

**S3-PS.6 Integrated watershed management for climate change adaptation  
& disaster risk reduction**

**Integrated Watershed Management for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk  
Reduction**

**Session Summary**

13:30-15:00, 19 October, 2016

Lavender (Committee Room C)

**Session showcased regional experiences and lessons learned from the application of integrated  
watershed management (IWM) to adapt to climate change and manage disaster risk.**

- Three speakers from Philippines, Sri Lanka, and India shared their local and regional experiences on using IWM as a tool to adapt to climate change and reduce disaster risks. A robust discussion between speakers and participants followed their presentations.
- Sharing the Philippines experience, Prof. Damasa B. Magcale-Macandog from University of the Philippines Los Banos emphasized the need for strong collaboration, coordination, and consultation with local government units, particularly on land-use and urban development plans.
- Cities at the basin-level converted agro-forestry lands into residential areas that make ground surfaces impermeable, contributing to rainwater runoff and flooding. As cities pursue their development, there was a call for more comprehensible, climate sensitive land-use plans to address flooding, including constructing permeable roads and flood-resistant buildings.
- Social considerations and processes also resonated throughout the session. Using India as an example, Dr. Suruchi Bhadwal from TERI stressed that planned interventions should not just come from the top down. She stressed that local communities need to want that intervention, and the intervention must have longer-term adaptation potential from 10 to 15 years.
- At the same time, Prof. Nimal Gunawardena from the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka noted that intervention benefits cannot just be generational – there must be visible short-term benefits (i.e. incentives), especially for local farming communities. If farmers don't like it, they won't do it.
- Based on her expertise and experiences in managing relevant projects in Nepal, Dr. Vidhisha Samarasekara of Asian Development Bank (ADB), who moderated another session when this session was organized, contributed to this session by providing her inputs in writing on the requirements, challenges, and opportunities for effective IWM implementation.
- The session was moderated by Mr. Isao Endo of Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

(IGES).

**Required conditions for successful planning and implementation of IWM as a tool for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction (CCA & DRM).**

- For successful IWM planning and implementation, requirements were examined in terms of science (e.g. climate projection, risk assessment), technology (e.g. low cost location specific technologies), and institutional arrangements (e.g. basin-scale coordination mechanism, collective planning for development and land-use).
- For effective implementation of IWM, an executing agency must have a clear mandate or acceptance for IWM as a planning tool. Similarly, technical capacity at the staff level to execute IWM should be available.

**Views and comments were exchanged on the challenges and opportunities for effective IWM planning and implementation.**

- Data availability has proved to be a challenge. There is a dire need to better coordinate data sharing not only amongst government agencies, but also amongst development agencies as a whole.
- Given the multiple uses of the Basin as a whole by different line agencies, overall coordination for IWM is a challenge. There is the need for a coordinating body to assume this role.
- Scaling up and financing projects remain a challenge. There also needs to be more efforts documenting successes and failures – and learning from them. The participants agreed that information on IWM in the region needs to be put on the public, open domain accessible to anyone who needs it.
- While challenges exist as mentioned above, there are also the opportunities for promoting IWM, including local and indigenous knowledge, and lessons learned from both successes and failures.
- The benefits from IWM implementation can be significant, providing incentives to local stakeholders and decision-makers.

**The way forward**

- Session acknowledged that IWM can be one of the promised approaches to address weather-related disasters such as floods and droughts.
- The call for actions was made to fully utilize the opportunities to overcome challenges.

## Acknowledgement

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