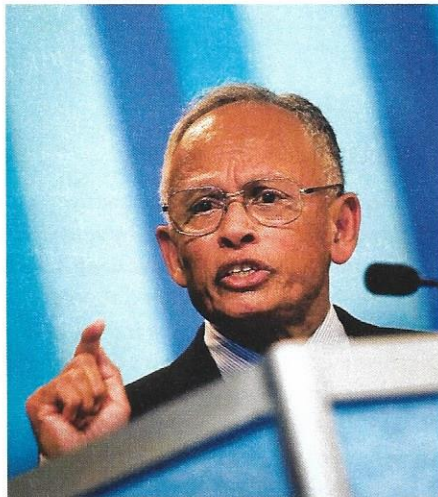


## World Water Week Daily

Tuesday, August 22, 2006



LStockholm Water Prize Laureate Asit K. Biswas (left) and Ms. Doris Ombara of WWF in East Africa challenged assumptions and encouraged action in water resources and development.

### A Very Very Extraordinary Plenary Session

An exciting and impassioned Opening Session took place on Monday. H.R.H. The Prince of Orange, Stockholm Water Prize Laureate Asit Biswas and Swedish Minister for International Development Carin Jämtin welcomed, challenged and inspired the more than 1,000 audience members.

Citing the elegant words of W.H. Auden, "Thousands have lived without love, not one without water," H.R.H. The Prince of Orange recounted the successes in water and development in recent years. But he also challenged the Week's participants to show "vision and genuine leadership" and achieve more.

Stockholm Water Prize Laureate Asit Biswas provoked much thought: there is no water crisis; uralisation is the problem; and

mega-forums on water issues are a waste of time and money, he said. He went on to say that the very forum in which he was speaking was in danger of being irrelevant if, like many other conferences, it only rehashed the "same old stuff" and not only reinvented the wheel but "reinvented the wood that the wheel is made of".

Also speaking at the morning session were Doris Ombara of the WWF/East Africa, SIWI Executive Director Anders Berntell, Herb Gray of the IJC, Tabeta Matiza Chiuta of IUCN, Frank Rijsberman from IWMI, and Prof. Chennat Gopalakrishnan from University of Hawaii at Manoa.

No doubt, attendees left the Opening Session challenged and inspired.

### Public or Private, Is That The Question?

Government agency representatives from a number of donor countries met with representatives from developing countries to discuss the viability of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in the water sector. Panellists drew from the experiences of not only donor projects but also their individual country cases.

Discussion centered around when and how to apply PPPs. Regardless of belief in the appropriateness of PPPs, agreement was expressed that resources management at least requires situation-specific application. PPPs can only work with solid political commitment, clear responsibility structure, and strong regulatory framework.

#### Today's Main Events

- 09:00–17:00 WS 1: Tools for Benefit Sharing in Transboundary Settings
- 09:00–12:00 WS 2: Water and Trade: Matching International Water Availability and Local Needs
- 09:00–15:30 WS 4: Benefits and Responsibilities of Decentralised and Centralised Approaches for Management of Water and Wastewater
- 09:00–12:00 Climate and Water-related Risks
- 09:00–12:00 Capturing the Big Picture of Gender in Water
- 09:00–12:00 Multi-scale Water Governance
- 09:30–12:30 Infrastructure and Water and Sanitation Services for the Poor
- 09:00–12:00 Partnerships in Action
- 12:15–13:15 International Training Programmes on Integrated Water Resources Management and Transboundary Water Management
- 12:15–13:15 The Difference a Tree Can Make: Water, Tree and Soil Interactions in Tropical Watersheds
- 12:15–13:15 Small Multi-Purpose Reservoir Planning
- 13:30–17:00 WS 6: Changing Diets and their Implications for Water, Land and Livelihoods
- 13:30–17:00 Sanitation Partnerships: Harnessing their Potential
- 13:30–17:00 Fighting Corruption to Reduce Poverty
- 13:30–17:00 Financing Integrated Water Resources Management in the North
- 13:30–17:30 Practical Implementation of IWRM in Africa
- 17:00–18:45 Poster Session
- 17:15–18:45 Developing Solutions to Protect the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities: The Contribution of Life Sciences to the Millennium Development Goals
- 17:15–18:45 Donor Country Approaches to Water-Related Development Cooperation: Focus on Water Resources Infrastructure
- 18:45–20:30 Stockholm Junior Water Prize Award Ceremony

## Many Rivers to Cross

When co-riparians are faced with water crises, it can be an entry point for either conflict or cooperation. As the mainstream discourse shifts away from talk of 'water wars' and towards benefit sharing, there will be more focus on disentangling the issues that complicate the negotiation of basinwide agreements. Enter the High-Level Panel on Benefit Sharing in Transboundary Waters, moderated by BBC's Nik Gowing. Among those participating were representatives of the World Bank, UNESCO, Bangladesh and Lesotho, and as the session wore on the conflict between two riparians, India and Bangladesh, came into sharper focus.

