

Dams and Development Forum

The Dams and Development Forum (DDF) is a broad-based multi-stakeholder group with representatives from thirteen stakeholder categories representing governments, civil society and the private sector. It is a fundamental component of the governance structure of the Dams and Development Project (DDP) that functions as a global vehicle to carry the constructive discussion on dams and development forward. It aims to ensure consideration of all perspectives in trying to find a common ground for often very controversial issues and to translate national and sectoral experiences and lessons learnt into key recommendations that may assist countries in framing national policies.



DDP

The specific role of the Forum is to:

- act as a platform for global multi-stakeholder dialogue on dams-related issues, including follow-up to the World Commission on Dams (WCD) report;
- exchange experiences and lessons learnt on operationalising and implementing WCD core values and strategic priorities;
- be an advisory body on key outputs of the DDP.

The Forum strives to be a neutral mechanism and draws on the experiences of its 120 member organizations. The consultative multi-stakeholder format of the Forum takes its origin from the WCD Forum, which proposed the establishment of the DDP at its third and final meeting in February 2001. The DD Forum supports the DDP Steering Committee (SC) and UNEP in directing the Project, and provides an opportunity for members to consider possible follow-up activities in their own countries or organizations.



DDP

Members of the Forum include key groups that are involved in the dams and development debate at national, regional and international levels. These comprise: Government agencies (policy, project/river basins and bilateral developing agencies, ECAs, regulators); affected peoples' and indigenous peoples' groups; utilities/operators and private sector/industry; international and advocacy NGOs; intergovernmental organizations; professional associations, organizations working on options; and research organizations (see list of member organizations in www.unep-dams.org).

The DD Forum convenes annually to deliberate on the agenda put forward by the SC. The DD Forum meetings have been instrumental in clarifying and prioritising key issues related to the decision-making, planning and management of dams and their alternatives for further consideration at global (e.g. issue-based workshops) and national levels and in advancing the debate on dams and development in search of a broad consensus.

First Dams and Development Forum Meeting, 8-9 July 2002, Nairobi, Kenya

Ninety-two representatives of a broad range of interest groups from around the world participated in the 1st Forum Meeting. Its structure consisted of six plenary sessions that addressed a wide range of issues, including the presentation of follow-up initiatives in countries such as Nepal, South Africa and Pakistan. Other items on the agenda included: institutional follow-up activities, key challenges, and defining the role and composition of the Dams and Development Forum meeting. The participants agreed that public acceptance, options assessment, existing dams, compliance, and facilitation of multi-stakeholder national dialogue activities were the main issues which the DDP activities would focus on. Parallel working group discussions were

held on each of the key issues to discuss what needed to be done to move dialogue and actions on these issues forward. Proceedings of this meeting are available at www.unep.org/dams/files/ddp_forum1.pdf

Second Dams and Development Forum Meeting, 25-26 September 2003, Geneva, Switzerland

More than 90 participants from 44 countries, covering a wide range of stakeholders' groups, attended the second Dams and Development Forum meeting. It was held under the theme: "Global Dialogue on Dams and Development to Meet Human and Environment Needs". Four plenary sessions dealt with the Forum's opportunities and responsibilities regarding global dialogue on dams and development; framing national dialogues; linking global and national dialogue; and promoting global dialogue on key issues looking beyond the strategic priorities. The work of five break-out sessions and a final plenary session resulted in a set of recommendations on the development of national dialogues, aimed at achieving concrete outcomes and the nature and features of further global dialogue on the priority issues adopted by the first meeting. Proceedings of this meeting are available at www.unep.org/dams/files/DDP.2nd.DDForum.Proceedings.pdf

Third Dams and Development Forum Meeting, 17-18 June 2004, Nairobi, Kenya

On the verge of concluding Phase 1, the third DD Forum meeting gathered 58 participants from 19 countries, representing various stakeholder groups. The meeting consisted of seven plenary sessions, which were structured in seminar, panel or working group format. The issues discussed intensively by the participants in the plenary sessions included national and regional multi-stakeholder dialogues for improved decision-making; integrating WCD core values and strategic priorities into national contexts; defining the indicators of success for multi-stakeholder dialogue processes, and the roadmap for implementation of the second phase of the DDP. Forum participants were also informed about the outcomes of three issue-based workshops convened by the DDP: Financing Dams and Sustainable Development, Addressing Existing Dams and Ensuring Compliance (see separate information sheet). Discussions focussed on the significance of further promoting national and regional dialogue to achieve concrete outcomes, and the need to involve more governments in DDP activities. These aspects were duly taken into account in the shaping of DDP Phase 2. Proceedings of this meeting are available at www.unep.org/dams/files/3RD_DDP_Forum.pdf

Fourth Dams and Development Forum Meeting, 6-7 October 2005, Nairobi, Kenya

The first DD Forum meeting of Phase 2 was attended by 82 participants from 33 countries representing a wide range of stakeholders, including a significant number of government representatives constituting the Government Advisory

Consultative Group (GACG). The meeting was organized into five plenary and two working group sessions. Presentations on the outcomes of the major relevant international meetings of 2005 and 2006 contributed to the substantive debates and resulted in the recommendation to raise the profile of the DDP in future meetings. The presentation of various national dialogue initiatives served to highlight the need for further multi-stakeholder dialogue, particularly in Africa. After discussing the practical tools that DDP is committed to elaborate, the participants recommended key priority issues for inclusion in the initial version of the Compendium on Relevant Practices. In this way, the DD Forum achieved the proposed objectives of moving forward the dams debate and providing an overall direction to DDP Phase 2. The proceedings of the meeting are available at http://www.unep.org/dams/files/ddp_forum4.pdf



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