

6th World Water Forum

Synthesis Report of the Asia-Pacific Regional Process



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1. Introduction

In the face of the region's pressing water problems, the Asia-Pacific Water Forum (APWF) was created in 2006 at the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico. The APWF's overriding mandate has been to ensure that water policy, reform, investment and performance are high on the minds of our region's leaders. This mission compelled the APWF to host the 1st Asia-Pacific Water Summit (1st APWS), held in Beppu, Japan in December 2007, which broke the way for highlighting the region's water security needs and challenges and served as a high level rallying point to focus political attention and actions on water issues.

The Policy Brief 2007, issued at the 1st APWS, outlined a series of recommendations that set forth a clear path on how to meet the combined and complementary objectives of development and poverty reduction, economic growth and environmental sustainability. These recommendations generated momentum in addressing the region's critical water challenges and provided the basis for the adoption of a set of concrete initiatives that have made a meaningful difference in solving our region's most urgent water problems.

The 5th World Water Forum provided the opportunity for the APWF, the Forum's regional coordinating organization for the Asia-Pacific, to monitor and follow up on the initiatives and commitments made at the 1st APWS. One of APWF's major initiatives is the Ministers for Water Security Initiative, which consists of a ministerial network that involves a variety of sectors including finance, planning, public health, disaster prevention, infrastructure, agriculture, energy, water, and others, and is used as a platform for dialogue with social leaders in various sectors.

The APWF, the regional organization for the Asia-Pacific for the 6th World Water Forum, regards the Forum as an unparalleled opportunity to synthesize the regional efforts and outcomes and discuss recommendations for head of governments and leaders to be assembled at the 2nd Asia-Pacific Water Summit (2APWS) to be held in 2012 in Bangkok, Thailand. The preparatory process in the Asia-Pacific was initiated by the APWF Secretariat in January 2011 after the 1st Regional Commission meeting and the 2nd Stakeholder meeting of the 6th World Water Forum in Paris.

2. Background of the Region and Rationale of Target

Background

The number of the target countries and regions of the Asia-Pacific region for the 6th World Water Forum is 50 according to the criteria defined in the preparatory process of the 4th World Water Forum, which include the following: Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Island, Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Niue, Nepal, New Zealand, North Korea, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, East Timor, Tonga, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, and Vietnam.

The governance structure for the APWF is based on a highly participatory bottom up approach, supported by a light managerial and administrative structure responsible for coordinating the APWF activities. All decisions of the APWF and the Governing Council shall be made by consensus. To the extent possible, all groups or committees established by the APWF shall be inclusive and open to any interested members who may wish to participate.

The APWF membership will be open to various groups in order to cover a broad and diverse constituency willing to work together to achieve water for all. There are five categories in the APWF membership: 1) national, regional, and provincial agencies which are in charge of water provision/policy development/management, 2) institutions and universities which contribute knowledge to address water issues, 3) CSOs and communities which are responsible for water provision/advocacy, 4) private companies/corporations which contribute to water, including corporate social responsibility activities, and 5) media institutions which support the objectives of the APWF. The members include 54 organizations as of December 2011.

The 2nd Asia-Pacific Water Summit (2nd APWS), under the theme of *Water Security: Leadership and Commitment*, will be held in 2012 in Bangkok, Thailand. In its preparation, a second version of the Asian Water Development Outlook will be published by the ADB and APWF. Its guiding vision for water security states that, "societies can enjoy water security when they successfully manage their water

resources and services to 1) satisfy household water and sanitation needs in all communities; 2) support productive economies in agriculture and industry; 3) develop vibrant, livable cities and towns; 4) restore healthy rivers and ecosystems; and, 5) build resilient communities that can adapt to change."

Preparatory Meeting

In addition to many informal consultation meetings between the regional coordinator and the target coordinators, five preparatory meeting were organized in cooperation with the host organizations, namely the Ministry of Natural Resources of Thailand, Singapore PUB, and Korea Water Forum, from January to December 2011. The list of the preparatory meetings is as follows:

- March 15, 2011
Brainstorming Session for the 2nd Asia-Pacific Water Summit and 6th World Water Forum, Tokyo, Japan
- April 21-22, 2011
1st Asia-Pacific Synthesis Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand
- July 8-9, 2011
9th APWF GC Meeting & 2nd Asia-Pacific Synthesis Meeting, Singapore
- September 20, 2011
Asia-Pacific Regional Target Coordinator' s Meeting for the 6th World Water Forum, Seoul, Korea
- November 29, 2011
10th APWF GC Meeting, Singapore

Highlights of each preparatory meeting are attached separately.

