

Uma Kant Jha
Executive Director
Water and Energy Commission
Nepal

His Majesty's Government of Nepal approved water resources strategy in January 2002. This document is the main guiding document for water resources development in Nepal. On the basis of principles outlined in Water Resources Strategy, Water and Energy Commission Secretariat (WECS), which is responsible for preparing plans and policies of water resources sector of Nepal, has recently prepared National Water Plan (NWP). It is in the process of getting approval from Government. National Water Plan is the first water resources plan of the country for a period of 25 years. This NWP has accepted the principle of water resources development through integrated water resources management and the basic unit of development as a basin.

I, as an Executive Director of WECS, was responsible for preparing National Water Plan. My main duty in WECS is to formulate plans and programs for His Majesty's Government of Nepal for the development of Water Resources in Nepal.

His Majesty's Government of Nepal approved its Irrigation Policy 2003 as per the principle incorporated in Water Resources Strategy 2002. At 1.4.2 of the Irrigation Policy clearly says that "projects shall be formulated and guided by the principles of Integrated Water Resources management to ensure water availability for all stakeholders, return of investment, investment sharing and self-insurance against natural calamities". Similarly policy of other users (e.g. water supply and sanitation, hydropower, industry, fisheries, navigation, etc.) has also accepted IWRM as its guiding principles.

As a policy maker I was looking for a practical and comprehensive training program on River Basin Management. Fortunately I got an opportunity to participate in NARBO 2nd training workshop on River Basin Management and Organizations. My subordinate staff in my organization Mr. N. M. Joshi who is also participating in this programme will be asset in my office. After going back to my organization I will try to prepare a plan for IWRM in a small basin close to the capital city "Bagmati Basin".

This programme has been of great importance for me because almost every aspect of IWRM has been dealt. Theoretical background information given by Dr. Charles Abernethy was of prime importance. River basin management and organization in Japan and Indonesia was discussed. Sri Lankan perspective presented by Mr. Chandra Ranatunga, Prof. Malik, Mr. Sanath and Mr. R. de S. Ariyabandu was quite useful. For the middle of the training programme a field trip was organized to the southern part of Maha Oya river. It gave us a clear picture of environmental degradation caused by sand and clay mining activities in the area. After field visit we presented our findings in presence of concerned authorities in Sri Lanka. It will help us to diagnose the problem in our country. It is a real training. Another important part of the training program was getting acquainted with the situation of IWRM in other Asian Countries. This training was as a knowledge sharing programme. We

have broader vision on basin management. This knowledge will help us to formulate a plan and policy for IWRM in Nepal.

I believe that this support from NARBO will be continued in the future. Similar training programme can be organized in Nepal too. Water and Energy Commission will be happy to host the training programme.