



***Towards a Framework for  
a Transatlantic Dialogue on Water:  
What Role for The University of Arizona?***

Progress Meeting, November 10-15, 2014



Interdisciplinary and Global  
Environmental Studies

*Franck Poupeau  
Coordinator*

*Maria A Sans-Fuentes  
European Project Manager*

# Contents

- **Introduction:** Goals of the SWAN Progress Meeting
- **Programmed Activities**
- **Results**
- **Feasibility study:** how to bridge scientific & institutional issues
- **Conclusion:** an action plan for SWAN 2

# Goals of the *Progress Meeting*

- Strengthen existing links of collaboration between different scientific fields and facilitate the creation of new ones
- Strengthen transdisciplinary science and public participation on water issues within an international framework
- Find a niche for the Transatlantic Dialogue Water (TDW) inside the University of Arizona:
  - *Meet scientific priorities of UoA and fill research gaps*
  - *Determine what the Transatlantic Dialogue can provide, that other well established organizations are not providing*
  - *Find a place for an “European UMI” (INCOLAB Project: SWAN)*

Time to start to wrap up things and to be pragmatics: to organize the research fields of the SWAN project, and to define how to build a specific academic offer at the UoA.

# Programmed Activities

## Day 1 (Mon):

Transatlantic Dialogue at the UoA

Feasibility Study & possibilities offered by the EU

## Day 2 (Tue):

Discussion on disciplinary perspectives (a follow up of *Monday Discussion*)

Scientific results of the SWAN teams & planning of activities for 2015 (the report period 2, SWAN2)

## Day 3 (Wed):

Presentations on Tucson Basin Case Study as a model for TDW and transdisciplinary collaboration

## Day 4 (Thu):

CAP visit for previously registered participants.

## Day 5 & 6: (Fri & Sat)

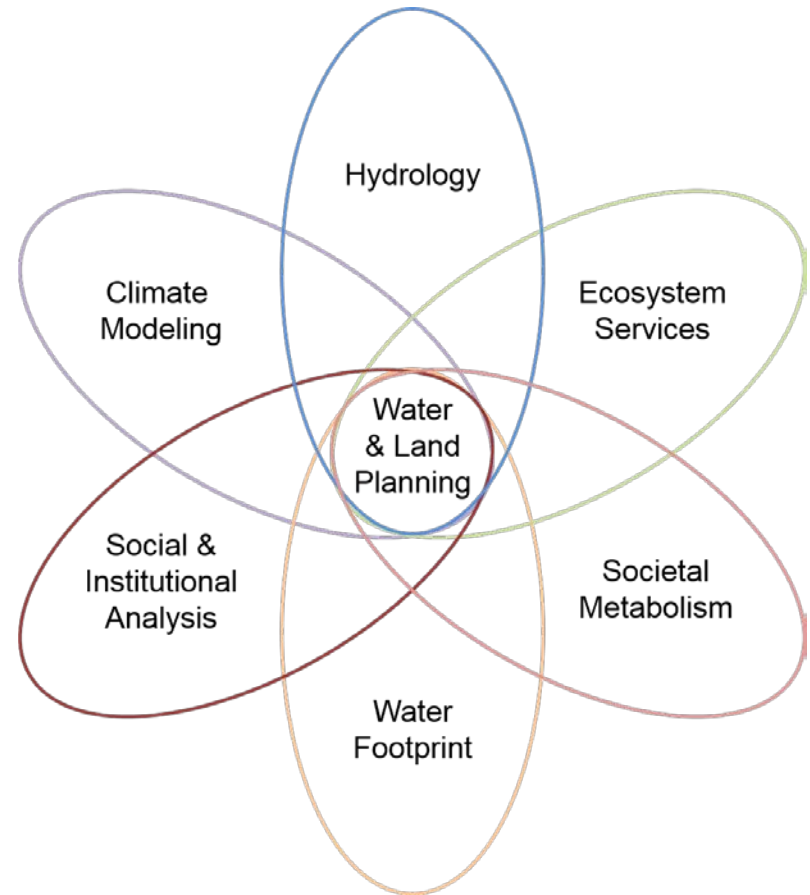
Work with SWAN members on the Case Study