The panel started with a review of strategies: how best to decouple water from security issues; making regional frameworks dovetail with national aspirations; the depoliticisation of hydrological data; encouraging transboundary cooperation among civil society actors; and the danger of using benefit-sharing to paper over core conflicts. In terms of success stories, southern Africa was discussed in great detail. Worst case river basin scenarios such as the Jordan (war politics) and the Ganges and Bramaputra (asymmetrical power dynamics), sparked a lively back and forth among panel members and the audience, illustrating vividly the volatility of the issues at hand.

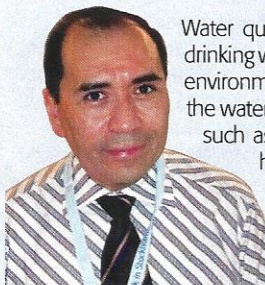
### What are the most pressing water-related issues from a global perspective?

An issue is how the decision makers can include the poor into their decisions, to make sure they also get a share of the benefits.

*Mario Herrero, International Livestock Research Institute, Kenya*

We will have a worse hygienic problem if our way of sanitation is continued. Usage of water resources and for sewage treatment plants is not performed efficiently.

*Ingrid Brettar, Helmholtz – Center for Infectious Research, Germany*



*Orlando Jaimes Martinez, Mexico National Water Commission, Mexico*

Water quality in terms of drinking water but also the environmental quality of the water. Many countries such as Mexico do not have the financial capacity to process waste water, thus it is just being flushed out.



The opening press conference featured (from left) Carin Jämtin, H.R.H. The Prince of Orange, Anders Berntell, Asit K. Biswas and Doris Ombara.

## Forum Releases Final Report

The Final report of the 4th World Water Forum, held in March in Mexico City, was released on Tuesday in Stockholm. For the first time, the political process designed for the Forum also brought together local authorities and governments, and parliamentarians, in addition to ministers. The report was highly anticipated.

"Beyond the reports and declarations, there was a clear willingness to favour action in the Forum week and Preparatory Process", declared Daniel Zimmer of the World Water Council, strengthening the importance of a big amount of pertinent, innovative and particularly promising local actions presented in Mexico.

In addition, a wide range of commitments and actions were launched in Mexico, which will be followed up in the years leading to the next Forum in Turkey in 2009. The report is online and available at the World Water Council exhibit.

## The Gray Area: Small Towns

International economic actors met to debate the merits of Official Development Assistance (ODA) versus Market-Based Mechanisms (MBM), with specific reference to water sector financing in "small towns". The lively discussion focused on the challenges facing small towns, and whether those challenges would unique impediments to the potential success of either ODA or MBM. Although panellists might not agree which approach is best fit for small town water sector development, in the words of Dr. William Muhairwe, National Water Corporation Uganda, "it is not enough to pour money after money".

## No Alternative to Water

Unlike energy, there is no alternative source of water. The rise in global population, rapid urbanisation and increasing requirements for water for industrial processes and power generation are happening at a time when climate change is causing rapid desertification in many places. So says the World Business Council for Sustainable Development in its new "Water Scenarios" report, published last week and discussed yesterday.

A number of possible futures are covered in the report, including water in China, climate change and water, global water rights and water and the Panama Canal - over a quarter of Panama's GDP depends on the Panama Canal, which runs on freshwater from water contained within the border.

An interesting aspect of the report, now available online, is that it focuses on potential scenarios in both developing and developed countries.

### Stockholm Water Front World Water Week Daily

**Publisher:**  
Anders Berntell, *Executive Director*

**Editorial Advisor:**  
Johan Kuylenstierna, *Project Director*

**Editorial Staff:**  
Britt-Louise Andersson  
Brad DeLange  
Kristin Prouty  
Jonas Stenström  
David Trouba

**Circulation:** 1000

Stockholm International Water Institute  
[www.siwi.org](http://www.siwi.org)

