The Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA) is a holistic, globally comparable assessment of all the world’s transboundary waters that recognises the inextricable links between freshwater and coastal marine environment and integrates environmental and socio-economic information to determine the impacts of a broad suite of influences on the world’s aquatic environment.

**Broad Transboundary Approach**

The GIWA not only assesses the problems caused by human activities manifested by the physical movement of transboundary waters, but also the impacts of other non-hydrological influences that determine how humans use transboundary waters.

**Regional Assessment - Global Perspective**

The GIWA provides a global perspective of the world’s transboundary waters by assessing 66 regions that encompass all major drainage basins and adjacent large marine ecosystems. The GIWA Assessment of each region incorporates information and expertise from all countries sharing the transboundary water resources.

**Global Comparability**

In each region, the assessment focuses on 5 broad concerns that are comprised of 22 specific water related issues.

**Integration of Information and Ecosystems**

The GIWA recognises the inextricable links between freshwater and coastal marine environment and assesses them together as one integrated unit.

The GIWA recognises that the integration of socio-economic and environmental information and expertise is essential to obtain a holistic picture of the interactions between the environmental and societal aspects of transboundary waters.

**Priorities, Root Causes and Options for the Future**

The GIWA indicates priority concerns in each region, determines their societal root causes and develops options to mitigate the impacts of those concerns in the future.

**This Report**

This report presents the results of the GIWA assessment of the Barents Sea region – one of the largest shallow continental shelf seas in the world and the most productive sea within the Arctic Ocean. Overexploitation of fish stocks and modification of the ecosystem caused by the invading Red king crab and other alien species have severely affected Barents Sea habitats. Policy options addressing the root causes of these problems are presented along with a discussion of the management of the large quantities of nuclear wastes stored in the area.