# Results

- The ongoing collaboration between SWAN teams has already led to the **Transatlantic Dialogue on Water**, which main goal is to build a new transdisciplinary framework on water issues that serves as scientific basis for permanent collaborative organization. The core of this collaborative research is a **Case Study** focused on **Water Management & Environmental Policies in the Tucson area**.
- As a by-product of such collaboration, several reports have been produced on different topics and scientific papers are under preparation:
  - Climate Change
  - Water Security
  - Data, information & Water management
  - Urban Water
  - Transdisciplinary perspectives on Water Issues
- **1<sup>st</sup> SWAN International Conference on Data and Governance**, hosted in Seville in June, 2014 -> Open Knowledge: one of the goals for SWAN2
- To know more about SWAN activities visit: <http://swanproject.arizona.edu>

# Tucson Case Study: A model of Transatlantic Dialogue

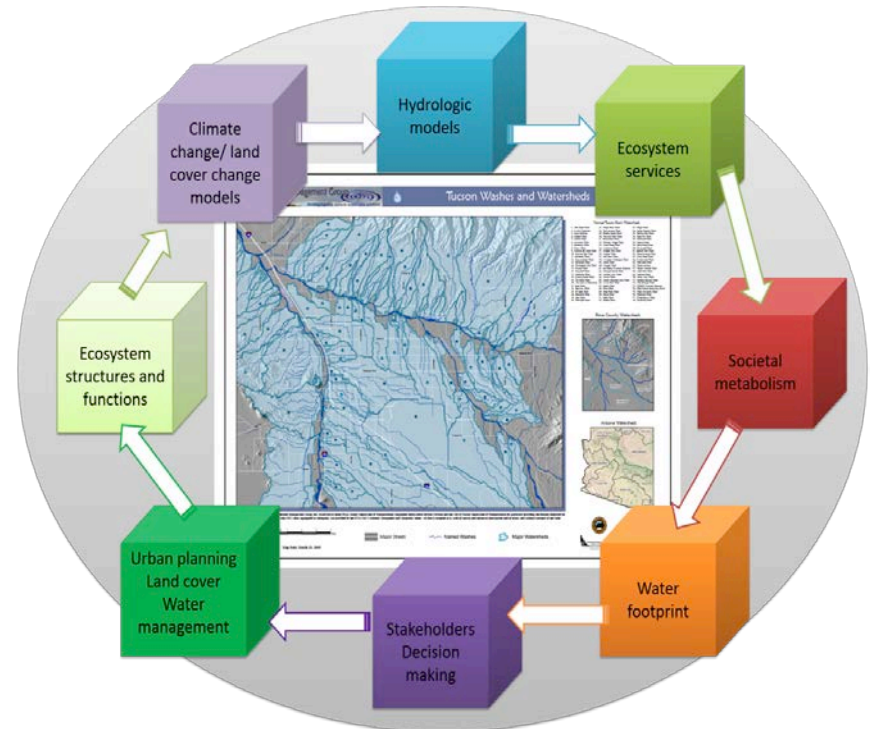
- Need of collective activities to link SWAN teams across the distances
- Tucson case study is possible thanks to the visits of the team students and the support of the UMI-CNRS and HWR-UoA
- From interdisciplinarity to transdisciplinary perspective: hydrology, climatology, ecology, engineering, geography, sociology, and integrative paradigms (ecosystem services, social metabolism, socio-ecological systems)





# Tucson Case Study: A model of Transatlantic Dialogue

- 3 days of work after the PM to get scientific and editorial advances.
- Idea of education/training to transdisciplinary & participatory research
- How to institutionalize this kind of international collaborations?  
=>Feasibility Study



# Feasibility Study:

## how to bridge scientific and institutional issues

To proceed, the FS has to identify:

