

**Welcoming Remarks of ADB Institute
For the First NARBO Training Course on
Integrated Water Resources Management
(IWRM)**

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- ADB Institute appreciates all the efforts made by NARBO partners, namely JWA, ADB, IWMI, ESCAP, KOWACO, and Thai Water Resources Association in particular, to organize the first training workshop under NARBO Action Plan.
- While all the 20 participants are from the South East Asian Countries, we plan to organize another subregional training course in South Asia as a second NARBO training course.
- ADBI is a subsidiary and think-tank of ADB established in 1996 and located in Tokyo. Its research and capacity building activities focus on four strategic areas; poverty reduction, good governance, regional cooperation, and private sector development which are consistent with ADB's long-term strategic framework. While the annual budget of ADBI is limited to about \$15 million, its work program is diversified, e.g., the capacity building in 2004 covers 16 regional training courses and workshops. Furthermore, its regional and global partner organizations contribute to the ADBI activities by cofinancing arrangements, thereby leveraging the ADBI's impact through networking.
- ADBI believes that useful and relevant knowledge should be shared through ICT technologies. In particular, the web-based training and dissemination of research and training results through CD-ROMs are effective to reach wider audience compared to traditional class room lectures.
- Recently, ADBI reviewed a CD-ROM on IWRM Tutorial published by CapNet and the results are available on our web which has been renewed and now attracting wider audience.
- ADBI will contribute to this workshop by producing the first NARBO self-learning CD-ROM on Participatory IWRM based on the training materials prepared and contributed by various knowledge partners.
- IWRM is an inspiring and relevant theme for the practitioners on the ground. The meaning of integration is important because it implies integration and coordination between:
 - 1) Land use planning and water resources use,
 - 2) Surface water and ground water management,
 - 3) Upstream and downstream conflict resolution,
 - 4) Freshwater system and coastal waters management,
 - 5) Urban and rural water management,
 - 6) Central government and local government's water policy harmonization, and
 - 7) River basin organizations and apex bodies.

- Transboundary water issues are another important area to be discussed during the workshop. According to the statistics, in Asia, there are 263 river basins that are shared by two or more nations. Often, the administrative and national boundaries do not comply with basin boundaries. Thus, we need to coordinate between different RBOs and administrative authorities.
- In this context, ADBI believes that NARBO has an important role to share knowledge on transboundary issues. In fact, During the second week of this course will visit the Ping River Basin in the northern Thailand to learn how to resolve the transboundary issues.
- The NARBO is not just an information-sharing network, but also aims at providing a practical model and tools to resolve those issues on the ground. The participatory IWRM is conceptually attractive and easy to advocate, but its process is very time-consuming and involves tough negotiations to reach a decision making.
- Fortunately, Thailand has a good experience in this regard, and an advocate and champion in Chiang Mai. It also requires a political will to decentralize the resources and budget as well as to empower people in the decision-making process. Again, Thailand has a rare combination of these two critical elements: political will from the top and people's champion on the ground.
- Ahead of us, there are challenging and ambitious agenda and field visit, on
 - 1) Public participation in the IWRM process, 2) Protection of critical watersheds, 3) Basin planning methods, 3) Resolving transboundary conflicts, 4) Wetland management, and 5) Water supply and quality management.
- ADBI considers this training as a Training of Trainers (TOT) course. Upon your return, you are the advocate and trainers for participatory IWRM which should transformed in your own context. We will provide you necessary ammunition in due course in a form of tutorial CD-ROM.
- Wish all of you successful and participatory discussions.