

Multi Stakeholder Consultation on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)

Organised by

Eastern Zonal Water Partnership (EZWP) and Odisha Water Forum (OWF)

Supported by

India Water Partnership

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Hotel Bari International, IRC Village, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar

A one day Multi-stake holder meeting on IWRM has been organized by Eastern Zone Water Partnership and Odisha Water Forum, supported by India Water Partnership on 8 Nov 2011 at hotel Bari International, Bhubaneswar. This meeting was attended by about 25 participants from various institutions, civil society groups, Government officials etc. and Executive Director of India Water Partnership (IWP) Dr. Veena Khanduri (Institute for Human Development), En. Sisir Behera, En. Subrat Rath (Deputy Director, Basin Planning-3), Er. Hrushikesh Mishra, Deputy Director, Basin Planning - 1) from Water Planning Organisation of the Water Resources Department of Govt of Odisha were prominent.



Session-1: Making a Beginning

At the outset Mr. Tapan Padhi of Odisha Water Forum and Convener of Eastern Zonal Water Partnership welcomed the participants. En. Sisir Behera presided over the session. After a round of brief discussion Mr. Tapan Padhi spelled out the objectives of the workshop. He said that the objective of the consultation was to come out with a road map for the Civil Societies. IWRM has imperfections, but at the time the civil

societies distancing themselves from IWRM processes by the government is not going to help the cause. It is a better choice to work together and address the imperfections in the IWRM approach. DrVeenakhanduri briefed about the institutional structure of Global Water Partnership, India Water Partnership, and the Zonal Water Partnerships and she also highlighted the good work done by the Area Water Partnerships.

En SisirBehara, providing a background to the water situation in the state, said Odisha is the richest state from the water resource point of view. We have 480 km long stretch of coastline, 11 river basins and sufficient ground water reserve. Only 25 per cent of ground water has been augmented. In spite of this the state is facing water scarcity, drought and flood in many parts. So we need an integrated approach to come out with solutions. Implementing infrastructure projects and taking up big projects is not the solution. One has to go to the source of problem. Where it is to be implemented, what is the problem, how it will be addressed. Before the implementation of any project let us take the views of the stake holders. It should be participatory. Time has come to go through the small water sheds instead of big projects. On the role of civil society organization he said it can help government in a lot many ways by sharing information, generating awareness and building the capacities of the stakeholders.

Er. SubratRath opined that there is a need for coordination and sharing of ideas with civil society and the department is open to ideas. He also said that they will like to join the Eastern Zonal Water Partnership to have a more coordinated effort to implement IWRM.

Session-2:PERSPECTIVES ON IWRM

In the second session MrTapanPadhi broadly defined the IWRM and its basic principle. He said till now the IWRM having a mixed response from various strata. He presented the five core principles of IWRM and all the participants agreed that there was nothing to crib about these principles. The disagreement, concerns, resistance to IWRM starts with the way it is implemented. If the implementation issues are addressed then IWRM will be greatly accepted by different stakeholders and it will be able to fulfill its objectives. Participation is the key to success of IWRM. And this has been the greatest challenge for the State to ensure this. There is a need to think out of the box. Only having people in the bodies like the River Basin Organisations is no enough. There is a need for capacity building of the stakeholders so that they are informed, are into IWRM practices and then they will be in a position to play an effective role in decision making. This presentation was followed by inputs from different participants.

Er. SubratRath in his presentation spelled out the plan of the state government with respect to implementation of IWRM. He said that the government wants to have the different stakeholders on board. IWRM report is published in the Water Resource Department website. There may be some shortcomings in it, but a lot of care has been taken to address the concerns of the civil societies. At present it is not feasible to address all the issue. He then outlined the steps that is to be adopted by the water resources department for the implementation of IWRM in the state They are:-



- Developing a Proper Dialogue Mechanism
- Basin Plan in 11 basins
- Allocation and pricing
- Regulation and Legal aspect

Mr Bimal Pandia of RCDC where he put forward many shortcomings in IWRM road map in spite of many good things in it. He said that there are a lot of implementation issues that need to be sorted out before the IWRM road map is put into practice.

Mr Sudarshan Das of Human Development Foundation suggested for making water management more sustainable by having community action in water management, implementation and monitoring level. Apart from this there also should be stress on advocacy, and social mobilization. But, first of all there should be adequate resource to manage

SESSION III : ENSURING PARTICIPATION, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

In this session after a brief introduction by the Mr Padhi on the challenges that the government faces on ensuring participation, this is the greatest challenge for implementation of IWRM. Agreeing to predetermined templates does not serve the purpose. The stakeholders need to own the process and unless stakeholders are themselves involved in managing water they neither will have the knowledge, involvement and capacity to play an effective role in the stakeholders' platforms and more often than not will lose out to more organized sectors as the stakeholders.

This was followed with an intense discussion on institutional mechanism for stakeholders participation. It was more or less an agreed position that River Basin is too big a unit to serve the purpose to involvement of the stakeholders in decision making. The RBO should be further decentralized into sub-basins up to at least mini-watershed level. The planning, implementation and monitoring should be done at the mini-watershed level. But the other opinion was that the as the hydrological boundaries are not co-terminous with the administrative boundaries, administrative boundaries should be recognized as a means for decentralization of planning, implementation



SESSION IV

The 4th and the final session, the open discussion session, focused on What role the civil society should play in furthering the basic mandate of IWRM. There were many responses and suggestions from the participant side. These suggestions can be put in the following action points:-

Action points:

- Expectation of govt about civil society role (NGO, Media)
 - Awareness campaign
 - To improve the water use efficiency in all the sectors, agl, water supply and industrial sector
 - Decrease the pollution of water – both point source and non-point source Eg. reducing pollution from the use of fertilizers and pesticides, open defecation etc
 - On importance of water and inclusion in curriculum

- Regulatory part
 - Water regulatory authority
 - In formulating strategies/ principles/agendas for WRA
 - Play a part on pricing
- Water Act
 - In consolidating all water related Acts

Suggestions by the other members

- Civil society can play a role in creating a healthy platform for dialogue and discussion among the stakeholders as to address the imperfections of the IWRM approach and adapt it to our conditions.
- Civil society should play a role in dissemination of information on water, help articulate the water related issues and also propagate the basic principles of IWRM so that an informed dialogue takes place.
- It also can watch whether the policies are implemented in the right earnest or not.
- CSOs also can create some models to demonstrated the IWRM approach.
- The CSOs should play a key role in devising an institutional framework that will ensure proper participation of the stakeholders especially the farmers, artisans and common man who run the risk of being marginalized.
- Civil society also has a bigger role in the inter-state dialogue process since there are many rivers whose basins are not entirely confined to a particular state.
- CSOs should clearly spell out the non-negotiables on their part, so that they do not become the implementation wing of the government and are able to safeguard the interests of the poor and the down trodden. Eg. Juanga's traditional rights cannot be violated at any cost.
- It can also initiate a process to see to it that the Pallisabha plays an active role in the water resources management as has been mandated by the PEAS.
- CSOs may come up with the ideas on different type of tax, cost recovery principles.
- CSOs can help the government in capacity building of the communities, functionaries.

Finally it was agreed that an effort will be made for creating a proper mechanism for continuous dialogue among all the stakeholders. The road map will be discussed, enriched and finalized through exchange of mails and then ways and means to go ahead with this road map will be found out.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks.