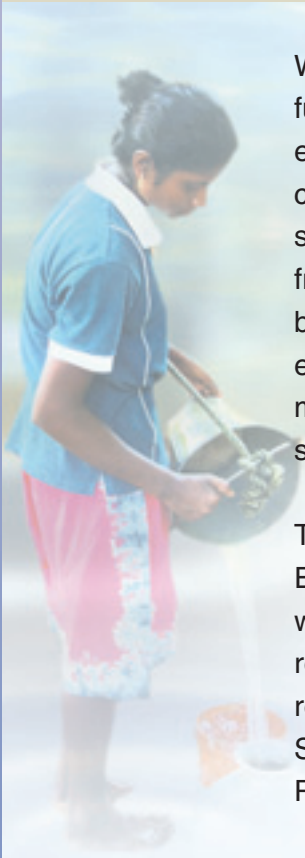


# Freshwater Resources Management Project



With a specific focus on the sustainability of the Asia-Pacific region into the future, freshwater as a resource is indispensable. However, alongside the rapid economic growth and rise in population, the Asia-Pacific region is now confronted with a significant shortage and pollution of freshwater resources. In spite of substantial efforts taken to improve the situation, the degradation of freshwater resources in quantity and quality continue, with negative effects on both the livelihoods and health of the people living in the region, as well as economic development. The main issues largely revolve around improper management of freshwater, and consequently it is this that needs to undergo serious revision in order to secure a sound and sustainable future for the region.

The Freshwater Resources Management Project of the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) has been carrying out research since 2004 with a view to proposing improved policy options for sustainable freshwater resources management in the Asia-Pacific region, in close collaboration with relevant organizations. The project comprises two main research components: Sustainable Water Management Policy (SWMP), and Water Environment Partnership in Asia (WEPA), which are explained in more detail below.



## **SWMP : Strategic research on water management policy in Asia**

SWMP aims to propose integrated policy options for sustainable water resources management, with a particular focus on the urban and peri-urban areas of six Asian countries. The first stage of the research targeted groundwater resources, and the current study includes the management of other water resources, such as surface water.

## **WEPA : A programme to develop a knowledge platform -WEPA database - for supporting policy development and implementation**

WEPA aims to contribute to strengthened water environmental governance and capacity building in Asia, through developing a set of databases which supports conservation of the water environment in the region. Through the cooperation of eleven Asian countries, the WEPA programme provides information regarding the water environment, such as laws, regulations, and activities for improvement of water resources.

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# Outreach of the research activities

Research activities and findings of the Freshwater Resources Management Project are disseminated through various conventions, such as the World Water Forum.



## Our sessions at the 4th World Water Forum

The Freshwater Resources Management Project co-organised two sessions and presented the outcomes of its research activities at the 4th World Water Forum, Mexico, March 2006, as detailed below:

Session title	Shared Groundwater Resources for Sustainable Development <sup>a)</sup> (17 March)	Water Accounting and Information Platforms <sup>b)</sup> (19 March)
Objectives	Dissemination of information on the significance of groundwater and the crucial need to ensure good resource management for sustainability	Exchange of views on the role of information platforms that contribute to strengthened water environment governance
Key messages	<p>Six key messages were declared, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the importance of sharing scientific knowledge and understanding that takes into account regional variations in order to improve groundwater management</li> <li>- the importance of governmental investment for promoting the reuse and recycling of water, in order to ease the demand for groundwater from the industrial sector</li> </ul>	<p>The following messages were emphasized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the importance of arranging information platforms and developing international partnerships of various scales</li> <li>- the setting of policy objectives that take into account local/regional characteristics and cultural backgrounds</li> <li>- the promotion of inter-governmental cooperation with regards to the water environment</li> </ul>

**\* Session conveners:**

a) UNESCO; Organization of American States (OAS); IGES; Global Environment Facility (GEF)

b) Ministry of the Environment, Japan; IGES; The United Nations University; Comisión Nacional del Agua, México (CONAGUA); Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática, México (INEGI)

For details of the activities at WWF4, please visit <http://www.iges.or.jp/en/news/topic/0603wwf4.html>



## Other conferences where we presented our research outcomes

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Southeast Asia Water Forum – Bali, Indonesia / August 2005
- The 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD13) – New York, USA / April 2005
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Southeast Asian Water Environment – Hanoi, Viet Nam / December 2004

### Our Products

**Publications**

- ▶ International Review for Environmental Strategies Vol.6 Number 2 2006, special issue on "Groundwater Management and Policy: Its Future Alternatives"
- ▶ Summary report "Sustainable Groundwater Management in Asian Cities", March 2006
- ▶ Policy Brief #004 "Rationalisation of Industrial Sector Water Use is the Key to Sound Groundwater Management", March 2006

**Web-based database**

- ▶ WEPA database (<http://www.wepa-db.net/>)