

Brief Report on the two sessions coordinated by India Water Partnership during 8th India Water Week on 19th September, 2024 in New Delhi

Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India organized 8th India Water Week- 2024 (IWW-2024) during 17-21 September 2024 at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi on the theme “**Partnerships and Cooperation for Inclusive Water Development and Management**” and invited IWP to facilitate and coordinate following two sessions on 19th September, 2024 (i) Water Governance and Financing” and, (ii) Partnership and Co-operation for Integrated Water Resources Management. On completion, India Water Partnership sent the highlights/recommendations to the India Water Week Secretariat for further necessary action.

Main objective of IWW-2024 was to provide a forum for various stakeholders working in water sector including policy makers, water managers, professionals, academia and the user of groups from different section of the society, wherein all water related issues are discussed and measures identified.

IWW-2024 organized various events in the form of Seminar, Panel Discussion, Side Events etc. organized in cooperation with stakeholders particularly the State Governments, Ministries of the Union Government, International Organizations, partner countries and related institutions, NGOs from within the country. An exhibition supporting the theme and showcasing the technologies, latest developments and solution available in various fields would also be part of IWW-2024.

Session-wise details coordinated and facilitated by IWP are given below:

(i) Session on “Water Governance and Financing”

This session was facilitated and coordinated by India Water Partnership on September 19, 2024, from 11:15 AM to 12:45 PM. It focused on three key topics (i) Beneficiaries’ Participation in Water Planning and Management; (ii) Role of Women in Water Resource Management; and (iii) Social Equity and Inclusion in the Water Sector.



**Welcome Address and Opening Remarks by
Dr. Veena Khanduri, Executive Secretary-cum-Country Coordinator, IWP**

The session was chaired by Dr. Veena Khanduri, Executive Secretary-cum-Country Coordinator, IWP and co-chaired by Ms. Anupama Madhok Sud, Director & Editor, Advance Water Digest. The Keynote Speech was delivered by Ms. Laura Sustersic, Programme Director, SGR, GIZ.

Four insightful presentations were made by the representatives of Vyakti Vikas Kendra, Art of Living; Implementation Support Agency for Jal Jeevan Mission, Assam; Indian Institute of Human Settlement; and NERIWALM. The presentations highlighted importance of decentralized decision-making, fostering partnerships across various levels, and integrating

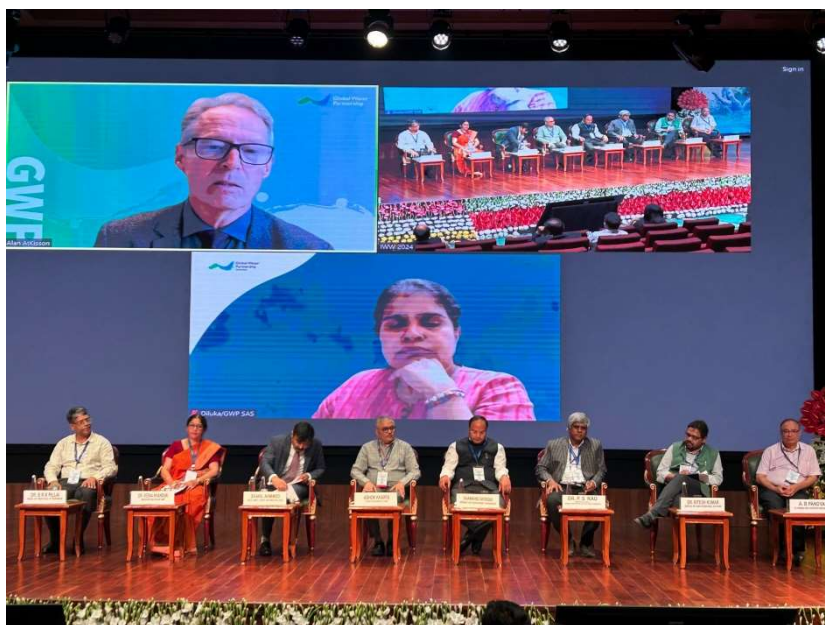
traditional knowledge to enhance the efficiency of modern water governance structures with focus on empowering women and the marginalized communities to lead water management initiatives, thereby ensuring equitable access to resources, strengthening disaster resilience, and promoting long-term sustainability.

Shri Milind Panpatil, Director, National Water Academy was the Nodal Officer nominated by 8th India Water Week for this session.

(i) Session on “Partnership and Co-operation for Integrated Water Resources Management” under World Water Leaders Forum (WLF-7)

India Water Partnership facilitated and coordinated this session on 19th September, 2024 from 13.30 pm to 15.00 pm. Objectives of the session were to discuss opportunities for accelerating adoption of IWRM in the country at all levels towards transforming water sector and achieving SDGs.

The Keynote speech was delivered by Mr. Alan AtKisson, GWP Executive Secretary and CEO. The Panellists were; (i) Shri A.B. Pandya, Secretary General, ICID, Regional Council Member, GWP-South Asia & Former Chairman, Central Water Commission; (ii) Dr. P. Shakil Ahammed, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Meghalaya; (iii) Dr. Veena Khanduri, Executive Secretary-cum-Country Coordinator, IWP; (iv) Dr. B R K Pillai, Prof. of Practice, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee; (v) Dr. P S Rao, Director (Technical), Advanced Centre for Integrated Water Resources Management (ACIWRM); and (vi) Dr. Ritesh Kumar, Director, Wetlands International South Asia.



Keynote Speech by Mr. Alan AtKisson, GWP Executive Secretary and CEO (on Top left) and Panellists on the chair (in bottom)

The session was moderated by Shri A K Kharya, Chief Engineer, BPMO, Central Water Commission, Government of India & Country Focal Point SDG 6.5.1 IWRM and co-moderated by Shri Shawahiq Siddiqui, Governance Expert, Indian Environment Law Organization (IELO), a network partner of IWP.

The Panellists shared their insights on forging partnerships and cooperation at various levels of policy-making, planning and IWRM implementation in an integrated manner across sectoral, geographical and institutional boundaries and associated challenges.

Dr. Kapil Kesharwani, Scientist D, National Institute of Hydrology, Roorkee was the Nodal Officer nominated by 8th India Water Week Secretariat for this session.

Recommendations:

1. Addressing global water challenges requires a coordinated and adaptive strategy within an international framework to ensure the long-term sustainability of water resources, in line with Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).
2. Initiatives such as community-driven interventions, carbon offset mechanisms, ecosystem service compensation, and capacity-building programs should be promoted from local to regional levels to strengthen Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).
3. Priority should be given to research on wetland structures and their influence on local hydrological regimes, with a focus on enhancing biodiversity, maintaining ecological balance, and promoting environmental sustainability.
4. Water planning should be done considering the women at the centre so that policies can address the practical challenges they face in accessing clean and reliable water, which reduces their burden and improves the overall efficiency of water use. Furthermore, Women's involvement in decision-making about water governance can also lead to more sustainable and effective outcomes, as they bring different perspectives and solutions based on their experiences.
5. The government should consider implementing a "Blue Credit" system, similar to the carbon credit model, to incentivize the conservation and sustainable management of the nation's water resources.
6. By establishing a market-driven framework, such an initiative could promote responsible water usage, reward stakeholders who invest in water-saving technologies, and enhance efforts to preserve this critical natural resource. A Blue Credit system would not only address water scarcity but also align with long-term environmental sustainability goals, supporting equitable access to clean water for future generations.

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