Managing Water for Sustainable Agriculture

From Secretary General’s Desk...

Dear Friends,

The scale of the global sustainable development challenge is unprecedented. The post-2015 sustainable development goals for a greener growth are nudging the world to focus on the vital challenges of sustainable development. UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN) launched by UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon in August 2012 is expected to facilitate innovative ways to draw upon worldwide expertise through greater participatory decision making.

As Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute and UN SDSN points out, sustainable agriculture through improved traits, agro-ecology, smart tillage, irrigation, micro dosing and ocean management will play a crucial role in sustainable development.

Irrigation and drainage managers have therefore tremendous responsibility to make agriculture water management that forms one of the main pillars of sustainable development more efficient and environmentally sustainable. At the high level dialogue organized on the occasion of IWMI’s Board meeting in New Delhi earlier this month, Prof Johan Rockström underline the importance of recognizing and respecting a set of nine planetary boundaries within which humanity can continue to develop and thrive for generations to come. Two among these nine planetary boundaries are already transgressed.

The upcoming International Day for Biodiversity on 22nd May and the World Day to Combat Desertification on 17th June will provide opportunity to the water managers in general and irrigation managers in particular for further diversify our knowledge on the environmental services.

The challenge for irrigation today is to produce more with less water. An improvement of water use efficiency is therefore expected from the irrigation sector as a small percentage improvement in irrigation water use has the potential to release large quantities of water for other uses. This goal can only be achieved through a high level performance and provision of irrigation services. Modernization of irrigation systems is, without doubt, one of the most promising strategies to meet these challenges. Active involvement of those being served in the decision making processes is equally important.

To improve the performance there is a huge need to modernize and rehabilitate the existing irrigation schemes. The 7th International Workshop on “Using 21st Century Technology to Better Manage Irrigation Water Supplies” organised by USCID last month highlighted these issues. It was pointed out that the multiple purposes of irrigation systems must be considered during the planning of modernization of irrigation schemes and new technologies on water management and water conservation have to be adopted with the implementation of modernization of irrigation systems.

In order to get the feedback that is so essential to get the complete buy in from the various stakeholders of irrigation and drainage scheme the First World Irrigation Forum scheduled from 29th Sept to 3rd October 2013 in Mardin, Turkey provides such an opportunity. The recommendations and inputs generated by interactions at the World Irrigation Forums would enable NCS to conceive sustainable solutions as part of their national plans and move towards provision of “irrigation services”.

May I take the liberty of reminding you to make use of “Early Bird” registration opportunity till 1st July 2013 and avail the concessional registration fee.

Preparations for WIFI are in full swing. We are expecting a number of Ministers, President WWC, DG of IWMI, representatives of the Water User Associations from Pakistan, Egypt, Turkey and many other countries. There has been an enthusiastic response to the World Irrigation and Drainage Prize 2013, nominations for which closed on 15th May 2013.

I take this opportunity to welcome our Malawai National Committee (MALCID) to IEC and congratulate them for reactivating the participation of MALCID in ICID. A word of appreciation for SARRA the regional irrigation outfit in Southern Africa will not be out of place for invigorating the NCS in the region.

This month we are introducing a new feature on our website. It is an exclusive section for the members of ICID. You must have received your passwords and explored the features therein. We are looking forward to your suggestions as to what features/documents you would like to see in your exclusive section.

With Regards,

Avinash C. Tyagi
Secretary General
The COUNTDOWN Begins for WatSave Awards 2013

Countdown for the WatSave Awards 2013 has begun as the last date for nominations, 31st May 2013, approaches closer. Nominations are invited for the ‘WatSave awards 2013’ from individuals/team through National Committees/Committee. The nominations sent directly to the Central Office, ICID cannot be entertained. The contact coordinates of the ICID National Committees/Committee, the ‘Nomination Form’, ‘Conditions and Criteria’, and ‘Check list’ of the documents to be submitted are available at <http://www.icid.org/awards.htm>. Just to remind, the WatSave awards are given in four categories: (i) Technology; (ii) Innovative Water Management; (iii) Young Professionals; and (iv) Farmer. The selection of the winners from amongst the nominations received will be made by an International Panel of Judges established by International Executive Council of ICID. The WatSave Award consists of a citation plaque along with a cash prize US $2000 each. The Turkish National Committee of ICID bags the honor of sponsoring the WatSave Awards 2013.

The awards will be presented at the 64th International Executive Council (IEC) meeting scheduled to be held on 5th October 2013 at Mardin, Turkey. For further information, please contact Dr. Vijay K. Labhsetwars, Director, ICID at Email: <icid@icid.org>.