Targets from the Asia-Pacific region

In commitment to water security in the Asia-Pacific region, several organizations of the APWF propose 7 targets to this end. These targets have not been selected based on political endorsement throughout the region. Rather, they reflect the understanding and

work of the various organisations on water security challenges, and our commitment to moving forward the vision of a water secure Asia-Pacific region.

The list of the targets from the Asia-Pacific region is as follows:

Household Water Security	Coordinator
<p>1.1 Reduce by half the number of people who do not have access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in the Asia Pacific region by 2015 and to reduce that number to achieve universal and sustainable access by 2025.</p> <p>THEMATIC LINK:</p> <p>1.1 “Guarantee access to water for all and the Right to Water”</p>	<p>ESCAP</p> <p>Ms Ermina Sokou sokou@un.org</p>
Economic, Food and Water Security	
<p>2.1 By 2012, to propose a framework for action on water in green growth in support of economic, food and water security, that addresses local, national and regional action and, by 2014, to initiate the implementation of key support components of the framework for action.</p> <p>THEMATIC LINK:</p> <p>2.4 “Promote Green Growth and value ecosystem services”</p> <p>Target 1 (WWC)</p>	<p>FAO</p> <p>Mr. Thierry Facon Thierry.facon@fao.org</p> <p>ESCAP</p> <p>Ms. Salmah Zakaria, zakaria8@un.org</p>
<p>2.2 Improving financial flows to the local level by reinforcing existing and creating innovative new mechanisms in Asia and the Pacific.</p> <p>THEMATIC LINK:</p> <p>CS2 “Finance water for all”</p> <p>Target 5 (UNDP)</p>	<p>UN Habitat</p> <p>Ms. Taeko Yokota Taeko.Yokota@unhabitat.org</p>

Urban Water Security	Coordinator
<p>3.1 Reduce by half the number of people who do not have access to safe drinking water by 2015 and aim to reach universal and sustainable access to water and sanitation in the Asia-Pacific region by 2025.</p> <p>THEMATIC LINK:</p> <p>1.1 “Guarantee access to water for all and the Right to Water”</p> <p>Target 1 and 2 (World Bank, Rural Water Supply Network)</p>	<p>UN Habitat</p> <p>Mr. Dzikus Andre Andre.Dzikus@unhabitat.org</p> <p>Dr Kulwant Singh Kulwant.singh@unhabitat.org</p>
Water Risks and Resilience	
<p>4.1 To develop, by 2015, a strategic flood risk management framework that engages emerging technologies and strengthens regional information systems for enhanced community resilience through appropriate policies and practices in the Himalayan region.</p> <p>THEMATIC LINK:</p> <p>1.4 “Prevent and respond to water-related risks and crises”</p> <p>Target 1 (UNSDR, NEMA)</p>	<p>ICIMOD</p> <p>Dr. Ramesh Vaidya rvaidya@icimod.org</p> <p>Ms. Krisha Shrestha krshrestha@icimod.org</p>
IWRM Process for a Water Secure World	
<p>5.1 By 2018, Northeast Asia countries will have committed to establish and manage a training centre in North East Asia responsive to water and climate change, which serves the purpose of research, education, and teacher training in North East Asia.</p> <p>THEMATIC LINK:</p> <p>CS3 “Enabling Environment”</p>	<p>KWF (Northeast Asia)</p> <p>Ms. YoonJin Kim, kwyoon@gmail.com</p>
<p>5.2 Enhance capacity of River Basin Organizations to implement IWRM including adaptation to climate change.</p> <p>THEMATIC LINK:</p> <p>CS1 “Good Governance”</p>	<p>UNESCO</p> <p>Mr. Toshihiro Sonoda, t.sonoda@unesco.org</p>



The RTG Report of each target is submitted to the IFC separately.

The Report from the extinguished Central Asia cross-continental process is submitted to the IFC separately.

3. TSG's progresses: Target action plans, solutions and commitments

Key progresses made by ESCAP under the target AP 1.1.

ESCAP plans to implement specific, manageable, attainable, resource-constraint, and time-bound strategies. These strategic actions are a combination of scientific research, capacity building activities, and creation of enabling environment to implement the most suited and politically acceptable policies in support of the target set by ESCAP for the household water security thematic focus.

