



MRC INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
**“Transboundary Water Resources Management in a
Changing World”**

**INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES IN THE
LA PLATA BASIN, SOUTH AMERICA**

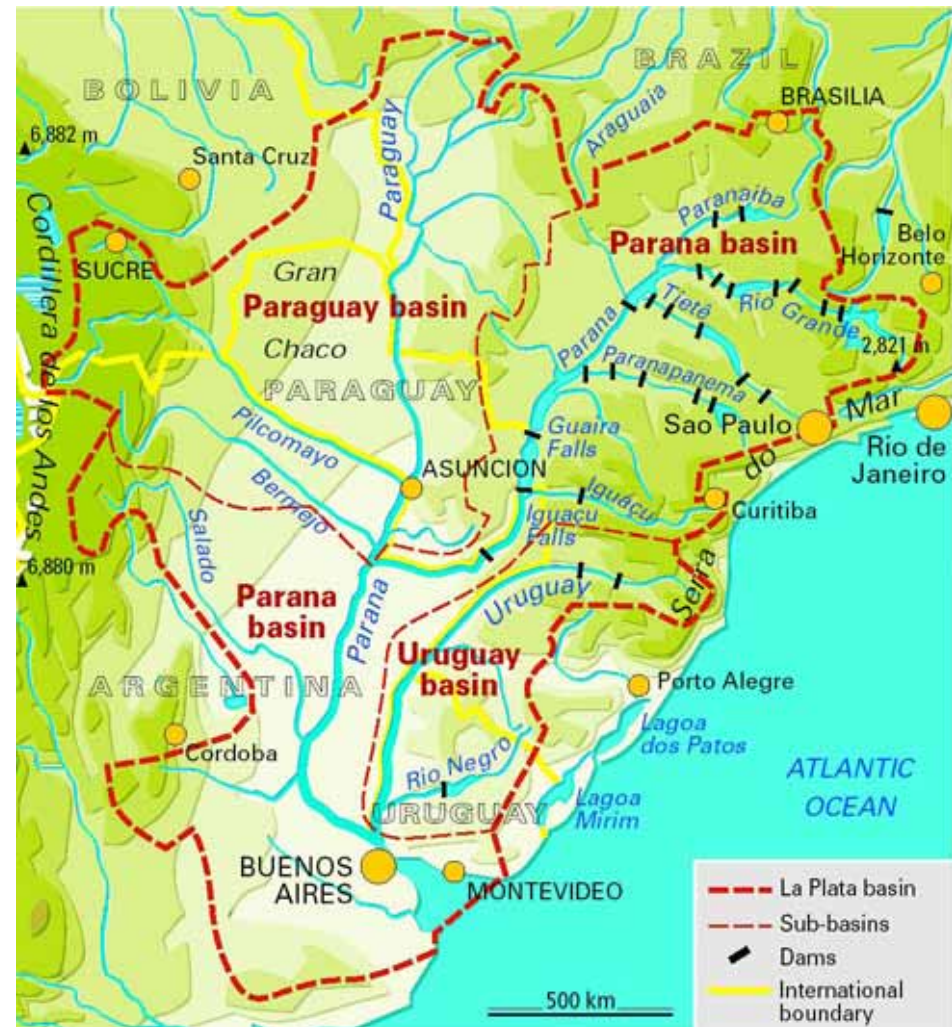
Víctor Pochat
Hua Hin, Thailand, 2-3 April 2010