International Day for Biodiversity, 22 May 2013

The theme of this year’s International Day for Biodiversity (22 May) is “Water and Biodiversity”. The theme Water and Biodiversity was chosen to coincide with the United Nations designation of 2013 as the International Year of Water Cooperation. Water and Biodiversity is the theme for International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) in 2013. Designation of IDB 2013 on the theme of water provides Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the public at large the opportunity to raise awareness about this vital issue, and to increase positive action. Read the notification. Coincidently, the period 2005-2015 is the International Decade for Action ‘WATER FOR LIFE’.

The emphasis is looking at how biodiversity, which contributes to “environment”, “ecosystem services”, and “natural infrastructure”, can help us manage water better. That is – how biodiversity influences water. It is not about how the “impact of water use on biodiversity” – although there are still significant problems with those impacts. Taking this approach, CBD has just released a booklet on the topic which is illustrative and answers a number of questions that agriculture water managers face. It can be downloaded from: https://www.cbd.int/idb/2013/booklet/.

World Day to Combat Desertification, 17 June 2013

Freshwater is valuable. Of all the water on Earth, only 2.5 per cent is freshwater. And of all this freshwater, the total usable supply for ecosystems and humans is less than 1 per cent. When demand for water exceeds available supply, it results in water scarcity. Dry lands are particularly vulnerable to water scarcity. The projected intensification of freshwater scarcity will cause greater stresses in dry lands. While each person needs at least 2,000 cubic meters of water for human well-being, the people in the dry lands have access to only 1,300 cubic meters. This led to the theme “Drought and water scarcity” for the World Day to Combat Desertification 2013.

The goal of the World Day to Combat Desertification 2013 is to create awareness about the risks of drought and water scarcity in the dry lands and beyond, calling attention to the importance of sustaining healthy soils as part of post Rio+20 agenda, as well as the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

This year’s slogan, “Don’t let our future dry up” calls for everyone to take action to promote preparedness and resilience to water scarcity, desertification and drought. The slogan embodies the message that we are all responsible for water and land conservation and sustainable use, and that there are solutions to these serious natural resource challenges. Land degradation does not have to threaten our future. For more information please access <http://
Kick-off meeting of the WWF7

More than 200 representatives from the world water community participated in the Kick-off meeting of WWF7 held on 14-15 May 2013 at Daegu-Gyeongbuk, Republic of Korea. This two-day event was inaugurated by World Water Council President Ben Braga together with distinguished guests Mr. Seoung-Iwan Suh, Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport of the Republic of Korea; Mr. Bum-il Kim, Mayor of Daegu; Mr. Jung-moo Lee, Chair of National Committee for the 7th World Water Forum and Mr. Kwan-yong Kim, Governor of Gyeongbuk Province. Earlier, on 13 May, Mr. Hongwon Chung, Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea welcomed all the visiting dignitaries in a reception ceremony. Mr. Yong Jiao, Chinese Vice-Minister of Water Resources and representative of the Mayor of Marseille, Martine Vassal were also present.

The ICID contingent was led by President Dr. Gao Zhanyi (China) at the kick-off meeting. Other members were Vice President Prof. Tai-Cheol Kim (Korea), Vice President Dr. Hüseyin Gundogdu (Turkey), Vice President Hon. Prof. Victor Dukhovny (Uzbekistan) and Vice President Hon. Shinsuke Ota, Chairman of Task Force for ICID input to WWF7 besides several Chairmen of National Committees of ICID.

The 7th World Water Forum is expected to put the solutions emerged from the last Forum to its use/implementation. Apart from political, thematic and regional processes, the WWF7 will introduce science and technology processes. The guiding principles for WWF7 have been prepared for leading the four working processes – thematic, regional, political, and science and technology.

BoG meeting

Prior to Kick-off meeting, the World Water Council (WWC) also held its 49th Board of Governors (BoG) meeting on 12-13 May 2013 at Seoul. As a member of Board of Governors of President Dr. Gao Zhanyi represented ICID in the BoG.

President Gao and Mr. Akif Ozkaldi, President of Turkish National Committee of ICID (TUCID) from DSI Turkey introduced the ICID’s new initiatives ‘1st World Irrigation Forum’ (1st WIF) to the august gathering. Prof. Ben Braga, President of WWC accepted President Gao’s invitation to participate in the 1st WIF, scheduled to be held on 29th September-03 October 2013 at Mardin in Turkey.

