

Globalization of Water Governance in South Asia

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This volume is part of the four-volume box set Water Resource Management in South Asia.

List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AGM	Additional General Manager
AMC	Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation
BIWTA	Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority
BOD	Biochemical Oxygen Demand
BOT	Build, Operate, and Transfer
BWDB	Bangladesh Water Development Board
CBINRM	Community Based Integrated Natural Resource Management
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CBRs	Conduct of Business Regulations
CCCIM	Central Co-ordination Committee in Irrigation Management
CDO	Chief District Officer
CFUG	Community Forest User Group
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CWRM	Comprehensive Water Resources Management
CWSSP	Community Water Supply and Sanitation Project
DAC	District Agricultural Committees
DANIDA	Danish International Developmental Agency
DAO	District Administration Office
DC	Distributary Canal
DCC	Dhaka City Corporation
DCC	District Co-ordinating Committee
DDC	District Development Committee
DEC	District Environmental Committees
DLRS	Directorate of Land Records and Survey
DoE	Department of Environment
DOH	Department of Health
DvCC	Divisional Co-ordinating Committee
DWRC	District Water Resources Committee
ETP	Effluent Treatment Plant
FCGs	Field Canal Groups
FOs	Farmers Organizations

FUG	Forest User Group
GBWSSB	Greater Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Project
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNH	Gross National Happiness
GNP	Gross National Product
GR	Government Resolution
GTZ	German Technical Assistance
GWP	Global Water Partnership
HP	High Power Committee
IDRC	International Development Research Center
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMD	Irrigation Management Division
INMAS	Integrated Management of Irrigation Agricultural Settlements
IPS	Intermediate Pumping Station
IRA	Independent Regulatory Authority
ISWP	Integrated State Water Plan
ITDG	Intermediate Technology Development Group
IWMI	International Water Management Institute
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JBIC	Japan Bank for International Co-operation
JE	Junior Engineer
JVP	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
KCWSAEIP	Kandy City Water Supply Augmentation and Environmental Improvement Project
KMC	Kandy Municipal Corporation
KNNL	Karnataka Neerawari Nigam Limited
KUKL	Kathmandu Upatyaka Khanepani Limited
KUWSDB	Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board
KUWSSC	Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Council
KWRA	Karnataka Water Resources Authority
LA	Local Authorities
LIG	Low Income Group
MARI	Modern Architects of Rural India
MASL	Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka
MC	Management Committee
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals

MGDP	Mahaweli Ganga Development Project
MKVDC	Maharashtra Krishna Valley Development Corporation
MLD	Million Liters Per Day
MoEF	Ministry of Environment and Forests
MSPs	Multi-Stakeholders' Processes
MWRRA	Maharashtra Water Resources Regulatory Authority
MWSD	Ministry of Water Supply and Drainage
MWSS	Mini Water Supply Schemes
NCWC	National Commission for Women and Children
ND-BOT	Nira Deoghar Project on Build Operate and Transfer
NEC	National Environment Commission
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NGOFUS	Non Governmental Organizations Forum for Urban Sanitation
NSSC	Neighborhood Society Service Center
NWAB	National Women's Association of Bhutan
NWP	National Water Plan
NWSC	Nepal Water Supply Corporation
NWSDB	National Water Supply and Drainage Board
NWSSSC	National Water Supply and Sanitation Steering Committee
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OBC	Other Backward Caste
PCC	Provincial Coordination Committee
PIM	Participatory Irrigation Management
PMC	Project Management Committee
PO	Partner Organization
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PUP	Public-Public Partnership
RAJUK	Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha
RSCs	Regional Support Centers
RSPN	Royal Society for Protection of Nature
RTI	Right to Information
RWH	Rainwater Harvesting
RWS&S	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation
SaciWATERs	South Asia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies

SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
SLR	Sri Lankan Rupees
SSCWSS	Small Scale Community Water Supply System
STWSSS	Small Town Water Supply and Sanitation Scheme
TAP	Transparency, Accountability, and Participation
TDF	Town Development Fund
TNC	Transnational Corporation
TWSSP	Third Water Supply and Sanitation Project
ULBs	Urban Local Bodies
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPWMRC	Uttar Pradesh Water Management Regulatory Commission
VDC	Village Development Committee
VWSC	Village Water & Sanitation Committee
WB	World Bank
WRC	Water Resources Council
WRDO	Water Resources Development Organisation
WRS	Water Resources Secretariat
WRS	Water Resources Strategy
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WUAs	Water Users Associations
YDF	Youth Development Fund

Foreword

This book is part of the “crossing boundaries” project, an effort by the South Asian Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies (SaciWATERs) to contribute to the on-going paradigm shift in water resources management in South Asia. The “wicked problem” of water, which does not allow an easy definition let alone subsequent trouble-free, linear resolution, has also been described as an enigmatic messy problem in its and/or nature as opposed to either/or of most other substances of importance to human societies (Moss 2009). It is solid and liquid and gas; life-giving and death-delivering; a natural good and a social good and an economic good, often all of that at the same time and place, while being a cause of both co-operation and strife. This complex nature means that water issues cannot be solved by the binary either/or rock logic of bureaucratic proceduralism alone but demand more flexible fuzzy logic accommodating contradictory certitudes.

Recent decades have seen several shifts in the previously unchallenged “hydraulic missions” of government agencies (or hydrocracies) tasked with harnessing rivers and “developing” water resources within their boundaries. First, the gap between government and governance has widened with actors other than state agency hydrocrats, such as environmentalists and social activists, demanding that they be both heard and responded to. These actors are bringing into the discourse issues important to holistic and healthy water management that had been conveniently filtered out or swept under the carpet by single-mission, construction-focused hydrocracies. Second, governments are discovering that they are neither capable of mobilizing the massive capital required for water projects nor, if they do manage the capital, does their procedural fetishism leave much room for high efficiency demanded by the inexorable logic of such capital. This has opened the space for the private sector’s entry into the water realm and the political acceptability of “public-private partnership.” Third, the increasingly significant role played by multilateral development agencies, transnational corporations and non-government organizations has served to challenge the hegemonic sway of hydrocracies.

Until quite recently, water management was seen as the exclusive domain of technical experts working under the auspices of the state. Currently, however, participatory management with multiple stakeholders has gained increasing importance. Indeed, a World Commission on Dams was constituted (in 1998) by major players in the field to see what common ground could be found in the controversy surround the building of large dams around the world. Ten years after the Commission presented its report, the issues of controversy have not gone away, but the understanding of their complexities has been deepened (Moore et al. 2010). The notion of government as the only decision-making authority has been replaced by multi-scale, polycentric governance: it recognizes a large number of stakeholders coming from different styles of organizing with varied perceptions of what the problem itself is, what the risks are and who should bear them, as well as what solutions might be acceptable. Thus, collaborative governance with constructive engagement between divergent views is considered to be more appropriate for integrated and adaptive management regimes needed to cope with the complexity of social-ecological systems (Gyawali 2009).

At many levels, these trends have been interpreted as eroding the dominance of hydrocracies in their monochrome and unchallenged policy space. It has constricted the room for government agencies to maneuver in several areas of public policy formulation that impinge on water management. The WEHAB agenda and the urge to accomplish the MDGs have led to the creation, at the highest level of global governance, of new partnerships across the countries involving a wide range of different actors.¹ The spread of democracy across the globe, on the one hand, and the growth of private enterprise, on the other, both pose new challenges for governance processes. In the water sector, the global environmental crisis, growing poverty in urban and rural areas, continued gender inequalities, and transboundary impasse in collaboration (among other issues) all point to the need for a different governance approach to water use and management. Multi-stakeholder platforms, wherever they have been established and practiced, while not providing magic bullet solutions, have, however, helped in the process of constructive engagement—"negotiations" in short—by providing the forum where the views of the "other side" can both be heard and responded to (Dore et al. 2010). As a result of such

developments, water (and other natural resources) management has been undergoing major paradigm shifts that may be the harbinger of more healthy and less conflict-ridden developments in the future.