ESCAP collected 18 case studies featuring solutions from the Pacific, North-East Asia, Central Asia, South-East Asia, South and South-West Asia. Of these case studies, five are considered as innovative solutions and 13 are solutions currently being implemented at various scales. These solutions exhibit feasibility, cost-effectiveness, demonstrated impact, replicability, existing commitment, and sustainability. Another 16 case studies have been contributed by other parties and partners. The total number of solutions available on the platform of solutions is 34.

In recognition of the pivotal roles that households play in ensuring that Asia Pacific is a water-secured region, ESCAP plans to continue to provide technical support to the existing and innovative solutions being implemented and developed throughout the region for wider implementation or upscaling. Where appropriate, ESCAP will provide additional capacity building support to maintain the progress being made towards the MDG-7 target. Further ESCAP will implement specific, manageable, attainable, resource-constraint, and time-bound IWRM strategies. These strategic actions are a combination of scientific research, capacity building activities, and creation of enabling environment to implement the most suited and politically acceptable policies in support of the target set by ESCAP for the household water security thematic focus.

Key progresses made by FAO-ESCAP under the target AP 2.1.

The Target Action Plan supports a renewed agenda for decisive action developed by FAO, ESCAP and partners. The framework for action on water in green growth for economic, food and water security aims at developing a coherent set of feasible and effective economic, social and environmental policy goals, water resources management and sectoral strategies, policy instruments and investment programmes within a green growth strategy for sustained prosperity with equity. A solid water accounting foundation, managing dynamic socio-economic transitions, adapting responses to the

nature of the countries' water economies and monitoring of investments and results will be critical.

A total of 54 existing and innovative solutions have been submitted at the time of the deadline for submission of this RTG. They are presented according to the main components of the framework for action promoted under this regional target.

While the solutions illustrate the region's capacity to confront the multiple challenges of economic, food and water security, the task calls for substantial efforts in sharing of knowledge, capacity building, leadership and action at all levels. A number of initiatives under preparation by FAO, ESCAP and partner organizations, which have been included in the target's plan of action, aim at providing impetus and supporting regional efforts at all levels.

Key progresses made by GWOPA/UN-HABITAT under the target AP 2.2.

The platform "Global Water Solidarity" Steering Committee and its members are committed to promoting political, operational and communication measures that support the development and expansion of innovative cooperation mechanisms in the water and sanitation sector at local, national and international level based on the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity and sustainability and the respect, protection and fulfillment of the basic human right to water and sanitation. GWOPA/UN-HABITAT is expected to play various roles in the achievement of the common target of "improv[ing] the flows of financing to the local stakeholders".

The existing solutions for this target can be the concrete cases of applications of this decentralized mechanism in some European countries, such as French law "Oudin-Santini," The Netherlands law "Motie Koppejan," Switzerland's "Plateforme Solidarit'eau," and Spain's "canon del agua." Another important existing solution for this target is Water Operators' Partnerships (WOPs) which are peer-support arrangements between two or more water or sanitation operators in the objective of strengthening their capacity.

The innovative solutions will include mechanisms to be established in Asia-Pacific region through this process. GWOPA/UN-HABITAT identified some countries in the region, namely, Korea, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore, as the initial targets for this purpose.

Key progresses made by UN-HABITAT under the target AP 3.1.

The Target Action Plan to be led by UN-HABITAT and its partner cities and organizations includes establishing coalition of partner cities in the region; adopting the detailed action

plan; establishing participatory monitoring frameworks / citizen observatories; establishing knowledge sharing platform; and conducting regular annual monitoring.

In order to achieve urban water security, the key activities will be undertaken by cities in Asia and the Pacific: (i) Quality assessments; (ii) NRW assessments; (iii) Assessment of Equipment efficiency; and (iv) Vulnerability assessment studies including collection of relevant data, surveys seminars, pilot project cases, trainings, and forums for sharing best practices, good pilot schemes, and knowledge.

UN-Habitat collected several existing and innovative case studies featuring solutions that can help achieving the given target urban water security and identifying key success factors, costs, sustainability and replication potential. Produce and collect case studies of existing and innovative successful solutions that can help achieving the given target urban water security, identifying key success factors, costs, sustainability and replication potential and upload them regularly on the online Platform of Solutions.

Key progresses made by ICIMOD under the target AP 4.1.

