

World Water Week Daily

Wednesday, September 8, 2010



Mr. Alexander Allard and Mr. Danny Luong of Canada, winners of the 2010 Stockholm Junior Water Prize for their work to develop a new biotechnical method to biodegrade polystyrene in water. They are pictured here with H.R.H Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden. "We believe the Stockholm Junior Water Prize has the power to transform our industry by engaging students – the next generation of water leaders – to address critical water issues," said Gretchen McClain, president of ITT's Fluid and Motion Control group.

The Dam Solution!

The report by the World Commission on Dams (WCD) has had so many downloads, it led Former WCD Chair and 2000 Stockholm Water Prize Laureate Kader Asmal and Former WCD Commissioner Deborah Moore to joke that looking at the big dam controversy was a sexy topic.

Asmal and Moore gave the opening remarks for the *World Commission on Dams + 10: Revisiting the Large Dam Controversy* seminar, which looked at the conclusions of WCD's report from ten years ago and the new questions that have developed in the interim, because contention surrounding dams still exists.

Asmal said he would like a fresh view to

be provided; one that is non-antagonistic. He also thinks the situation in the developing
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Kader Asmal, Former Chair WCD, South Africa and 2000 Stockholm Water Prize Laureate gave opening remarks.

Adapting to Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean

Water experts and government officials from the Latin America and Caribbean region debated the strengths and weaknesses of a regional climate change adaptation strategy during the *Expert and Ministerial Panel on Water Adaptation to Climate Change: Prospects and Challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean Region*.

The seminar presented preliminary results of a Regional Policy Dialogue organised by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Water Forum of the Americas, the National Water Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean (CAALCA).

Participants on a ministerial panel representing nine countries in the region were overall positive about the policy dialogue document, although Herman Rosa Chávez, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources of El Salvador, noted that the strategy was focused on the future, while "this problem is taking place as we speak."

Seminar Chair Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm of the IDB asked each of the panelists to identify the constraints on climate change adaptation policies in their respective countries, what they would do if the constraints were lifted, and what international financial institutions such as the IDB could do to help.

Most panel members identified lack of information resources as well as financial constraints as the biggest obstacles to implementing adaptation strategies. Several panelists suggested removing bureaucratic "red tape" at development banks and other multilateral institutions.

Dr. Roger Pulwarty of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Karen Kemper of the World Bank both praised the initial results of the Regional Policy Dialogue.

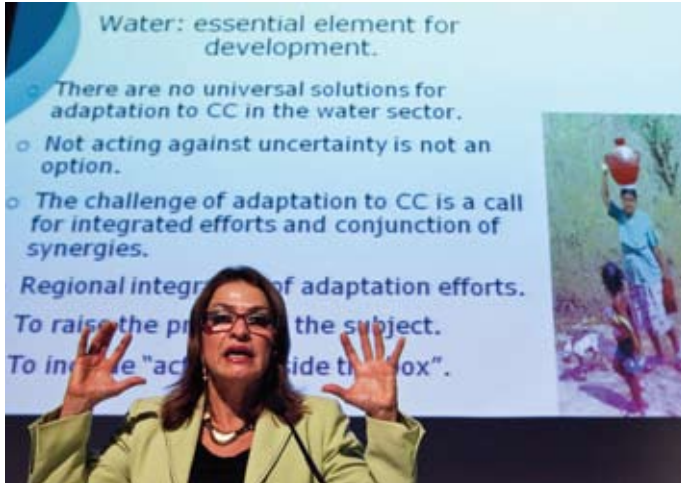
Pulwarty said it was the first regional

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strategy he had seen that ties the benefits of climate change adaptation strategies to economic benefits, rather than just environmental outcomes.

According to Kemper, the document does a good job of laying out challenges and policy solutions, but cautioned that sustained financial support from governments would be key.



Eng. Maureen Ballestero of GWP Central America presents contributions to a regional agenda on water adaptation to climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In addition to Irfaan and Rosa Chávez, the ministerial panel included Guyanese Housing and Water Minister Ali Irfaan; Joseph Gilbert, Minister for Works, Physical Development and Public Utilities of Grenada; Deputy Managing Director of the Water Resources Authority of Jamaica Herbert Thomas; Director of the Water Department of the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Telecommunications of Costa Rica José Miguel Zeledon Calderon; Andrés Rodríguez, National Director of Water Resources Conservation and Protection of Argentina; General Director of Aguas de Chile Matias Desmadryl; and Vice-Minister of Housing, Territorial Development and Environment of Uruguay Jorge Patrone.

