

Negotiated Approaches to Integrated River Basin Management
Conference Report
10th and 11th of April 2007.



Conclusions:

There can be no River Basin Management without including this rural stakeholder.

Conclusions and the way forward;

- ❖ *River Basin Management must be participatory.*
- ❖ *Urban Areas must have specific clear plans of development in advance.*
- ❖ *These should sharply anticipate the future and cater to it in advance*
- ❖ *Winning the required participation from all those stakeholders who will benefit from the success of that plan is absolutely a must.*
- ❖ *Urban pollution spoils the entire downstream, usually for small towns and villages.*
- ❖ *Urban areas must realize that they are a part of an organic whole called the River Basin and that it is their responsibility to take care of the quality of the water released after use.*
- ❖ *While this care may be taken as part of routine operations and city management the effective application of existing laws that make polluting the river a criminal offence must be more seriously undertaken.*
- ❖ *Eventually the Community we belong to, must become, emotionally, the River Basin System.*
- ❖ *And we must develop a personal and institutional sensitivity to the entire river basin and the well being of all its stakeholders.*
- ❖ *Weaker stakeholders are to be empowered and represented.*
- ❖ *All sections of the River Basin System population must be guided into adopting a 'negotiated' approach, especially; rural groups must be guided to be vocal stakeholders via representatives or through pressure groups*

Question and answer sessions on the first day 10th April.



Session: Chaired by Kalpanatai Salunkhe and Dr. Mukundrao Ghare:

Q B.S. Bhavanishanker, Karnataka:

Why Authority? Why not service?

Will increasing organization in water sector help? Or are we going towards a top-heavy structure, which is not understood by the stakeholders?

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A Once the main function is regulation and MWRRA has powers of punishments, you cannot have name like council, hence Authority.

With the current superstructure, integration was not possible; hence there was a need for a democratic, unbiased legal entity like MWRRA State water council, State water board, etc.

J.T. Jangale, Maharashtra Pani Parishad

What is the position of the rules and regulations of the Act?

The government frames rules, we have given our suggestions and it is right now at the state government level. Draft rules have been sent

Dr. Limaye: How will projects like Our Village, Our Plan (which deals with ownership of water by the village) stand vis a vis MWRRA?

This will be taken care of at the level of basin plans. MWRRA does not have powers to draw plans, they lie either with RBAs or the government.

Dr. Lele: We are reaching precision system in water management. Measurement of water flows and accounting for water is crucial. But we do not have any provisions for these in irrigation sector or municipal water supply. How are we going about this? Can we have manual for measuring water?

Technical manuals in entitlements deals with these. Cut throat plumes are set at the canals where the WUAs take water. Depending on the quantum of water, measuring device will be selected.

Dr. Jasween Jairath:

Cost recovery as a principle. Who will decide and on what basis will we decide what will be included in the area where of the bureaucratic inefficiencies and corruption. This leads to inflated prices. So are we expecting the citizens to pay for the corruption and inefficiency also?

Operation maintenance has to be covered through water charges. This includes salaries and maintenance. Asset maintenance is also an important aspect of cost recovery. This is the basic minimum maintenance cost

What is the need for transferability of water rights? If some one does not want to use it, this can go in the common kitty. Are we not deliberately making ploy for water trade? Why was the need felt? It will be welcome of we delete this.

There have been controversies, even in the authority itself. This was linked with the World Bank project. Purpose was to increase water use efficiency. Even today, private wells do sell water to neighbors. But should we provide statutory standing to it? It must be discussed.

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In this era, every sector wants water. If there are new stakeholders arising in 5 years, RBA cannot provide water, but if some one is saving water, they are free to trade that water. This will provide incentive for water saving.

Accountability of bureaucratic constituency. Systemic political pressures. What will change with this authority? The authority if totally dominated by senior bureaucrats. Are we not consolidating bureaucratic pressures on water?

Bureaucrats dominate it, but there are five special invitees from each basin. Government will be appointing these. Individual or a group can approach to the authority and MWRRA will have to give equal weightage to these opinions.