The objective of the proposal from ICIMOD is to develop, by 2015, a strategic flood risk management framework that engages emerging technologies and strengthens regional information systems for enhanced community resilience through appropriate policies and practices in the Himalayan region. Five milestones have been identified towards reaching the objective, and a timeline for implementation developed for each.

ICIMOD target proposal milestones include flood hazard mapping for selected zones in the HKH region; establishing a real-time regional information system in the region; developing a vulnerability and adaptive capacity assessment (VACA) framework; promoting regional cooperation; and developing a strategic flood risk management regional framework. As for technology and early warning systems, a number of soft and hard technologies are planned to be developed at various milestones in the ICIMOD target proposal. A number of case studies are uploaded in the on-line Platform of Solutions of the 6th World Water Forum, in which examples of efforts to adopt these technologies are discussed.

In order to strengthen adaptation, ICIMOD will focus on facilitating regional knowledge sharing to increase the capacity of communities to adapt; will develop regional platforms and mechanisms in partnerships to provide the regional countries and partners with important climate related data sets; will facilitate policy dialogue; and will promote sustainable adaptation practices.

Key progresses made by KWF under the target AP 5.1.

The Target Action Plan to be led by KWF and its partner organizations includes establishing water education research and training center for North East Asia's sustainable development (by 2012); reinforcing international cooperation (by 2015); raising public awareness of water education (by 2015); and expanding sectoral education programs (by 2015).

To successfully establish the Water Education Centre Responsive to Climate Change for North East Asia, following tasks should be implemented in two steps: 1) Preparation for the establishment of the Water Education Center Responsive to Climate Change for North East Asia (by 2015); and 2) Operation and management of the Water Education Centre Responsive to Climate Change for North East Asia (Post 2015).

Water Education Center Responsive to Climate Change in North East Asia is a tool to contribute to the empowerment of major agendas in the international society. The education program is based on certain key principles of the following elements and the center will implement the following agendas: (i) Water education in Sustainable Development and MDGs; (ii) Water education for all; (iii) All about water (security, conflict, gender, disaster, sanitation, etc); and (iv) Education (knowledge) Hub.

Key progresses made by UNESCO under the target AP 5.2.

The Target Action Plan to be led by UNESCO and its partner organizations includes facilitating establishment of River Basin Organizations (RBO); promoting capacity development of RBO on IWRM implementation and adaptation to climate change; and inter-regional cooperation e.g. IWRM workshop between Asia and Africa.

The 'IWRM spiral' demonstrates how the dynamic and evolving process of IWRM in a river basin progressively achieves better and more sustainable water resources management. One turn of the spiral includes such phases as: (1) recognizing/identifying pressing issues/needs, (2) conceptualizing the problem itself and locating possible solutions, (3) coordinating and planning among stakeholders to reach an agreement, and (4) implementing/monitoring/evaluating the plan and its outcome.

A 'Key for Success' is a key that can be used in practice to help make IWRM succeed. It is a key to enable breakthroughs in challenging situations, opening the door to better IWRM. Many of them have already demonstrated their worth in practice. Some are generic, i.e.

apply to every successful example of IWRM, others may apply to specific situations. It helps to find the key appropriate for the given circumstances of each basin IWRM process. Active dialogue between scientists and water managers is also encouraged to utilize achievement of advanced science and technology e.g. earth observation for IWRM.

Key progresses made by Central Asia

The work done by the Central Asia cross-continental coordinator has been incorporated in the Asia-Pacific regional process as of 2 December 2011.

The Report from the extinguished Central Asia cross-continental process is submitted to the IFC separately.

4. Outline the challenges in the Asia-Pacific region

Based on a series of discussions during the preparatory process, water issues in the Asia-Pacific region can be summarized as follows:

- Asia and the Pacific is on track to achieve the MDG's target of halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water, but not the MDG's target for improved sanitation. While governments are stepping up investments, greater attention is needed in addressing risks in the system, i.e. sustainability of systems, impact of climate change and inequalities.
- The achievement of the MDG's target of universal access to drinking water and sanitation, will require an approach consisting of: (a) Implementing Integrated Water Resource Management; (b) Managing Water Demand Management; (c) Improving focus on serving the poor; and (d) Strengthening the role of local authorities. The principal challenge of achieving urban water security is not so much technological but related to governance issues.
- It is necessary to develop a regional framework for action on water in green growth that supports economic, food and water security and local, national and regional actions, including intensification of risk management strategies. Such a framework will need to be based on national food security policies and will require a regional system for monitoring investment and outcomes.
- There is a need to accelerate the wide exchange of experiences and lessons learnt on environmental flows knowledge within the Asia-Pacific region in order to support biodiversity, agriculture, energy, industry, and human development.
- Various water-related events such as floods, droughts and water contamination pose serious risks for people and society. Containing such risks, while at the same time ensuring sustainable growth under financial, political, societal constraints, is no easy task and will require strong leadership, commitment and cooperation.
- Impacts of climate change often appear and are felt through water: floods, droughts, and change of water flow trends. Combating these risks requires holistic water governance and is a key requirement for adaptation to climate change.