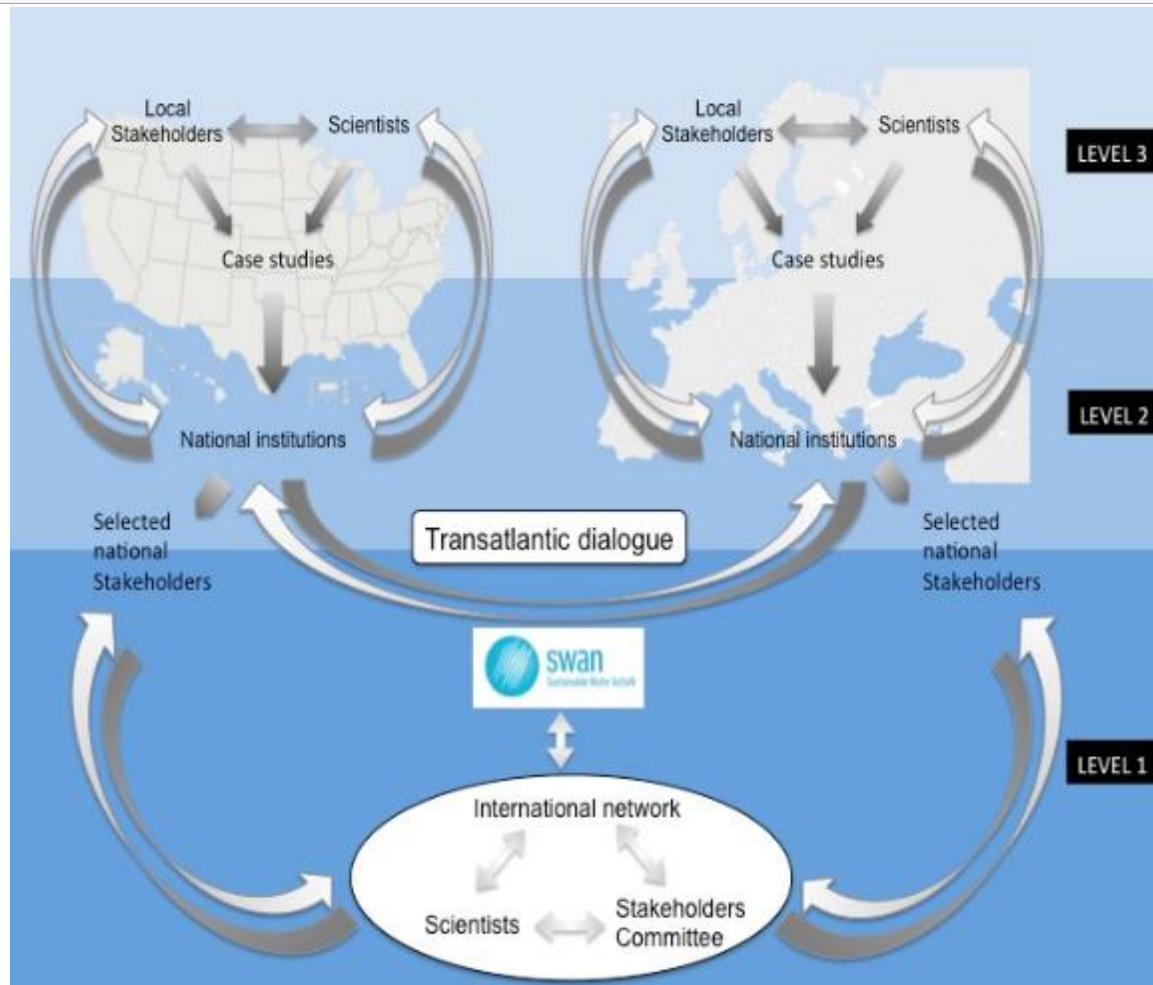
- 1) Key research priorities
- 2) Cross-cutting scientific themes between the teams
- 3) Advantages & strengths of having an European organization in the UofA/USA to support this project

Two main questions (in terms of sociology of sciences):

- Is there a specificity of water issues in terms of organization of scientific work?
- How to produce a participatory research with stakeholders' involvement?