One Size Doesn't Fit All



Dr. Graham Alabaster of UN-Habitat's Water Sanitation and Infrastructure Branch.

World Water Day 2011 will focus on urban water management. At the seminar *World Water Day 2011—Urban Water Management: Key Issues and Priorities for Action*, Graham Alabaster of UN-HABITAT's Water, Sanitation and Infrastructure Branch describes urbanisation

as a continuum running from the village level to "megacities," with each requiring its own approach to water management.

Alberto Tejado-Guibert and Dr. Sarantuyaa Zandaryaa of UNESCO presented International Hydrological Program (IHP) data and suggested a holistic approach that responds to the needs of the urban poor.

UN-Water Chair Zafar Adeel encouraged those who want to participate in World Water Day next March 22 to contact UN-Water.

What are the biggest water challenges in your region?



"The government in my country is not providing water in an adequate quantity, so people rely on groundwater by drilling bore-holes. This creates great danger for the groundwater resource."
Nurudeen Oladoja – Researcher at Adekunle Ajasin University Nigeria



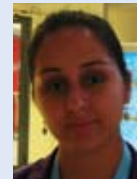
"Raising people's awareness that water conservation management is something they should be concerned with. Water resources are still relatively abundant on the east coast, so it's not close to home. They need to become aware of how their consumer choices impact water resources."
Marielle Weikel – Conservation International USA



"Our biggest problem is the over-extraction of water, mostly for agriculture and industry. Secondly, and almost as important is water quality. Standards for water discharge do exist but they are not always complied with, so they need to be coupled with local solutions and improvements in technology."
Anjana Pant – WWF India



"My region is the world, so the greatest challenge is to get water to as many people as possible as quickly as possible."
Patrick Vaughan – Safège France



We don't have shortage of water in most of the country, but in our case it's really treatment. We should get more political will to treat better.
Marina Saraiva Carvalho, Journalist from Brazil



There are no regulations, no one cares about water. We should have some regulations and awareness about the importance of water and water quality, especially, because not all the water you drink is good water.
Abir Kouzayha, Lebanese Atomic Energy Commission (LAEC-CNRS)



I'm from Sudan. Climate change is the biggest issue.
Modawi Ahmed, Public Water Corporation of Sudan

Helping Businesses Balance Energy and Water

With water availability declining and energy demand rising, businesses may have to make trade-offs between using more energy and using more water.

Those attending the side event *Balancing Water and Carbon in Sustainable Energy Production* got an introduction to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development's (WBCSD) Global Water Tool, which helps businesses determine their water use. The WBCSD is also working on a version of the Global Water Tool customised for utilities as well as a water-in-energy tool.

With the increasing focus on carbon, "Have we forgotten about water?" CH2M HILL carried out a study on oil and gas and energy companies' public reporting on their water use. The results are to be released later this week.

WBCSD members offered "upstream" and "downstream" perspectives on balancing water and energy use.

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world has gotten worse in the last decade, because although water access may have improved, water quality has gotten worse as discussed in the plenary sessions Monday.

Moore outlined the new themes in the dam debate. She said drivers of dam development such as climate change and financiers are changing. There are also untapped water and energy innovations like in Portugal, where renewable energy use has grown from 17 per cent to 45 per cent in 5 years, reducing the need for hydropower.

Case study presenters and panelists, who attempted to answer these new questions surrounding the dam controversy, joined Asmal and Moore.

Health of Entire Baltic Sea Impaired

Despite HELCOM's creation of the Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAP) in 2007, the health of the entire sea is still impaired based on biological and chemical status indicators, Maria Laamanen, Professional Secretary of HELCOM, said at the *Baltic Sea Water Award Seminar – Regional Integration, Sustainable Development and Combating Eutrophication in our Common Sea Basin*.

Eutrophication is by far the biggest problem; affecting biodiversity, food supply and water transparency, but any single activity like fishing and shipping can cause several pressures to the ecosystem. Maria said the input of nutrients that cause eutrophication have lowered some, "but still no where near the reduction target line. Hence, we need to take stronger action."

Chair of HELCOM 2010-2012 and Ambassador of the Seas, Sweden, Gabriella Lindholm said its every Baltic nation's responsibility to implement and fund the plans outlined under the BSAP, which is an investment for the future and a tool for taking steps in the right direction.

The Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award was given today to Polish Professors Maciej Nowicki and Marek Gromiec, who shared their views on pollution abatement efforts in the Baltic region.

Winners of the Swedish national competition for the Stockholm Junior Water Prize Joanna Blossner, Anna Lindback and Miranda Wiklund Melander closed the ceremony with their presentation *Gambling with the Baltic Sea*.

Food Security or Water Security?



Mr. Christos Zoomides describes the water footprint of crop production in Cyprus.

Research from the Netherlands, Spain, Cyprus and Iran was used to illustrate the economic and political factors involved in reducing national water footprints during the seminar *Water Footprint and Public Policy: What Can Governments Do to Reduce Humanity's Water Footprint?*

The case studies were geared toward policy-makers. Many scenarios saw countries having to choose between importing products such as grains that require a high volume of water to produce, decreasing

food security, or producing foods themselves, thereby decreasing water security.

Other speakers addressed the concept of a national water footprint from the perspectives of non-governmental organisations and United Nations agencies.

Giovanni Muñoz, Water Development Officer for the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) presented research on water use and agriculture in Central Asia, as part of a project aimed at offering governments in the region a new perspective on water problems based on the water footprint concept.

Chaired by Prof. Arjen Hoekstra, Scientific Director of the Water Footprint Network (WFN), the seminar also included discussion about blue, green and grey water use as part of a country's water footprint.



Prof. Marek Gromiec and Prof. Maciej Nowicki, both of Poland, receive the 2010 Swedish Baltic Sea Water Award. The award was presented Tuesday afternoon by Mr. Joakim Stymne, Sweden's State Secretary for International Development Cooperation (middle).

Driving a Stake Through Land Use Pollutants

Mobilising stakeholder involvement is the number one factor in minimising land use based water pollution, panellists and participants agreed at Tuesday's Workshop 6.

The basic problem of land use pollutants is the overload of nutrients through farming practices. It would be best to look at what nutrients are already in the soil before we add more. Also, the when and the way fertilisers are applied is important in limiting overload of phosphorus and nitrogen, the major causes of eutrophication.

They persist because the issue is highly complex, because there many different sources with a number of tradeoffs involved between use and non-use of nutrients.

There are also driving forces that will continue to expand the problem such as exponential population growth, increasing wealth improving people's diets, and international attempts to eradicate hunger like the MDGs.

Technical approaches need to be developed that are implementable, meaning they must fall within legal constraints and be able to be properly financed, Prof. Malin Falkenmark, Senior Scientific Advisor, SIWI, said at the workshop's conclusion.

Also, incentives must be found, considering a new phosphorus peak that says all of the natural nutrient would be used in 40 years, said Dr. Arno Rosemarin, SEI.



Tracy Stanton of Forest Trends/Ecosystem Marketplace gives an overview of payment mechanisms used to improve water quality.

Can We Build a Bridge from Water to Climate?

It has proven more difficult than previously thought to have water included as a major component of climate change negotiations, but water managers should not give up. This was the message of the *Water and Climate in Focus: Post Stockholm and COP 15* seminar.

Seminar chairman Johan Kuylenstierna, Chief Technical Advisor, UN-Water, said that last year's water and climate conservation at World Water Week was "very hot" and water managers had high hopes for the COP 15. However, the inability of climate negotiators to reach a decision was highly disappointing.

This year's goal is for water managers to create a universal statement that is honest about the difficulties that exist, but also shows that these difficulties will be less painful than doing nothing, said WB Sector Manager for Water Julia Bucknall.

Hannah Stoddart, Policy Coordination, Water and Climate Coalition, added that a global policy that "steers" development objectives could go a long way in increasing recognition of water in the climate debate.

COP 16 should not be seen as an end, but rather as an opportunity to discuss, advocate and push water strategy in climate negotiations, she added.

Following the presentations, a high level panel with ministers and heads of organisations further debated mainstreaming water into climate negotiations. One thing most participants agreed upon was the need to strengthen institutional capacity.

Draft Statement to High-Level Plenary on MDGs Available

The draft Stockholm Statement to the High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDG's can be picked up at the SIWI Secretariat. The main message of the first draft is that the crosscutting nature of water must be fully recognised in order to achieve the MGD's. Your comments are most welcome. A copy of the draft is available at the secretariate.

Snap Shots