5. Recommendations for follow-up for the Forum

Water is a fundamental resource and as such its sustainable management is at the heart of human security and the social and economic development of nations. To this end, strong leadership and commitment from national leaders is essential. The Asia-Pacific Synthesis and Commitment Session will synthesize regional outcomes from the 6th World Water Forum, and discuss recommendations for head of governments and leaders to be assembled at the 2nd Asia-Pacific Water Summit (2nd APWS), which will be held in Bangkok, Thailand in 2012.

The 2nd APWS will showcase leadership in decision-making, excellence in practice and innovation, and concrete results that have had substantial impacts, spanning from policy to the grassroots. At the end of the Summit, a synthesis of key messages will be presented and commitment to change sought from Heads of Government from nations throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Recommendations from the 6th World Water Forum to the 2nd APWS may include:

- Work together to develop leadership, build commitment, and encourage behavioral change among all stakeholders in order to achieve effective solutions to the region's current and future water challenges.
- Commit to increasing Government investment alongside developing and implementing strategies to address risks associated with sustainability, financing, and climate change.
- Pay careful attention to the role of water governance, including leadership and commitment, the policy environment, legal and regulatory frameworks, based on the principles of accountability, participation, equity and transparency of financial information.
- Adopt innovative financial mechanisms in order to attract and retain potential investors in key water-related sectors.

- Sustain our efforts in achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving the number of people who do not have access to safe drinking water and to couple this with a greater focus on for the poorest quintile of households.
- Hasten our progress in reducing by half the number of people who do not have access to basic sanitation by recognizing the importance of governance and adopting differential and locally appropriate solutions within an integrated water resource management framework.
- Accord the highest priority to achieving the target of Universal and Sustainable Access to Water and Sanitation in the Asia-Pacific Region by 2025.
- Take the necessary steps to improve economic, food and water security through water-based perspective review of broad social, economic, and environment objectives, intensifying appropriate risk management strategies based on national food security policies, and supporting the implementation of a regional system for monitoring investment and outcomes.
- Support green growth strategies while ensuring economic growth to alleviate poverty and achieve food and nutrition security. This requires improving our understanding on the water, energy, and food nexus.
- Take measures to maintain the health of mountain areas which are the Earth's natural freshwater reservoirs, since more than half of humanity relies on freshwater from mountains to grow food, provide drinking water for domestic uses, produce electricity, and sustain biological diversity. Ensure mountain areas receive special attention in the water-food-energy nexus discussions.
- Share experiences and lessons learnt regarding environmental flows and environmental water security among Asia-Pacific member countries in order to improve the health of ecosystems and support biodiversity, agriculture, energy, industry, and human development.
- Recognize the need, and the ability of the region, to support the development of communities and societies which are risk-resilient and adaptive to global changes and future water-related shocks such as floods, droughts, and water contamination.

- Improve holistic water governance for adaptation and mitigation of climate change related water hazards by supporting the development of regional guidelines, capacity building, institutional frameworks, and adoption and application of scientific and technological achievements necessary for implementing an IWRM process with effective coordination at regional, national, and river basin levels.

6. Conclusion

In March 2006 at the 4th WWF in Mexico, the Asia-Pacific Water Form (APWF) was created to help address the water challenges of the Asia-Pacific region. The APWF organized the 1st Asia-Pacific Water Summit which was held in Beppu, Japan, in December 2007 and focused on the theme “Water Security: Leadership and Commitment”. The Summit endorsed the Message from Beppu and launched a series of concrete initiatives for regional water solutions, and good progress has been made since then. However, the region continues to face serious water challenges related to development, vulnerability and sustainability. Asia-Pacific member countries recognize the need for continued leadership and commitment in order to achieve effective solutions. In furtherance to this, the APWF is expected to continue to move forward the vision of a water secure Asia-Pacific region with its member countries.

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