



United Nations Environment Programme DAMS AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Information Sheet No. 4.4

Promoting Dialogue

Nepal Multistakeholders Dialogue on Dams and Development

The Nepal country initiative that follow up World Commission on Dams (WCD) process is one of the most successful initiatives in Asia. Its origin goes back to the special session on the WCD organised by the Nepal Water Partnership at a regional meeting on Integrated Water Resources Management on 26-28 February 2002. A year later, a meeting was organized on 2 January 2003 at the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Nepal office to discuss future actions to develop Nepal's position on the WCD report. There was a general agreement amongst the participants that the WCD report provided a very good basis for discussion within Nepal for more effective water resources management for Nepal's overall development. It was mentioned that the main issue was neither a complete adoption nor rejection of these recommendations but to internalise them for better dams planning and implementation. A subsequent meeting of the Task Force agreed on an overall mission statement for the process as shown in the box below.



"To carry out national consultations on dams and development, to consider the relevance of the recommendations of the WCD and other bodies in the Nepalese context with the ultimate aim of recommending the development and adoption of a national guideline for improved decision making, planning and management of dams and alternatives for Nepal".

UNEP-Dams and Development Project has consistently supported the Nepalese Dams and Development National Consultation Process to date. Moreover, financial support has been provided during the period from 1 January to 31 July 2003.

The scoping report

A ten member team coordinated by Nepal Water Conservation Foundation produced the scoping report while the IUCN Nepal Office coordinated the Nepal Multistakeholders Dialogue on Dams and Development process that began as a WCD follow-up process. The first draft of the "Nepalese scoping report", also known as "status report on Nepal's policy, legal and other guidelines vis-à-vis the Dams and Development recommendations", was issued on 11 September 2003. The report provides a very comprehensive review of existing laws and regulations related to dams and development in Nepal. In undertaking the comparison of national provisions with recommendations of WCD, the Task Force team looked at the seven strategic priorities as the framework for analysis with a focus on the content of 26 WCD guidelines. The result is a compilation of areas:

- Where Nepal's policies already provide coverage; and
- Where there is no current policy.

The analysis also identifies areas where implementation needs to be strengthened in the light of existing policies. The scoping report can be requested from IUCN office in Kathmandu, Nepal.

At the second Dams and Development Forum

At the second Dams and Development Forum held in September 2003 in Geneva Nepalese stakeholders presented the Nepal national multistakeholder process before the international audience. The presentations were well received and triggered the lively discussions.

Key Messages

Nepal multi-stakeholder dialogue:

- is the first ever sustained multi-stakeholder discussions on Dams and Development in Nepal; and
- has raised awareness on Dams and Development in Nepal and raised interest internationally on the National process

At the Consultation Meeting in Kathmandu

The consultation meeting with the representatives from the government ministries and departments was held on 14 November 2003 in Kathmandu. It was very well attended and various stakeholders contributed their comments on the first draft of the scoping report. UNEP Dams and Development Project attended the meeting and contributed its official comments on the first draft of the Scoping Report.

What is the next?

Nepal is working to have its own definition and criteria to categorise the nature of dams across its diverse topography.

As immediate task, Nepal is gearing up for the second phase with renewed commitment from government, NGO, INGO, private sector and academia to continue multistakeholder dialogue on Dams and Development in Nepal towards sustainable development.

Specific tasks are:

- To finalise the scoping report based on the inputs from the national workshop, to be published soon in English and a summary of it in Nepalese language.
- To continue the work of Task Force on a permanent basis and make it more participatory to the local needs and situations. The Steering Committee members who met on 17 September 2003 made this decision.
- To include the review of policies and guidelines of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank in light of the WCD Report in Nepalese context.
- To organise series of workshops on strategic policies as the UNEP-DDP has started doing them now at global level.



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