Who is the authority handling groundwater management as groundwater is a private property?

A draft bill is under consideration as *groundwater* is a community property is a radical concept and will take some time to be implemented. GSDA participants can clarify this point further. In the new act, watershed committees will be formed who will manage these

Shripad Dharmadhikary:

There is the state plan and then there are tradable entitlements. Is this not contradictory, destroying the basis for planning?

Only the water that is saved can be traded and transferred

What is the role World Bank has played in the tradable water entitlements?

Came in place prior to World Bank involvement. This is in place in Australia and this has led to increase in efficiency.

Jankarajan: We have talking about user participation and decentralization, but this act subsumes, under one umbrella, several agencies. Is this assuming more powers good for the country?

T.N. Prakash: It is not the outcome but the process adopted that is important. Failure or success depends on participation of the people as well as the policy makers. If they are not involved in implementation, no good program can be successful. So did we make these policies?

WRD held several seminars before finalizing the Act. This went on for a considerable time, nearly one year. The authority doesn't see itself as a super authority at all. This is to bring stakeholders in the process. Authorities role is merely coordinating between departments and stakeholders.

Mr. Bhingare: What we need is a flood management systems based on IT systems and a public friendly warning system. How is the act incorporating this?

Flood management is an integral part of the RBP.

K.J. Joy: When we talk about an approach to IRBM, we should talk about normative instruments in water management. If we look at Water policy, MMIFS, and MWRRA the common feature is

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privatization and tradable water rights. These are the basic issues. There was very little discussion on these issues.

We have also included things like family planning. Water Authority should not deal with these issues.

Himanshu Kulkarni: What do you mean by water conservation with regards to ground water management?

Will regulation and enforcement lead to encouraging good practices?

Entitlement register will be kept with water user association. Thus this is not strong enforcement, but a participatory process.

If one system is not working, we are putting a new system in place. Can we not look at the reasons for non-performance? How will this be different than any other committees?

Sachin Warghade: For a common person, equity will mean that water will be distributed irrespective of whether the farmer is poor or rich.

This was followed by felicitation ceremony of Shri. R.K. Patil for his involvement and critical contributions to water management and especially, his pioneering work in the field of participatory irrigation management. This was on behalf of 'Sinchan Sahayoga'. A memento and a cash award were given at the hands of Shri. Nimbalkar.

Prof. Paranjpye invited Smt. Kalpanatai Salunkhe, Chairperson of the session, to say a few words.

Smt. Kalpanatai Salunkhe: 'I am here as a grass root worker and representative of farmers. I believe that the authority is a step in a right direction. But, I hope this is a dynamic process and not a fixed, unchanging system Water management and energy management is integrated and has to be treated as such. Is the authority studying the carrying capacity of the basin? Carrying capacity of each basin changes and this has to be taken into consideration. In a small watershed too, carrying capacity and characteristics change, so can we work with a centralized basin planning process? 70% of farmers have land below 1 hectare. Only 20% farmers are in the command area, whereas 80% of the farmers are not in the command area. This is the weakest class and not represented in the power structure, in the political structure, etc. So how is the authority planning to address the more basic problems of this class? The authority will go a long way if it reinforces the dialogue between authorities and local population.

Prof. Paranjpye thanked Ms. Salunkhe and Shri Nimbalkar and Shri. Sodal. He said that despite the fact that this was a civil society process, coinciding with sessions, they made it a point to attend the conference at a short notice, and contributed meaningfully.

