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Editors

Water Security, Climate Change and Sustainable Development

 Springer

Foreword

The Vibrant Gujarat series of biennial summits was the brainchild of my predecessor and the current Prime Minister of India, Hon. Narendra Modi. Started in 2003, it was conceived as an event to bring investments to Gujarat and to make the state the premier investment destination in the country by showcasing its business-friendly environment, transparent regulatory and administrative regimes and excellent infrastructure.

Gujarat accounts for about 6 % of the land mass of India and approximately 5 % of its population. However, the state now accounts for 7.6 % of the country's GDP, about 10 % of national employment and a whopping 22 % of Indian exports. Between 2001 and 2012, the state had an averaged annual GDP growth rate of 10 %, which was consistently well above the country growth rates. In 1991, it was an electricity deficient state. Through good planning and astute management, it now has a power surplus, with all its villages electrified. Viewed from any direction, Gujarat has made commendable progress over the past 15 years.

Geographically Gujarat is located in a very arid climate, with very few perennial rivers. Not surprisingly and historically, water scarcity has been a very serious issue in the state. Prior to 2001, during years of droughts, severe water crises often led to social tensions and even some years to riots in areas which severely suffered from lack of water. Migrations in search of water, and thus for survival of both humans and animals, were a common phenomenon during the dry summers.

With the construction of major water development projects like the Sardar Sarovar and completion of a Statewide Water Grid, water scarcities have become events of the past.

Because of the importance of water to social and economic development of Gujarat, and standard of living and quality of life of its people, the Government decided to hold one of the seven thematic seminars for the 2015 Vibrant Gujarat on water, climate change and sustainable development.

Gujarat has managed to ensure reliable water supply available for its people, both now and over the foreseeable future. However, with population steadily increasing because of natural causes and migration to the state due to steady and

progressive economic development and employment generation as well as rapid increase in human and economic activities, we have to run faster to stand in the same place in terms of ensuring water security. By 2050, per capita freshwater availability in the state will be significantly less than what it is at present. Thus, we have to significantly improve water use efficiencies for all our water-related activities. Accordingly, we are constantly searching for the latest scientific, technological and management advances and then adopt them to improve our water management processes and practices. The main reason for our success has been the formulation of state-of-the-art future-oriented plans and their timely execution.

Our planning and their execution have been consistently underpinned by responsible and proactive political leadership, clear, unambiguous and transparent administrative measures, relentless pursuit of economic growth, and perpetual quest for excellence to ensure better quality of life of our people. All these have contributed to steady improvements in the standard of living of our citizens. The net result, I am pleased to note, has been a true success story of self-reliance and resilience in all water-related areas, creation of consistent growth opportunities and continuing good governance.

While I am pleased with the situations of the past, present and the near future, the water issue has been made more and more complex and complicated due to the uncertainties posed by the expected climate change which is likely to affect nearly all our social and economic activities in somewhat unpredictable ways and rates. This is one of the main reasons why we chose to convene a special seminar during the last Vibrant Gujarat on the interlinkages between water, climate change and sustainable development.

Climate change has the potential to change perceptibly how we plan and manage rural and urban settlements, agricultural production, food availability and distribution, energy generation and use practices, manufacturing and transportation patterns and a host of other development activities. In the area of water, it could alter precipitation patterns and their spatial distribution over time, river flow regimes, groundwater availability and recharge patterns, and variations in water quality.

Aware of the potential impacts of climate change, we established the first Climate Change Department on human development and ecosystem conservation, in the year 2009, in any Indian states.

For our seminar we invited Prof. Asit K. Biswas, who is the Co-founder of the Third World Centre for Water Management in Mexico, to plan a truly world class seminar. He carefully selected and then specially invited the world's leading academics, heads of international organizations and captains of major industries to share their views on how best water, climate change and sustainable development be most successfully managed in Gujarat and the rest of the world. The result was a truly outstanding seminar which brought many new and innovative ideas to the fore. We are analysing them seriously for policy planning and possible implementation.