LA PLATA RIVER BASIN

Area: 3,100,000 km²

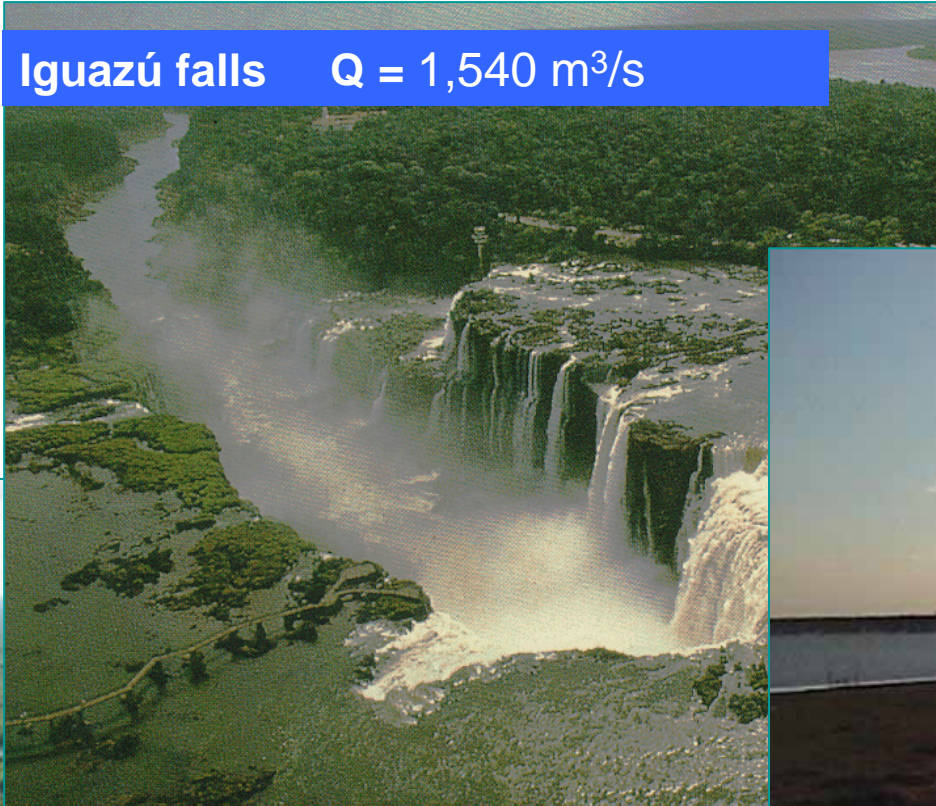
Population: 101,656,965 inhab.

70% GDP of the 5 countries



Some rivers of the *La Plata River Basin*

Iguazú falls $Q = 1,540 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$



Paraná river $Q = 17,140 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$



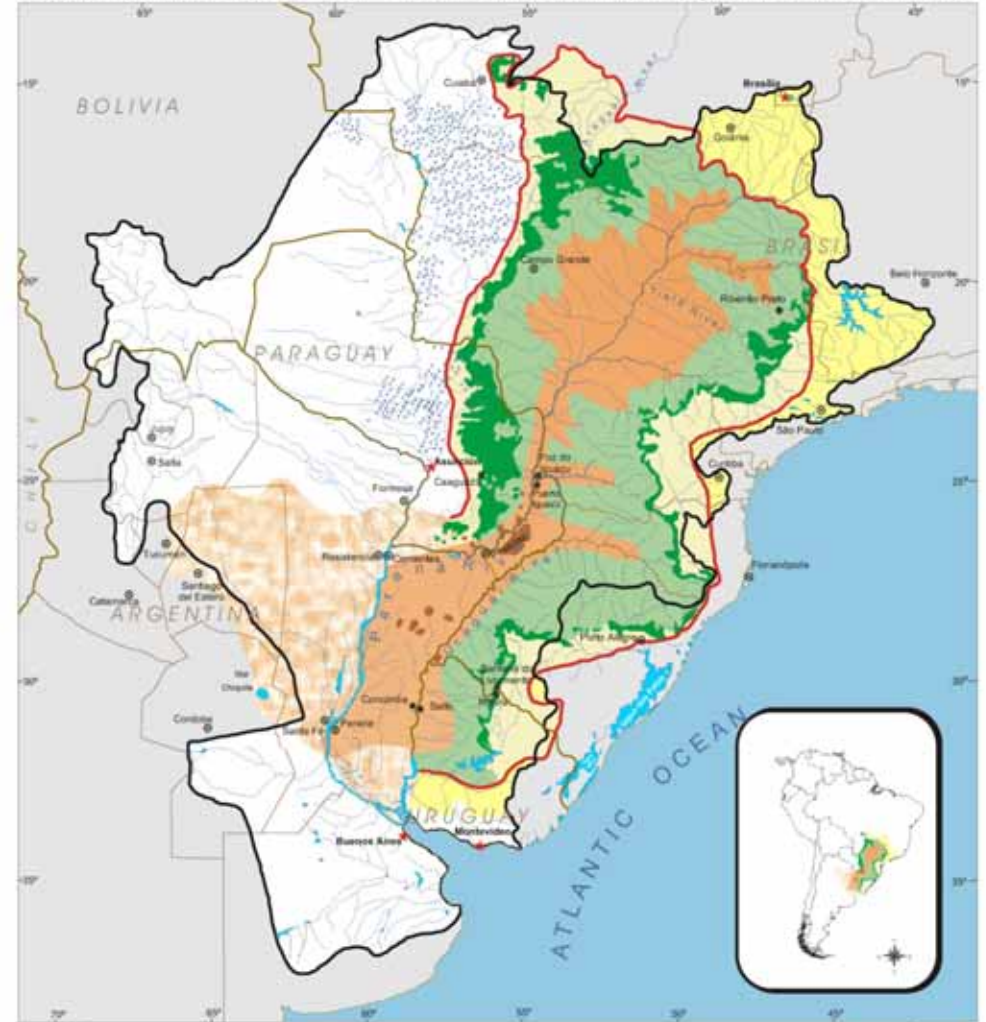
Paraguay river $Q = 3,810 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$