President Gao also participated in the 48th BoG meeting of WWC held during 1-2 February 2013 at in Marseille, France. During both these meetings of WWC, the development strategy of WWC was discussed vividly. Taking advantage of the occasion, President Gao highlighted the issues of water and water management for food production, food security, poverty alleviation and rural development. President Gao was later appointed as a member of the Steering Committee of Water and Food Security Project jointly supported by WWC and the Qatar National Food Security Programme (QNFSP).

News from ICID National Committees

Irrigation Australia Limited (IAL), Australia

Change of Guards at IAL

Irrigation Australia Limited (IAL) (incorporating Irrigation Australia’s Committee on Irrigation and Drainage, IACID) has informed that Mr. Ian Moorhouse and Mr. Duane Findley have taken over as new Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), respectively. The contact coordinates are as follows:

Mr. Ian Moorhouse, Chairman, Irrigation

Take advantage of Irrigation and Drainage Online

The ICID Journal, Irrigation and Drainage is available online FREE via Wiley Online library for all ICID office bearers, work body chairs & members and national committees. Volume 62.2, April 2013 is now available on the website. Click on http://onlineibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1531-0361 for direct access to the page for papers in this issue of Irrigation and Drainage.

ICID News Update

May 2013
We thank Mr. Anil Kumar Pokharel, Former Director General of Department of Irrigation and Chairman of Nepal National Committee of ICID (NENCID) for his active support and contributions to ICID.

**CEYRD (Spain)**

31st Spanish National Congress on Irrigation

The Spanish National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage (CERYD), together with the Spanish Association of Irrigation and Drainage (AERYD) will be organizing the 31st Spanish National Congress on Irrigation during 18-20 June 2013 at Orihuela (Alicante) in Spain.

The Technical Sessions during the Congress will be held on topics such as hydrology, crop water requirements, soil-water-plant relations, irrigation water quality, irrigation engineering, application methods and crops response, institutional water management, legal aspects, water rights, etc. More than 65 papers have been accepted so far and about 150 delegates from Spain, Mexico and Argentina are expected to participate in the Congress.

A special Round Table will be organized to present the Development of Orihuela (Irrigated Area in “Lower Segura Plain”). The Round Table is divided into four sessions: (i) History of the Plain Irrigation; (ii) Water resources availability; (iii) Modernization of irrigation structures, and; (iv) Effect of irrigation in the regional socio-economic development. To enrich the Congress, a Special Session on the theme “Present situation and safety of Irrigation Ponds in Spain”, will also be held to stress the irreplaceable role of these structures for the regulation of irrigation systems along with the traditional exhibition of irrigation materials and equipments. More information of 31st Spanish National Congress on Irrigation is available at <http://www.aeryd.es>

**ICID.UK (UK)**

Water and the Green Economy

British National Committee of ICID (ICID UK) will be hosting a one-day seminar on “Water and the Green Economy” on 8 November 2013 at Institution of Civil Engineers, London. This will be from an agricultural point of view. However, the interpretation of agriculture, water and the economy will be wide, and include the farm production, water conservation, productivity, the food chain, the private sector and consumer demand and behaviours. The term green economy implies economic growth alongside a decreasing consumption of natural capital - UNEP’s working definition considers a green economy to be one which results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. You may like to get in touch with Dr. Bruce Lankford, Chairman of ICID. UK, E-mail <b.lankford_at_uea.ac.uk> or click at <http://www.icid.org.uk/shownews.php?item=36> for more information.

**USCID (USA)**

Using 21st Century Technology to Better Manage Irrigation Water Supplies

President Dr. Gao Zhan yi (China) delivered a keynote speech upon invitation from the U.S. National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage (USCID) in their 7th International Workshop on ‘Using 21st Century Technology to Better Manage Irrigation Water Supplies’ held during 16-19 April 2013 at Phoenix, Arizona, USA. In his keynote on ‘Water Management for Food Security and Multiple Purposes’, he highlighted the huge need to modernize and rehabilitate the existing irrigation schemes. The age old traditional problems of irrigation infrastructures exist in many developing and the least developed countries. These problems lead to poor performance and low water use efficiency and water productivity in many irrigation schemes.

Presently many irrigation schemes, not only supply water for irrigation purpose, but also supply water to other sectors for various purposes, including supplying water for hydropower generation, for domestic uses, for industry, for tourism services besides fishery and ecological system. New technologies on water management and water conservation must be considered during the planning of modernization of irrigation schemes.

The workshop otherwise covered a wide range of technologies from farm scale to basin scale, from drip irrigation to remote sensing technology, from water use efficiency to water productivity. The technology and knowledge was discussed and shared for improvement of water management for achieving food security and sustainability. An exhibition on new technologies for irrigation water management was also held during the workshop.