# A Multi-level Field for a Transatlantic Dialogue



# Stakeholders' recommendations for the feasibility study

## RECOMMENDATIONS BY RESPONDENTS (2014)

- Define the scientific perspective - a research niche.
- To create a TDW, there is no need for new organizations.
- Open process: from scientific network to more institutional structure.
- The proposed TDW:
  - should be scientific and have a close cooperation with the private sector and governmental institutions (reports, books, co-organization of training activities).
  - should lead to broadening and deepening the development of simulation models of best practices for water management.
  - should contribute in the improvement of water management politics by facilitating exchange of knowledge on the implementation of European Directives in the field of waters.

# Prospects for achieving the FS

- TDW requires the commitment of stakeholders to SWAN's work at different levels through the development of effective modes of participation.
- TDW is built on an explicit recognition of transdisciplinary research and comparative approaches on water => the goal is to provide an institutional framework for SWAN teams to develop case studies.
- TDW is an international network open to include, over time, additional partners from Europe, USA and the rest of the Americas.
- TDW aims at elaborating a common strategic roadmap to increase scientific cooperation before the eventual institutionalization of a water center: the creation of a legal structure is more an outcome than a way to consolidate and achieve a scientific network.
- However...

# Sociological comments

## on the scientific and political implications of stakeholders engagement

⇒ An institutional/legal structure might be appropriate to achieve stakeholders engagement. Cf. Sheridan et al. (2014) *Stitching the West Back Together. Conservation of Working Landscapes*:

- Based on the results of a research with the distribution of an analytical tool called “Grassroots Collaborative Conservation Survey” distributed to community-based environmentalist groups.
- Example of Altar Valley Conservation Alliance in Arizona, created in 1995 and became a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in 2000; work with the UoA and other local foundations => management agreements with ranchers; dialogue and trust between agencies, scientists, farmers, conservationists etc.

⇒ What are we doing when we promote collaboration with stakeholders in a research project? For example, the grassroots collaborative conservation movement has tried to reverse the top-down logics of decision making, legitimized by scientific expertise and economics interests. Two different questions:

- Is this the role of science to support or contest decision making in the area of water management? Or is it to produce knowledge?
- Can a participative research be limited to a scientific network or an academic structure? Are there institutional alternatives? Are these alternatives compatibles with scientific goals?

# Risk assessment analysis

- First step -- based on a contractual basis, taking into account the different levels of stakeholders: international advisory board, national members that regularly collaborate and local stakeholders involved around a project.
- Second Step (SWAN2) -- What kind of legal structure for the TDW? Company, Association, Foundation or a legal structuration without legal personality (academic center or network)?
- The principal risk concerning structure with legal personality is the tax question. Fiscal laws are different for each country and might be an obstacle to the participation of several members in different countries. Another financial risk is the management of contributions.

# Conclusion: towards SWAN 2

- The Final Strategic Report will determine the basis of a future SWAN 2 project:
  - Vision, scope and structure of the future organization for TDW.
  - Short list of potential **new partners**, and criteria to enhance the process of scientific and institutional integration.
  - Proposition of a strategy to expand the UMI 3157 (CNRS / UA) into a multi-partner scientific and training European platform in the USA for new ideas, methods and research projects at a worldwide scale.
  
- The Final Strategic Report will propose:
  - A mechanism for student and staff **mobility between SWAN partners**, particularly with arrangements for student exchange and study.
  - **A secretariat**, based at UMI/UoA, in order to provide organizational support.
  - A multi-institutional collaborative **training program**.



- SWAN has already started the process of building a transdisciplinary and transatlantic research, open knowledge through comparative case studies, education and training.
- To continue with this process we need funding:

## **SWAN2 proposal**