Guaraní Aquifer System

- Area: 1.2 million km²
- Estimated volume: 40,000 km³
- Annual recharge : 166 km³
- Aquifer depth: surface-1800 m
- Temperatures: 33°C - 85°C

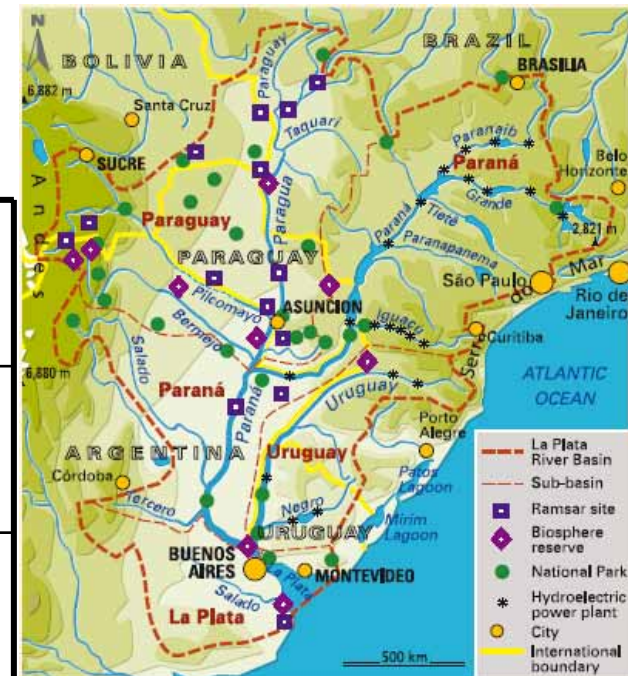
SCHEMATIC MAP OF THE GUARANI AQUIFER SYSTEM



LA PLATA RIVER BASIN

Main crops

| Countries | cereals | soybean | oil-plants | sugarcane | maize | cotton | forages |
|--------------------|---------|---------|------------|-----------|-------|--------|---------|
| Argentina (plains) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | |
| Bolivia | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | |
| Brazil (south) | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | |
| Paraguay | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ | |
| Uruguay | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ |



LA PLATA RIVER BASIN

High % urbanization/50 major cities



Buenos Aires, Arg



São Paulo, Brazil



Montevideo, Uruguay

LA PLATA RIVER BASIN

Hydroelectricity/75 large dams



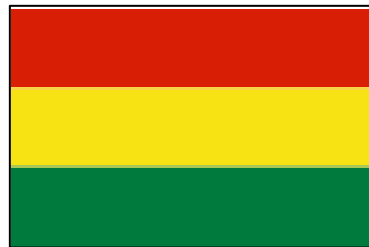
INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

