

Statement
at the Side event of the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Summit on the Environment
“Impactful Investments in Water Efficient Infrastructures : Inputs to the 3rd Asia-Pacific
Water Summit”

(Thursday, 12:30-14:00, 7 September 2017, CR-3, UNCC, Bangkok, Thailand)

Distinguished Ms. Shamshad Akhtar, Executive Secretary, ESCAP

Distinguished H.E. Mr. Yeshey Dorji, Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Royal Government of Bhutan,

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

Excellencies, Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- On behalf of H. E. **Mdme Bounkham Vorachit, the Vice Minister of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Lao PDR, H.E** assigned me to state on water.
- Lao PDR has improved the situations on water drastically under the activities of MDGs. For example, we can see the significant increase in the number of people with access to safe water and sanitation by the investment to these fields. However, currently, population is growing very rapidly, and economic growth is also significant. Along with these situations, water demand for irrigation and hydropower is also increased, and water conflicts among sectors and riparian countries have emerged. Making acceptable and applicable water planning and immediate implementation, in addition to boost investment to infrastructure development are required.
- Compared with MDGs and SDGs, we can see concrete Goals and Targets on Water as Goal 6 in SDGs. Water is closely related with sectors such as agriculture, energy, transportation, city, environment, poverty, disaster and gender and so on. Water issue is a cross-cutting and is not solved solely. Integrated and applicable approach is indispensable.
- Regarding Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), we've applied the concept of IWRM in water policies, and now, we're implementing many activities under 'National Natural Resources Strategy' and 'the 8th national socio-economic development plans of the government 2016-2020'. We've applied IWRM in major river basins and sub-basins with expanding the lessons throughout the country across the basins in the country. More studies and trainings for enhancing the capacity of organization and its staff are being implemented.

- However, more actions are requested to meet the goals and target of SDGs, although resources including financial and human resources are not enough. When we consider achievement of SDGs, we have some questions in my mind. What should we do? How to balance socio-economic development and biodiversity in the basin? How to enhance activities at field?
- As one of the answer, more investment to strengthen institutional capacity and governance should be promoted. Having ability to find and create applicable and appropriate methods from regional experience on water management may be a fundamental matter for securing sustainable development with securing biodiversity. To make it happen, regional networking for sharing and knowing experiences through practical guidelines or show case are very important and effective.
- When we think about the investment to water, we need to consider the ‘user pay principle’ as like a ‘polluter pay principle’ for securing the fairness and inviting private sectors to this field. Sound cycle of financing would be needed to enhance more investment to water, especially from private sectors. Furthermore, sector of the developer should consider the happiness of the people of the whole river basin and biodiversity. By doing so, investment to water links with ESG principles itself.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- In conclusion, I would like to stress that investment not only for infrastructure development but also for development of institutional capacity development through strengthening network for improvement of water governance to be strengthened for sustainable development. I’d like to expect the fruitful discussions for exploring the concrete and proactive actions to achieve goals and target of SDGs. I also expect that our strong messages would be delivered to the 3rd Asia-Pacific Water Summit and catalyze enhance for palladium shift at all levels.

Thank you.