Because of the outstanding nature and results of this seminar, we decided to put together the best papers that were presented in Gandhinagar. This is the first time

during the entire history of Vibrant Gujarat, the results of one of its thematic seminars are being published as a definitive and authoritative book by a major international publisher so that not only Indians but also interested people from all over the world will benefit from the knowledge and ideas that were generated in Gandhinagar.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to express my personal appreciation to Dr. Rajiv K. Gupta and Prof. Biswas for arranging this authoritative and absorbing seminar, and Prof. Biswas and Dr. Tortajada for editing the resulting text. I am confident that the people of Gujarat as well as others from outside the state will benefit significantly from the contents of this book.

Anandiben Patel

Preface

Individually, each of the three issues of this book, water security, climate change and sustainable development, is a difficult, complex and somewhat challenging subject. Academics and policy-makers may often differ with each other as to even the definitions of each of the topics, let alone their implications and ramifications. Thus, and not surprisingly, when these three topics are combined together, their complexities, uncertainties and intricacies multiply by several orders of magnitude.

The fact is, in the real world, irrespective of how each of these three issues are defined, or how they interrelate and interact with each other with numerous known and unknown feedback loops, from a development-related policy perspective they have to be viewed, considered and analysed together. The danger is if each of these three topics is considered independently for formulation of appropriate policy responses, they may have negative implications on the other two issues. This could, for the most part, ensure that the impacts of the pursued policies on the society and the environment as a whole would most likely be sub-optimal, and in many cases even negative over the medium to long terms.

Water security, climate change and sustainable development are closely inter-related and, though difficult and challenging it may be to consider them together, we really have no other choice. Thus, this is a concerted attempt to consider them together from multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary, and multi-issues perspectives.

The book is based on the papers that were presented during an international seminar on the topic during the Vibrant Gujarat Investors' Summit, in Gandhinagar, in January 2015. All the authors were specifically invited to outline their views and thinking on these related issues. Following intensive peer reviews, only the best papers presented were selected. These were then modified by the authors in line with the reviewers' comments. The Government of Gujarat, through its Water Supply and Sewerage Board and Gujarat and Narmada Valley Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited was the main host and organizer of the Seminar with the Third World Centre for Water Management as the main knowledge partner.

Gujarat accounts for 6 % of India's land mass and around 5 % of its population. The state now contributes to 7.6 % of India's GDP, and about 10 % national

employment, but a stunning 22 % of the country's total exports. Between 2001 and 2012, Gujarat had an average annual growth rate of 10 %, almost consistently well above India's GDP growth rates. Furthermore, in 1991, Gujarat was a seriously electricity deficient state. However, it is now a power surplus state. All its 18,000 villages have been electrified.

In terms of water security, Gujarat has not been so fortunate. It is situated in a very arid climate within the Asian monsoon belt. Historically, people of the state have suffered serious water scarcity in non-monsoon months. During drought periods, which have been quite frequent, the people have suffered from serious water shortages for drinking, as well as for agricultural and livestock uses. Migrations in search of water have been a recurrent phenomenon during dry summer periods, when social tensions have been quite prevalent, including even water-related riots.

Fortunately, with good water governance practices, and accelerated construction of a state-wide drinking water grid, most of the ravages of water shortages and social tensions of the past have now been basically eliminated.

The socio-economic and water-related developments of the recent past, laudable though they have been, do not guarantee similar levels of continued progress in the future. This is partly because the water regimes of the past appear to be changing, rapidly changing urbanization and development patterns in the state, and equally rapid evolution of global Indian conditions.

Consider climate. Globally, driven by continued economic and population growth rates, anthropogenic emissions are now higher than ever. Annual emission growth rates up to the year 2000 were 1.3 %. Since then, this has increased to 2.2 %. Such developments are changing climate patterns all over the world, including changes in inter-annual and intra-annual precipitations in different parts of the world. This, in turn, is impacting on river flows and groundwater recharge potentials, and thus water availability and use patterns which will undoubtedly impact upon the future water security conditions of the world.

