

CALL FOR PAPERS

Multi-stakeholder Processes and Water Governance in Asia: Lessons and Next Steps

Date: January 28-29, 2010 (to be confirmed)

Location: LKY School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore, Singapore

Organized by: Consensus Building in Asia: A Network of Academics and Practitioners

Hosted by:

Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy,
National University of Singapore

Sponsored by:

Institute of Water Policy,
National University of Singapore

PURPOSE

Around Asia, government and non-government actors are using different kinds of multi-stakeholder processes (MSPs) to discuss, design, implement, and evaluate public policies. The water sector is one area where interesting MSPs are being convened throughout Asia. For example, numerous countries are now experimenting with river basin organizations. The Mekong riparian countries have created the Mekong River Commission to aid their coordination on water management.

Multi-stakeholder processes come in many forms. Some have interested parties meet together to share information. Others go farther, seeking to generate innovative options, do joint fact-finding, or, more rarely, even make recommendations together to decision-makers (who may or may not be participants in the deliberation). Some are new experiments; others are more well-established in the country.

Much can be learned from these multi-stakeholder processes, especially when one moves beyond questions of failure or success to learn how to make them work better. After all, all work can be improved and multi-stakeholder processes are often technically and politically complex. This workshop focuses then on analyzing recent processes to learn more about questions of how we convene and manage MSPs to produce better results. For example, how do we improve the creativity and technical wisdom of these processes? How do we manage relationships of hierarchy to get at real interests and generate attractive options? How can we manage the natural career risks that can arise when we lead and promote potentially politically-sensitive MSPs for water politics and policy? How can we create room institutionally for these experiments to have a fighting chance? What do the practitioners convening, facilitating, and otherwise managing these processes need to know? How can we evaluate their impacts over the short and long term? Should we go beyond whether they achieved their initial, short term purpose, such as generating options and reaching agreement? What lessons and challenges cross national, cultural, and other boundaries?

This workshop is aimed at gathering, comparing, and finally distributing the best cases and their analysis describing multi-stakeholder processes used to aid water management all around Asia.

From the proposals, a select group of practitioners and scholars will be invited to the workshop to share, critique, and improve each other's experiences and research. The best papers will then be invited to be chapters in an edited book tentatively titled: Multi-stakeholder Processes and Water Governance in Asia: Lessons and Next Steps.

ORGANIZERS

The Workshop is being organized by the founders of Consensus Building in Asia: A Network of Academics and Practitioners (CBAAsia). CBAAsia is co-organized by academics and practitioners from Korea Development Institute (KDI) School of Public Policy and Management, the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Public Policy, the Negotiation Program at Peking University Law School, and LKY School of Public Policy of the National University of Singapore. It has already convened two workshops on public policy consensus building in Asia. The first workshop was held at the Korea Development Institute School of Public Policy and Management in Seoul on 15-16 November 2007. The second was held at the University of Tokyo in 29-30 August 2008. Information about the workshops and CBAAsia can be found at <http://cbasia.org>.

CBAAsia's mission is to assess the current state of the art of the use of consensus building and other kinds of multi-stakeholder dialogue for public policy problems around Asia. It seeks to establish a network of Asian practitioners and researchers working on these issues in Asia. Its previous workshops have been attended by, for example, a former Vice-Minister for the Environment from Korea, an advisor to the Thai government on conflict resolution, business leaders from China, NGO representatives from Japan, and academics from public policy, planning, and business schools from Asia, the United States, and the European Union.

PROPOSALS FOR PAPERS

Proposals for papers are due by 5PM (Singapore time), November 23rd, 2009. Proposals should not be more than one page single-spaced in length and should briefly summarize (a) the experiments being described, including its location, the stakeholders involved, and the expected product of the dialogue and (b) the lessons learned in terms of conducting future such dialogues.

Proposals and serious enquiries about the content of the workshop should be submitted to **conference@cbasia.org**.

Decisions on the proposals will be made by November 30th, 2009 and communicated by email. Authors of successful proposals will be invited to the workshop with their travel and lodging paid by the organizers.

Draft papers are due by January 15th, 2010. The invitees will be expected to present their draft papers to the workshop. Final papers will be tentatively due on April 30, 2010.