

## Editorial

The Club of Tokyo is an informal group of influential water and development experts from around the world, who because of their technical and intellectual capabilities and their senior positions, can influence and informally give a direction to the global discussions and agenda on water.

Sixteen leading international experts on water and development issues and very senior policy-makers were invited to join this exclusive Club. The members were selected following a peer group survey, and the simple criterion used to identify the members was that they were considered to be the most influential by their peer group. No consideration was given in the selection process to their country of origin, or residence, or gender. Every one invited promptly agreed to join the Club.

The co-chairs of the Club are Professor Asit K. Biswas (Mexico) and Dr Kazuo Takahashi (Japan). The members and their current residences are Dr Mahmoud Abu-Zeid (Egypt), Dr Mohamed Ait Kadi (Morocco), Dr Benedito P. F. Braga (Brazil), Professor Malin Falkenmark (Sweden), Dr Torkil Jonch-Clausen (Denmark), Dr Aalt Leusink (the Netherlands), Dr John Pigram (Australia), Dr Ismail Serageldin (Egypt), Dr Aly Shady (Canada), Professor Yutaka Takahashi (Japan), Dr Olcay Unver (Turkey), Mr Jay Narayan Vyas (India), Professor John Waterbury (Lebanon) and Professor Gilbert White (USA).

All the members were invited to join the Club in their personal capacities. Accordingly, the Club is totally independent, and is *not* affiliated to any institution or association.

The Club of Tokyo is financially supported by a grant from the Center for Global Partnership of the Japan Foundation. Since the first meeting of the Club was in Tokyo, 25–27 September 2000, it was called the Club of Tokyo. The Third World Centre for Water Management and the International Development Centre of Japan are its current sponsors.

The Club members meet once a year without any specific agenda. The discussions focus on what the members consider are the world's most important water and water-related issues, and what steps can be taken to resolve them cost-effectively and in a timely manner. The second meeting of the Club will be held in Aswan, Egypt, 5–8 November 2001.

During the first meeting of the Club of Tokyo, its members raised certain priority water issues. The background papers prepared by the various members, on which the discussion in Tokyo was based, are included in this special thematic issue of the *International Journal of Water Resources Development*. Not surprisingly, the topics cover a wide spectrum of issues. We believe that these issues are not only topical, but also would be of direct interest to water professionals all over the world.

On behalf of the members of the Club of Tokyo, and as co-chairs of the Club, we would like to extend a special appreciation to the Center for Global

Partnership of the Japan Foundation, whose support has made this worthwhile venture possible.

*Asit K. Biswas*  
*President, Third World Centre for Water Management*  
*Atizapan, Mexico*

*Kazuo Takahashi*  
*Director, International Development Research Institute*  
*Tokyo, Japan*