

COOPERATION WITH THE FOURTH WORLD WATER FORUM

Successful cooperation with the Third World Water Forum, held in Kyoto, Japan in March 2003, provided key incentives for UNESCAP to be involved in the Fourth World Water Forum to be held in Mexico City in March 2006. In this context, UNESCAP joined the Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC) to convene a technical session entitled: “Upstream-Downstream Issues in Implementing Equitable and Reasonable Water Utilization” at the Second South-East Water Forum (SEAWF-2), which was held in Bali, Indonesia from 29 to 31 August 2005. At this Session, UNESCAP presented its experiences on dealing with upstream/downstream issues in the context of community building and promoted the concept that upstream-downstream issues must not be perceived as sources of conflicts in water resources management, but should be conceived as opportunities for a logical start of effective public participation in the introduction of integrated water resources management processes for empowerment.

Subsequently, UNESCAP in cooperation with the Korea Institute of Construction Technology of the Ministry of Construction and Transportation of Republic of Korea organized the Special Seminar on Coping with Risk: Experience of the UNESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee at the 31st Congress of the International Association of Hydraulic Research (IAHR), which was held in Seoul from 11 to 16 September 2005. This activity is part of the regional efforts of UNESCAP to contribute to the implementation of integrated water resources management through the integration of risk management of water-related disasters to socio-economic development process. Speakers at the Seminar included six experts from the Typhoon Committee Members and UNESCAP as well as an international expert from Switzerland, who is currently Chair of the UNESCO Task Force on International Sediment Initiative and Chair of the International Commission on Hydrology of the Rhine. In order to highlight expected impacts of the activities of the programme jointly implementation by the Typhoon Committee and UNESCAP for the hydrology component, attempts were made by these speakers to discuss linkage of most recent results in the disaster preparedness of the Typhoon Committee Members to recent disasters in the region as well as the experience of the recent Katrina Hurricane.

UNESCAP also accepted an invitation of the Chuncheon Water Forum Organizing Committee to speak at its annual forum for 2005 on the topic: “Experiences and Emerging Challenges in Water Resources Management of International River Basins in Asia”. In line with the main theme of the Chuncheon Water Forum 2005: “Water and Disasters”, UNESCAP highlighted the fact that most of successful cooperation experiences in international river basins in the region had been initiated following major natural disasters and these opportunities had been conceived as part of subregional programmes of collaboration among riparian countries through enhancement of mutual understanding and trust towards socio-economic development. The Chuncheon Water Forum was initiated in 2003 and the two previous annual forums focused on the following two themes: “Water and Democracy” in 2003 and “Water and Conflicts” in 2004. Invitation of international experts was only initiated for the first time in 2005.