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Building a water resources information system in the Tarapaca region – Chile

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In 2010, in Chile, the National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT) decided to settle the Center for Research and Development in Water Resources – CIDERH. The goal of this decision was to promote and install an important set of capacities regarding as well research as training. This Center aims to become the reference regarding water resources in Chile.
The specific mission of CIDERH is to generate and disseminate scientific knowledge on water resources in arid areas, through a multidisciplinary team of researchers. Particular importance is given to the transfer of results towards scientific community but also towards civil society.
CIDERH three main objectives are:
• Propose a system for water resources monitoring dedicated to their characterization, quantification and prediction regarding short, medium and long term. The aim is to ensure that all basins in the region have adequate meteorological, fluviometric, hydrogeological and water quality information.
• Characterize and quantify the water resources of three pilot basins.
• Disseminate and transfer water information to public and private actors in charge of water resources.
The result is a fully integrated environmental information system (EIS) that was built by putting together all requested skills. Actually, all key players accepted to contribute from their own experiences and skills: field measurements specialists, hydrologists, computer scientists, geographers, documentalists, communication managers and politicians have made available their know-how, resources, tools, standards and requirements to build this EIS.
This example is a real experience of building ab initio an integrated environmental information system. This EIS provides means to get and disseminate useful and additional information on water resources. This information is crucial for scientists but also for stakeholders in order to contribute to regional and national development as in many areas in Chile water resources still remain one of the most important challenges.