

Editorial

The first Stockholm Water Symposium was organized in 1991. It has been an annual event, and, within a short period of only six years, this symposium is now universally acknowledged as the premier water meeting anywhere in the world. As a continuing member of its Scientific Programme Committee from its very beginning, it has been a very satisfactory professional experience.

The symposium format recently has been to select a series of critical topics each year, which are related to issues discussed in the earlier symposia. Each topic is introduced in the plenary session by a specially selected international expert, who outlines the problems, issues and possible solutions. The topic is then discussed at a one-day focused workshop, whose conclusions and recommendations are then reported back to the plenary session at the end of the symposium. Generally two specialists are invited to present papers at the workshop, and the rest of the papers are selected from the abstracts received as a result of the overall call for papers for the symposium.

For the Sixth Stockholm Water Symposium, which was held from 4–9 August 1996, the main focus of the meeting was on ‘Safeguarding Water Resources for Tomorrow: New Solutions to Old Problems’, and one of the workshops was on ‘Capacity Building for Integrated Water Management’.

The framework for the workshop was based on the fact that, for efficient and integrated management of scarce water resources, all countries need to develop appropriate capacities in terms of three interrelated issues: human resources, institutions and appropriate policy formulation. The primary focus of the workshop was on the challenges facing a large number of developing countries that currently do not have these capacities. How could such countries develop national capacities in formulating and implementing a sustainable water resources management properly and quickly? The objective was to highlight the results of experiences in capacity building from different parts of the world.

The workshop was chaired by me, with Frank Hartvelt (United Nations Development Programme, UNDP) as the Co-Chairman. The Rapporteurs were Cecilia Tortajada (National Water Commission of Mexico) and Klas Cederwall (Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm). UNDP was the co-convenor of the workshop.

I had the privilege of being the plenary speaker. The two invited papers for the workshop were by G. J. F. R. Alaerts (Infrastructure Hydraulics Environment, Delft, The Netherlands) and Kirk Rodgers (Organisation of American States, New York). The symposium received 29 abstracts from all parts of the world for the Workshop, from which seven were selected for presentation. Subsequently all the papers presented during the symposium were peer reviewed for possible publication in this Journal.

On behalf of the Scientific Programme Committee of the Stockholm Water Symposium, I sincerely hope that this Thematic Issue will be of special interest to water professionals all over the world who are interested in capacity building.

Asit K. Biswas

Instituto de Ingeniería

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico, D.F., Mexico

