

International film festival on water, Bangalore: 26th-29th August, 2011

Monday 29th August

Conference on: “Alarming state of ground water-Need for concerted action”

Water availability and access has influenced civilization and growth and development of societies. India's growing population and rapid economic growth has placed an enormous demand on this finite and scarce natural resource. Government have formulated a water policy that enunciates amongst others per capita need/demand, availability, and obligation for public service providers. In the absence of a integrated approach to the water –availability, distribution, access, conservation & catchment protection, communities have at best access to only 30% - 50% of the prescribed per capita water availability whose quality is often suspect. On the other end of the spectrum the rich and mighty can purchase water with no prescribed limit.

With water availability from rivers and tanks decreasing due to a combination of abuse, misuse, overuse and neglect, people have increased reliance on ground water for both drinking and farming purposes. The result has been rapid fall in ground water, chemical contamination of drinking water from salts/minerals in aquifers and from surface. Society and government has woken up belatedly by taking up rooftop rainwater harvesting, groundwater regulation legislation. Although important, by itself they are not enough, what is needed is a totally new water culture and ethos that governs the usage, exploration, protection and conservation of water. Only then can the future generation will have water left to drink and grow crops.

Svaraj, Bangalore Film Society and a consortium of organizations has organized a conference on the last day of the film festival on water, to discuss and deliberate on the ground water challenges and frame specific action points to be followed by all concerned.

Practitioners/Experts from Academic & Scientific Institutions, Govt and Civil Society will share their experiences and ideas, answer queries and frame recommendations.

Participants: CBOs/People groups, farmers, concerned citizens, representatives from VOs/NGOs, GW experts from Academic/scientific institutions, GOs and CSOs, Development professionals

Timings: 9.30 am – 3.45 pm

Venue: Alliance Francoise

Dialogue Process: To understand the critical ground water situation and act on conservation, protection and development

The conference will begin with a lead presentation on the challenges (policy & implementation) to balancing the increasing demands on ground water with an Overview of macro/micro measures planned and required. The three presentations to follow will:

- Bring practical perspectives on gaps in policies and ground realities, from the water challenges of Doddaballpura town
- Share critical perspectives on the challenges in prevention & management of ground water pollution especially drinking water
- Provide a overview of the Karnataka's proposed Ground water regulation/management bill the ensuing challenges and way forward

Each presentation will be followed by an interaction session that facilitates clarifications, comments and suggestions from participants, and a short focussed discussion to formulate key recommendations on the topic. These recommendation/action points for all stakeholders -community, service providers –ULBs/GPs, policy making institutions and VOs/NGOs will be adopted and released for action by all concerned.

Post lunch, we will get to hear community voices – where families/individuals from the rural, peri urban & urban context share their perceptions on the daily challenges to addressing their drinking water needs and the results of their own proactive actions, that should challenge us for action.

Schedule (draft)

Timings	Topic		
9.30 – 9.45	Water Songs - ‘Boomithayi Baliga/ Nemmadi’ Inauguration –		
9.45 -10.00	Welcome	Mohan Paul Prabhu, Executive Director, SVARAJ	
10.00 – 1.30	Presentations, Discussion & Recommendations	Chaired by: Dr. V.S. Prakash, Director, KSNDMC	
10.15 – 10.30	Lead Presentation: Balancing increasing demands on ground water- Policy & Implementation challenges, Overview of macro/micro measures planned/ required	Prof Shekar Muddu Dept of Civil Engg IISc	
11.15 -11.30	Water Policy and ground realities – A case study of Doddaballpura town	Mohan Paul, Svaraj	
	<i>Comments/Discussions Key Recommendations for bridging gaps</i>		
12.00 – 12.15	Ground water pollution - Challenges in prevention and ideas for holistic management	Dr. Daniel, Scientist Australia	
	<i>Comments/Discussions Key Recommendations for management</i>		
12.45 – 1.00	Regulating ground water- Karnataka’s proposed legislation - challenges and recommendations for making it effective	Dr. Venugopal Retd. Additional Director (GW), Dept of Mines & Geology, GOK	
	<i>Comments/Discussions Key Recommendations for making legislation effective</i>		

	<i>Adopting/Releasing recommendations</i>		
1.30 – 2.30	Lunch Break		
2.30 – 3.30	Self initiatives/Action on conservation, protection and pollution prevention of ground water	Community Voices	
3.30 - 3.45	Vote of thanks	, Svaraj