**1967 Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee of
La Plata Basin Countries – CIC**

1969 La Plata Basin Treaty



ARGENTINA



BOLIVIA



BRAZIL



PARAGUAY



URUGUAY

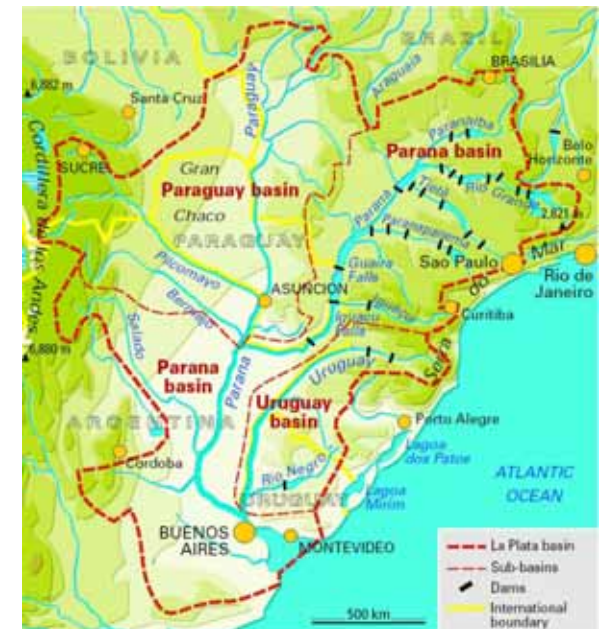
BI-, TRI AND MULTILATERAL AGREEMENTS

*The La Plata Basin Treaty is **broadly comprehensive** as regards its **competence** on plans, projects, works, and programs in the basin's area*

*However, it was **not proposed** as an **exclusive option** for riparian states, **but** as a **framework agreement** that could add special benefits to its global scheme, by allowing the countries from concluding **specific or partial bilateral or multilateral agreements**.*

LA PLATA RIVER BASIN Bi, tri and multilateral organizations (1)

| Year | Countries involved | Organization |
|-------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 1946 | Argentina Uruguay | Joint Technical Commission of Salto Grande (CTM) |
| 1971 | Argentina Paraguay | Argentinean-Paraguayan Joint Commission of the Paraná River (COMIP) |
| 1973 | Brazil Paraguay | Itaipú Binational |
| 1973 | Argentina Uruguay | Administrative Commission for the La Plata River (CARP) and Joint Technical Commission for the Maritime Front (CTMFM) |
| 1973 | Argentina Paraguay | Yacyretá Binational Entity (EBY) |
| 1975 | Argentina Uruguay | Administrative Commission for the Uruguay River (CARU) |



LA PLATA RIVER BASIN Bi, tri and multilateral organizations (1)

