

FAN briefing for 3rd World Water Forum, Kyoto

Water and Climate Dialogue

The Dialogue on Water and Climate (DWC) was launched in 2001 to bridge the information gap between water managers and climate change professionals. It has initiated 18 local, multi-stakeholder dialogues at the national (Bangladesh, Netherlands, Canada), regional (South Asia, Central America, Pacific Islands, Western Africa, Southern Africa, Mediterranean), and basin (San Pedro, Murray-Darling, Nagoya) levels. They deal with questions of how to address the consequences of climate change and what kinds of knowledge and actions are needed to resolve water problems. It is hoped that capacity in water resources management will be improved to cope with the impacts of climate change, by establishing a platform through which policymakers and water resources managers have better access to, and make better use of, information generated by climatologists and meteorologists. Ultimately, it is hoped this will help countries prepare for disasters before they happen. Climate variability and weather extremes will derail achieving the 2015 Millennium Development Goals. Development activities without considering climate change will further increase vulnerability.

The international steering committee of the Dialogue includes FAO, GWP, IPCC, IUCN, NWP, UNESCO, WWC & WWF3, and the World Bank.

Progress of the Dialogue at the Third World Water Forum

Actions

- Infrastructure development
- Timely warning and forecasting systems
- Risk reduction
- Risk sharing and data management
- Spatial planning and institutional capacity development and reform
- Based upon community level decision making

Recommendations

- Enhance policies and measures towards adaptation to the impacts of climate variability and change, along with continuing efforts on further reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- A multi-stakeholder approach at national, basin and regional level to prepare action plans for adaptation
- Integrated Water Resources Management should become the inter-sectoral framework for implementation
- Secure financial support for preparation and implementation of national water sector adaptation plans
- Create a Water and Climate Alliance as an international umbrella to continue building bridges between the climate and water sector

- Establish Water and Climate Associated Program under the GWP
- Integrate and mainstream the initiatives developed under the Water and Climate Associated Program with related processes like the IPCCs 4th Assessment Report, national communications for UNFCCC, and disaster preparedness and management strategies
- Mainstream climate variability and change into national water and land management policies and management practices

[Read more](#)

Water and Poverty Dialogue

During the World Summit on Sustainable Development a commitment was made to prioritize water and sanitation in national sustainable development strategies and poverty reduction strategies where they exist.

The ADB had a process called The Dialogue on Water & Poverty to prepare for Kyoto. Dialogue with poor people was a major objective, to get a clearer understanding of the mechanisms of water and poverty and to present findings and proposals for action programs to policymakers and development partners.

Action points from the Forum

- The delivery of improved water services, sanitation and hygiene to be guided by governance that improve equity and target the most vulnerable in society
- The specific needs of poor people should be identified and targeted as a priority in water management
- Empowerment of poor people, and especially women, children and other vulnerable groups
- Governments should include pro-poor water management as a key element in national poverty reduction strategies and associated programs with external support agencies
- Secure the rights and entitlements of the poor, especially for women, through reforms to laws, policies, institutional mandates, and participatory processes for decision-making
- More investments in water infrastructure and services that meet poor peoples water needs, supported by capacity building in poor communities and service providers
- Improve advocacy for, awareness of and knowledge on pro-poor water policies and management by active campaigns that involve all stakeholders
- Define and put in place strategies and monitoring systems to achieve clear targets and indicators, based on international commitments for poverty reduction and water security

Meeting these challenges will require all stakeholders to be active participants, through partnerships that are based on common but

differentiated responsibilities to improve the water security of poor communities. Such partnership arrangements will create a basis for water and poverty action initiatives. These initiatives should support effective national policies and strategies for poverty reduction and water investments: water management alone will not solve poverty problems and poverty will not be reduced without improved water security for the poor.

Financing Water Infrastructure

The WWC & GWP formed a Financing Panel, chaired by Michel Camdessus, until recently General Manager of the International Monetary Fund in Washington D.C. Panelists, all men, were mainly representatives of government and banking institutions. NGO Panelists were WaterAid, Transparency International and International Secretariat for Water.

Its mandate was to look for new sources of funding (not ODA or public funds) to meet the 2025 water security targets of the World Water Vision. This includes investment needs for improvements to drinking water (\$13 billion/yr), irrigation (40 billion/yr), sanitation & hygiene (\$17 billion/yr), wastewater treatment (\$70 billion/yr), industrial effluent (\$30 billion/yr), environmental protection (\$10 billion/yr) totaling \$180billion/yr over 25 years. Of course there are various assumptions behind these figures which provoke controversy (e.g. a bias towards large scale infrastructure projects serving urban areas).

The final report was released at a session at the 3rd World Water Forum in March 2003 and was one of the most heated sessions at the Forum. Activists waved placards and chanted Water for Life and not for Profit during the presentations. The final report provoked controversy in for a number of reasons:

Many NGOs criticised it for not addressing the vulnerability of the poorest countries exposed to financial risks.

Professor Kader Asmal MP and Former Chair of the World Commission on Dams warned that the reports proposal for multi-lateral financing institutions and donors to re-engage in financing dams subject to adequate social and environmental safeguards without any reference to the growing support for the framework proposed by WCD avoids dealing with the underlying issues. He claimed it provides support for those who wish to continue the business as usual approach in the hope that controversy will merely melt away.

Critics also say the report does not offer communities enough participation in water projects, this is potentially disastrous as a huge problem confronting water utilities in developing countries is that government departments do not pay their water bills, so utilities cannot meet their costs. They want governments to be responsible for managing water and say that political will is needed if poverty is going to be reduced.

The controversy has overshadowed some positive points that have been made by the report:

- The importance of mobilising local investment funds
- Micro finance
- Roles of NGOs
- Reporting of progress against MDGs
- Creating credit pools for sub-sovereigns (local government)
- Subsidies for connections not consumption
- Good governance

Response by the NGO Panel Debate Statement:

We call for a rejection of the Camedessus Report as the product of an unaccountable, unrepresentative, inaccessible process no longer suitable for this day and age.

Response by the Ministerial Conference:

We should explore the full range of financing arrangements including private sector participation in line with our national policies and priorities. We will identify and develop new mechanisms of public-private partnerships for the different actors involved, while ensuring the necessary public control and legal frameworks to protect the public interests, with particular emphasis on protecting the interests of the poor. In other words it is trying to balance the issue of privatization but it remains very much on the global agenda.

[Read more](#)

Food, Water and Environment

The 2nd World Water Forum (The Hague) exposed the need for an action-oriented dialogue on the development of water management strategies and practices that enhance food security and environmental sustainability. Ten international agencies (FAO, GWP, ICID, IFAP, IUCN, IWMI, UNEP, WHO, WWC, WWF) have joined forces as a Consortium to 'promote a rational dialogue on future water needs for nature and food production'.