

Summary of Discussion on "Water Security in the River Basins"

5th NARBO General Meeting - Water Security in the River Basins
NARBO Thematic Workshop at the 2nd Asia-Pacific Water Summit Technical Session
Chiang Mai, Thailand, 15:45-17:45, 16 May 2013

Water security is a foundation for sustainable development. In Asia, existing gaps in water quantity and water quality, and between water supply and water demand are exacerbated by rapid urbanization and industrialization, increasing population, and climate variability.

The Thematic Workshop on Water Security in the River Basins was convened to look at three questions, viz. :

Q1: What is happening in Asia?

Q2: What are current perceptions on achieving water security?

Q3: How can we achieve water security in river basins?

The Workshop started with a Keynote Lecture on "RAPID FLOOD MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT" by Mr. Apichart Anukularmphai. The key messages from the Keynote were :

- (1) Engineering alone is not enough – we need public participation in IWRM.
- (2) Engineers must change their mindset – they must not only look at “hard” engineering but at “soft” engineering as well: local knowledge is important.
- (3) People are starting to realize that it is important to participate. We must continue to promote IWRM and we must look at the other aspects of managing water.

The Panel discussion started with a short presentation by each of the five panellists to answer the three questions. Then, there was then a very lively Q&A session where many participants contribute their ideas and experiences. Based on the discussions, the Session agreed and recommended that :

- (1) Water security is a serious issue in the region. Perception and awareness on the issue is already present, while action is not there yet.
- (2) Engineering alone is not enough – we need public participation in IWRM. Good projects are established when people demand it.
- (3) Human resource capacity development is important for Water Security.
- (4) Carrying out trans-boundary Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a “must” for basin countries.
- (5) GG towards inclusive sustainable development must involve the poor in co-managing the basin resources.
- (6) Innovative RBO’ are drivers for change.