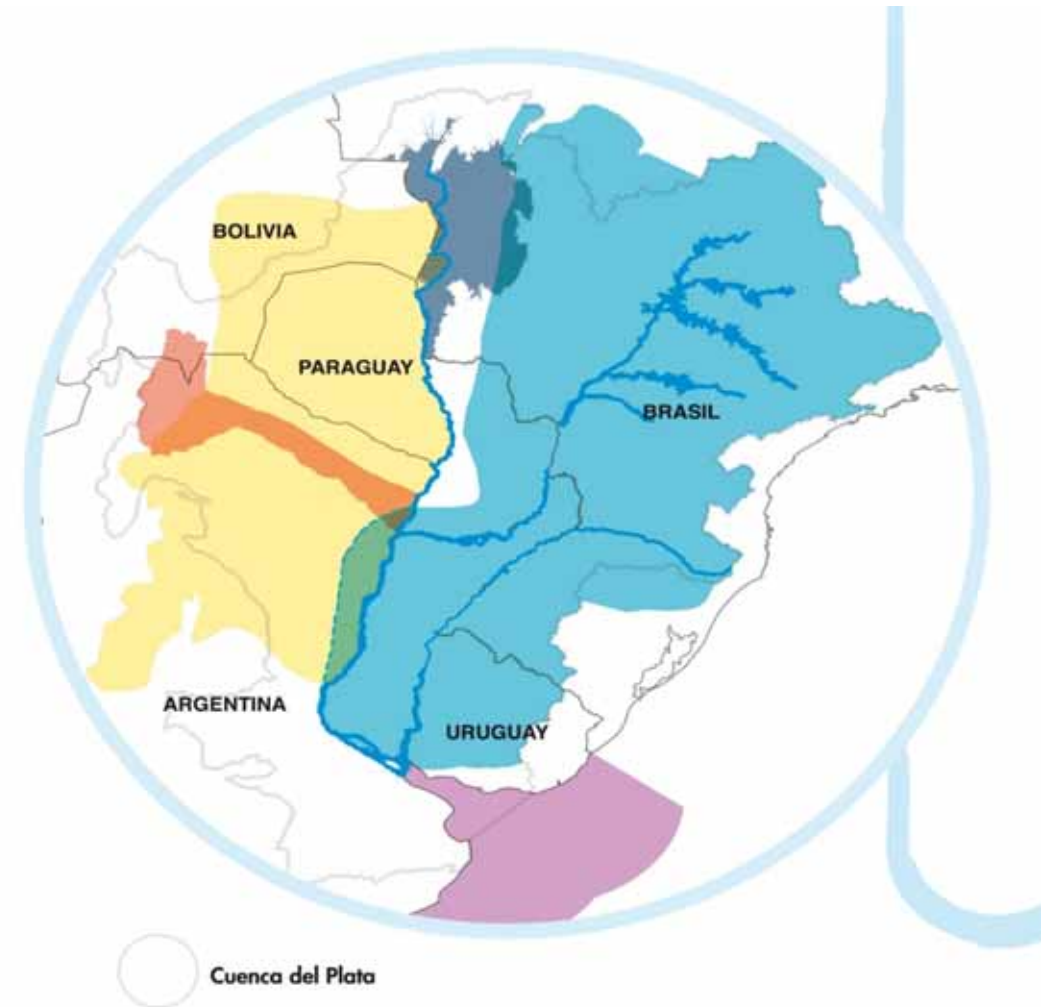
| Year | Countries involved | Organization |
|------|--|---|
| 1989 | Argentina Bolivia Brazil Paraguay Uruguay | Intergovernmental Committee for the Paraguay-Paraná Waterway, Cáceres Port-Nueva Palmira Port (CIH) |
| 1991 | Brazil Uruguay | Joint Brazilian-Uruguayan Commission for the Development of the Cuareim/Quaraí River Basin (CRC) |
| 1993 | Argentina Paraguay | Administrative Binational Commission of the Lower Basin of the Pilcomayo River |
| 1995 | Argentina Bolivia Paraguay | Trinational Commission for the Development of the Pilcomayo River Basin |
| 1995 | Argentina Bolivia | Binational Commission for the Development of the Upper Basin of the Bermejo River and the Grande de Tarija River (COBINABE) |
| 2006 | Brazil Paraguay | Brazil-Paraguay Commission of the Apa River Basin |



International projects in the La Plata Basin

Global Environmental Facility (GEF)

- Pantanal and Upper Paraguay
- Bermejo
- La Plata River
- Guaraní
- Gran Chaco
- **Framework Program for La Plata Basin**



International projects in the La Plata Basin

European Commission (EC)

- Pilcomayo



Some lessons learnt

The La Plata Treaty of 1969 opened up channels of communication that simply were not overtly allowed before.

For the purpose of managing issues that affected them all, the riparian countries, upper and lower, richer and poorer, were able to discuss in high-level meetings the priorities they had for their states.

Some lessons learnt

The existence of bi-, tri- and multilateral organizations has left the CIC acting in a rather secondary level, since they have:

- more specific objectives**
- a stronger economic capability**

Nevertheless, the CIC's coordinating role envisaged in 1967 is still fully valid and should be strengthened, in order to foster synergies among the different institutions and projects in the La Plata Basin

towards an integrated approach for its management, as an extension of the "collective goal" of conducting an "integral study" of the basin, foreseen when the CIC was established.

Some lessons learnt

A fundamental flaw of the CIC has been the lack of a permanent technical organization.

Although working groups were created with the participation of experts, these ad hoc collaborations were not able to provide what a permanent technical organization could have produced.

In 2001 the CIC established a Technical Projects Unit – integrated by the technical representatives of its five Member countries- but it has played a limited role because they are high-level public officers with many other commitments to deal with in their respective countries.

In order to be able to maintain the required technical activity, a stable full-time technical staff would be needed.

Some lessons learnt

In order to be able **to continue achieving the objectives** envisaged since the first years of existence of the La Plata institutional system, **the main challenge** for the five countries of the La Plata Basin is and will be **to ensure the sustainability** of the activities carried out with very valuable national efforts and international support.

A blue-tinted photograph of a forest stream with a fallen log across it. The scene is misty and serene, with trees and rocks visible in the background and foreground.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

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