Inaugural session was followed by three parallel thematic sessions:

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Gomukh Trust: Conference on Negotiated Approaches to River Basin Management

10th and 11th April 2007- Programme

Day I: 10th April 2007

Time	Subject	Speaker
9.00 am -9.30 am	Registration and tea	
9.30 am– 9.50 am	Inauguration of the Conference	
9.50 am-10.00am	Introduction to the conference	Gomukh representative
Inaugural Session: Chairperson: Shri. Ajit Nimbalkar		
10.00 am- 10.20 am	Inaugural Address	Shri. Ajit Nimbalkar Chairperson, MWRRA
10.20 am- 10.40 am	MWRRA and its significance in River Basin Planning and Management	Shri. Suresh Sodal Secretary, Maharashtra Water Resources Regulatory Authority
10.40 am- 11.00 am	Keynote Address	Dr. Madhavrao Chitale Stockholm Water Prize Laureate, Noted water resources expert
11.00 am- 11.30 am	Question and Answers	
11.30 am- 12.00 pm	Tea break	
12.00 pm- 12.15 pm	Felicitation: Shri. R.K. Patil at the hands of Shri. D.M. More	
Panel Discussion: Community Participation in River Basin Planning Chairperson: Dr. Mukundrao Ghare		
12.15 pm- 12.45 pm	Need for community participation in RB Planning	Smt. Kalpanatai Salunkhe, Pani Panchayat Prof. Vijay Paranjpye, Gomukh
12.45 pm- 1.00 pm	Summing up and conclusions	Dr. Mukundrao Ghare
1.00 pm- 1.30 pm	Question and Answers and Discussions	
1.30 pm- 2.30 pm	Lunch	
Parallel Subgroup Discussions (2.30 pm-5.00 pm)		
Subgroup A	Water Laws in India: Implications for	Chair: Dr. Madhavrao Chitale

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	Statutory and community-based river basin management initiatives	Co Chair: Shri. Ajit Nimbalkar Initiator: Bhavanishanker Benkipur, Sahayoga
Subgroup B	Resolving water conflicts in river basin management	Chair: Dr. Janakrajan Madras Institute for Development Studies, Chennai Initiator: K.J. Joy, Soppecom
Subgroup C	Flood Management in river basin planning	Chair: Mr. Bhingare, Ex Director, Walmi Co Chair: Mr. Ghogare, Irrigation Department Initiator: Mr. R. S. Gaiikwad
<i>5.00 pm- 6.00 pm</i>	Jal Sadhan Mela	
<i>6.00 pm-7.00 pm</i>	Cultural Show	
<i>7.30 pm- 9.00 pm</i>	Dinner	

Day II: 11th April 2007

Time	Subject	Speaker
9 am – 9.45 am	Plenary: Presenting previous day's subgroup conclusions	Rapporteurs of Subgroups A, B and C
9.45 am- 10.30 am	Up scaling Kolwan valley experience	Shri. Suneel Waman, Gomukh Trust
10.30am-10.45 am	Presenting Bhima Basin Management Plan	Prof. Vijay Paranjpye, Gomukh Trust
10.45- 11.15 am	Tea Break	
Parallel Thematic Sessions		
11.15 a.m.- 1.15 p.m.	Groundwater management in IRBM	Chair: Dr. Mukundrao Ghare, AFARM Initiator: Dr. Himanshu Kulkarni, AQWADAM
11.15 am- 1 .15 pm	Allocating water for Nature through IRBM	Chair: Dr. Prakash Gole, Ecological Society Initiator: Ms. Parineeta Dandekar, Gomukh

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		Trust
11.15 am- 1.15 pm	Urban Issues in River Basin Management: Industrial water use, pollution, urban water management, conjunctive water use	Chair: Mr. Vivek Kharwadkar, Nodal Office, Water Supply and Sanitation, PMC Co Chair: D.V. Anand, BILTS Initiator: Mr. Vishwanath, Arghyam
1.30 pm- 2.30 pm	Lunch	
2.30 pm – 3. 15 pm	Presenting subgroup conclusions	Rapporteurs of Subgroups A, B and C: Day II
3.15 pm- 4.30 pm	Plenary session: Conclusions and Action Prof. Vijay Paranjpye, Mr. Suneel Waman, Dr. Himanshu Thakkar, Mr. Vishwanath	Plan for way ahead Dr. Prakash Gole, Dr. Madhavrao Chitale,
4.30 pm – 5.30 pm	Press Conference	

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