Gujarat has not been immune to these changes. Current data indicate that the frequency of hot days is showing a gradually increasing trend. Furthermore, frequency of cold days seems to be decreasing. Ahmedabad, the largest city in Gujarat, with already over 6 million people, has had serious heat waves in the recent past. In May 2010, temperatures soared to 46.8 °C, which led to heat stress resulting in serious health problems, including deaths, of its citizens. Many have predicted that the temperature may increase by an additional 2 °C which would have serious health, economic and social implications. It is the first Indian city which formulated a heat action plan in 2013.

Climate change may also bring a rise in seawater levels. The average annual rise in mean sea level in Gujarat is estimated to be around 1.3 mm. This is important for the state since it has 1,600 km of coastline, the longest in any Indian state. Rising sea level is likely to increase salinity of groundwater which would affect both humans and ecosystems. A one-metre sea level rise is estimated to affect 14,149 km² of area, about 6 % of its coastal population. Higher sea surges in the future may further exacerbate water security problems.

There is no question that water security has to be an integral and essential component of Gujarat's future sustainable development plans. Climate change and subsequent erratic and unpredictable rainfall patterns will affect river flow regimes of the past and groundwater recharge rates. Since a reliable and assured water supply of appropriate quantities and qualities is an essential prerequisite for sustainable development, the interplay and interactions between water, climate change and sustainable development will dictate the future of Gujarat's socio-economic development, as it will in all other Indian states and other countries.

The situation will be especially difficult and complicated in Gujarat since people during the post-2000 period have got used to steadily improving water availability as well as standard of living. They expect the future to be a continuation of the same. It will be a challenging task to meet the people's expectations and aspirations with all the uncertainties imposed on by climate change and rapidly evolving Indian and global conditions.

Fortunately, water is a renewable resource, and with good and efficient management, it can be used and reused numerous times. In addition, in the coming years, there will most certainly be tremendous advances in science and technology as well as management practices to store, use and reuse water. The starting point for solutions to ensure global water security will have to come from strong and effective institutions, political will, appropriate pricing for all types of water uses, good education for all water uses and continuous scientific, technological and management innovations.

We are convinced that the world's water problems are solvable, even after considering the uncertain implications of climate change over space and time.

The contributors to this book come from different disciplines. They represent different sectors like academia, government, business, international organizations and media. All the contributors are leading figures in their fields. We are convinced that this book will make significant contributions to the ongoing global debates and discussions on how we can best link water security, climate change and sustainable development to ensure a bright global future.

And finally we would like to pay compliments to Honourable Chief Minister of Gujarat Smt. Anandiben Patel who not only graced the occasion but also found time from her extraordinarily busy schedule to meet the experts who attended this international Seminar. Due to dedication and support of her team of officers headed by Dr. Rajiv K. Gupta IAS we could organize such a high quality event. We would also like to express our appreciation to Ms. Thania Gomez of the Third World Centre for Water Management, Mexico, for all her work to finalize this book.

Asit K. Biswas
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Contents

Water Security, Climate Change and Sustainable Development: An Introduction	1
Asit K. Biswas and Cecilia Tortajada	
Climate Change, Resource Efficiency and Sustainability	7
Peter Brabeck-Letmathe	
Water Resources Management and Adaptation to Climate Change	27
Taikan Oki	
Adapting to Climate Variability and Change in India	41
J. Bird, S. Roy, T. Shah, P. Aggarwal, V. Smakhtin, G. Amarnath, U.A. Amarasinghe, P. Pavelic and P.G. McCornick	
Downstream Implications of Climate Change in the Himalayas	65
David J. Molden, Arun B. Shrestha, Santosh Nepal and Walter W. Immerzeel	
Economic Growth and Climate Proofing Asia Through Sustainable Water Resources Management.	83
Bindu Lohani, Yasmin Siddiqi and Garrett Kilroy	
Business Case for Water	107
Joppe Cramwinckel	
Water, Climate Change and Sustainable Development: An Industry Example	123
Sanjay Khajuria	
Journey of Sustainable Development by Private Sector Actors	137
Asim Parekh	

**Will Rivers Become a Cause of Conflict, Rather Than Co-operation,
in South Asia? 155**
Adam Roberts

Index 163