All these developments and challenges have led academicians and practitioners all over the world to express increasing concerns over the inadequacy of current measures of universal economic performance, in particular those based on GDP figures. The concern is about the relevance of these indicators as measures of societal and human well-being and equity as well as measures of economic, environmental, and social sustainability. Current well-being has to do with both economic resources, such as income, and with non-economic aspects of peoples' life—what they can do, what they should do, and how they feel and value the natural environment they live in. Whether these levels of well-being can be sustained over time depends on whether stocks of capital that matter for our lives (natural, physical, human, social) are passed on to future generations in as good a shape, if not better, than how we ourselves have inherited them.² The big question is—will South Asia make seminal contributions to this debate through indigenous approaches or will it simply follow and parrot concepts developed elsewhere?

Bhutan, where a conference was organized by SaciWATERs in May 2010, which has led to the chapters in this book, stands out by its introducing the concept of “Gross National Happiness” (GNH) into the global discourse. It may have many operational difficulties, but it certainly is a paradigm challenge that has to be engaged with constructively, especially by those in South Asia. As far as water is concerned, South Asia's civic movements are rich in new explorations, which have crossed many boundaries, not just the political and administrative but also conceptual and disciplinary. They have allowed us to see the “social construction” of water by different social solidarities or stakeholders, the implications they have for the choice of variegated water technologies ranging from age-old traditional to modern industrial, and the plural perceptions of risk and equity that have guided their invention as well as use and adaptation.

The Arun and Mahakali debates in Nepal, those of Tehri and Narmada in India, Eppawala in Sri Lanka, flood action plan in Bangladesh or the Kalabagh in Pakistan have all deepened our understanding of the perils of the unbridled hydraulic mission

paradigm and the reflexive discourse on modernity demanded by our times (Gyawali et al. 2006). And it is not that there are no success stories in our neighborhood to build on. Alternative thinking on water management in Calcutta has shown how urban wastewater can be cleaned and the nutrients harvested through algae and fisheries before they are lost to the sea. Water harvesting and restoration of traditional tanks in the dry parts of western India have been inspirational measures. Those who worked to restore ponds in the mid-hills of the Nepal Himalayas found, to their surprise, that these measures also prevented landslides from growing, increased maize production with the increase in soil moisture, and gave extra weeks of life to mountain springs, thus reducing water stress for people and livestock alike.

This book is both a marker and a continuing journey by the collegiums of South Asia and beyond engaged with SaciWATERs. The Thimpu conference in May 2010 focused on the implications of the trends and shifts in water management of this region under the globalization process and asked the question: how are these trends changing water management practices, ownership and access? How are water management policies being reformulated? What roles have international and multilateral institutions played in influencing the direction and content of water sector reform processes? What room do governments have to maneuver vis-a-vis the international political and economic order in the management of their reform processes? How is the growth of private enterprise influencing access to water? And finally, what are the implications of these trends for human and societal well-being? The workshop was attended by about 50 researchers, academicians, practitioners and students from South Asian countries. Of the 25 papers presented at the conference, seventeen appear in this volume following a rigorous peer review process and the incorporation of the debates at the workshop.

I am confident that this book will provide a new searchlight on the path ahead and contribute to the public debate around the democratization of water governance in South Asia.

Dipak Gyawali
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Notes

1. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan proposed at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 five key areas for particular focus—Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity (WEHAB). Available at http://esl.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dc/wehab/WEHAB_Indicators.htm (accessed May 2, 2013).
2. Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress. Available at <http://www.stiglitz-senfitoussi.fr/en/index.htm> (accessed May 2, 2013).

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