



Impactful Investments in Water Efficient Infrastructures: Inputs to the 3rd Asia-Pacific Water Summit

(Strengthening Integrated Water Resource Management Processes and the Practitioners' Network)

Organizers: Japan Water Agency, National Water Resources Committee of Myanmar, Network of Asian River Basin Organisation (NARBO), Asia Pacific Water Forum (APWF), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (EDD, ESCAP)

Cocktail Lunch is served at 12:30-13:00

13:00-14:00, Thursday, 7 September 2017

**Conference Room 3, United Nations Conference Centre
Bangkok, Thailand**

Background

Regional and Global Processes:

While water is at the heart of the region's sustainable development, the sources of regional investments in water emanate from both public and private sources and follow financing framework. ESCAP in collaboration with ADB and the network of experts of Asia-Pacific Water Forum (APWF), including NARBO network partners, committed to lead a regional thematic report on *Financing of Water-Related SDGs*.

The 3rd APWS will be held in Myanmar, December 2017 and will feature concrete actions, solutions, and innovations at the local levels. There will also be a specific focus on transboundary and multi-partnership cooperation through the improved utilization of the Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) processes as well as the building up of water-based economies. The outcomes of the regional discussions of 3rd APWS will be reported at the 8th World Water Forum in April 2017 in Brazil and at other international conferences.

The exchanges between high-level officials and policy makers of this side event would contribute to the development of the key regional policy messages, that would be further incorporated in the regional Report, which would be providing baseline for discussion of political leaders at the 3rd Asia-Pacific Water Summit (3rd APWS) and the 8th World Water Forum (8thWWF).

Contextual Insights

Water efficiency is a broad term that encompasses water conservation and management plans to achieve more resourceful water use and to reduce water consumption patterns. The region's water demands are projected to increase by about 55% due to the growing needs for domestic water, manufacturing, and thermal electricity generation. At the same time, the agricultural sector will need to produce 60% more food globally by 2050 and 100% more in developing countries all while accessing diminishing water resources which in turn augments the need for investments in water efficient technologies. The focus of water efficient infrastructures will be on reducing water losses and waste. However, this must be achieved without restricting water use across all sectors, while also ensuring sustainable withdrawals along with the supply of freshwater to address water scarcity. The question that arises are how can the region accelerate and ensure impactful investment patterns? What are the enabling governing conditions and regulatory mechanisms of good water management that are available to aid countries in the region towards their attainments of the SDGs?

ADB (2013) estimated that at least US\$59 billion in investments for water supply and US\$71 billion for improved sanitation are needed to cover the region's basic needs. It is also estimated that as much as 70% to 90% of household and industrial wastewaters return to the water eco-system untreated. How then can we buck this trend and move towards more efficient water use and avoid polluting the environment?



The current regional decision-making process is aligning its policy and practices with the guidance of the 2030 Agenda and the attainments of water-related SDGs at the local and city levels. Building on these backgrounds, this side event will focus on impactful policy levers to enable investments for water efficient infrastructures to contribute in the achievement of sustainable economic growth, manners in which people can live in harmony with nature while ensuring their well-being in the region, and the application of an environmentally friendly economic approach and IWRM. In this regard, it is essential to strengthen the capacities of the professional networks and practitioners and to further promote best practices in water efficient infrastructures which were developed using appropriate and applicable approaches and lessons learnt from the IWRM guidelines.

Scope

The main objective of the event is to inform the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment on the 3APWS and to share perspectives on ways to meet the SDG targets, in particular on the SDG 6.4, SDG 6.5, and SDG 11 through the promotion of *impactful investments for water efficient infrastructure* under the concept frame of *quality infrastructure*. The scope of discussions would mainly touch base on case studies and policies around the following topics:

- Impactful investments in water and sanitation infrastructures (through water efficiency and sustainable sanitation services);
- Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) with a focus on sustainable economic growth and professional networking of practitioners through policy framing by addressing water-related vulnerabilities associated with water in-efficient infrastructures and their impacts on climate change;
- Recommendations on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, innovative approaches on IWRM with sustainable economic growth, and the delineation of additional research areas, capacity development needs, and replication of best practices.
- Various applicable and appropriate approaches and technologies for the *data mining* of raw data for IWRM as well as for the identification of contextual information about regional changes. For example, *Remote Sensing* and *Environment Data Analysis facilities* can be utilized in data generation and the monitoring of the attainment of SDG6.

Key Questions

- What are some practical methods and policies to attract and enhance investments in infrastructure development to ensure sustainable and inclusive development? How can investments in water sectors be associated with the Environment, Society, and Governance (ESG) investment principles?
- What are the persisting challenges to bridging the gap between public and private investments, and what can be done to close this gap?
- What knowledge and mechanisms are required to develop a multi-layer approach? What are the roles of international networks such as APWF and NARBO, etc. in Agenda 2030 and the SDGs? How can they work together in the decision-making processes at the regional, national, and local levels so that there are beneficial outcomes?
- How can practical achievements be created through the development, strengthening, and dissemination of water efficient infrastructures through IWRM processes while taking economic growth and guidelines from the network of practitioners into consideration? What should the 3rd Asia-Pacific Water Summit stress in order to create more impactful messages, so that high-level officials turn these discussions into concrete actions?

Tentative Programme

Moderator: Japan Water Agency, NARBO (list of speakers below)

1. Opening & Introduction by Moderator and the Key Note (5-7 mins)
2. Invitation to the 3rd Asia-Pacific Water Summit (5mins)
3. Panelist interventions (7 mins each, total about 42 min)
4. Q&A and discussion (25 mins)
5. Key messages and closing by Moderator (5 mins)



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List of Speakers:

MC: Dr. Aida Karazhanova, ESCAP

Chair: H.E. Mr. U Ohn Winn, Union Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Myanmar

Moderator: Mr. Hideshi SASAHARA : Deputy Director, Water Resources Engineering Division, Japan Water Agency / Deputy Secretary General, NARBO

Panel Speakers

- Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Executive Secretary, ESCAP
- H.E. Mr. Yeshey Dorji, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture & Forests, Thimphu, Bhutan
- H.E. Bounkham VORACHIT, Vice-Minister of MONRE , Lao PDR
- Ms. Ladawan Kumpa, NESDB, Thailand (tbc)

Discussants

- Mr. Tatsuo KUNIEDA, Associate Director, Japan Water Agency
- Mr. Saroj Srisai, Assistant Director/ Head of Environment Division, Sustainable Development Directorate, ASEAN
- Mr. Nobuyuki ICHIHARA, Director, Japan Water Forum / Asia-Pacific Water Forum Secretariat
- Mr. Hans Hans Dencker Thulstrup, Senior Programme Specialist, Water and Environmental Sciences, UNESCO Regional Science Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (WEBEX)