



# The NARBO Newsletter

(Network of Asian River Basin Organizations)

<http://www.narbo.jp>

## Activities(Thematic Workshop)

### The NARBO Thematic Workshop on Water Rights

Michitaro Nakai \*

#### 1. Introduction

The NARBO Thematic Workshop on Water Rights was held in Manila, the Philippines (ADB Headquarters), on 29-31 May 2007, attended by 31 participants from 7 countries (The Philippines, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Japan). The workshop was hosted by ADB, in collaboration with the National Water Resources Board (NWRB), Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), and Japan Water Agency (JWA).

The objective of the workshop is to follow-up the Thematic Workshop on Water Allocation and Water Rights, held during December 2005 - January 2007 and to finalize the technical paper on water rights system.

Participants gave presentation on the status on water rights system in their own countries, and had intensive discussion on the system. In addition, field visit was held to go to 3 venues; Tagaytay City Water District, Office of National Irrigation Administration, and Ayala Property Management Corporation. We could share information on water rights in the Philippines through the field trip.

#### 2. Highlight of the Discussion

The following items were mainly discussed in the workshop. Outcome of the discussions is attached herewith.

- How to accommodate water resources 1) for poor communities, 2) for new users, and 3) for environment
- How to improve consultations for win-win solutions
- How to manage transition from implicit allocation scheme to explicit one (From "implicit" to "explicit")
- How to coordinate surface water and groundwater allocation

#### How to accommodate water resources:

- **For poor communities:** Participants reported the issue that poor community areas, in many cases, do not have adequate water supply facilities. Accordingly, there find some controversial cases that rich people can use reasonable priced water though poor people have to buy expensive bottled water. Therefore, participants concluded that it is necessary to develop adequate potable water supply facilities for poor communities with minimum cost.
- **For new users:** Participants concluded the followings; (i) more beneficial

water uses should be prioritized, (ii) it is necessary to develop new water resources not only with reservoir construction but also inter-basin transfer or other measures, and (iii) with developing new water resources, financial contribution from large water users should be considered.

#### • For environment:

Participants concluded that it is necessary to ensure certain of % of available water for environmental use and raise awareness on the necessity of environmental flow.

#### How to improve consultations for win-win solutions:

Participants concluded that the followings are needed to realize improvement of consultations for win-win solutions; (i) to identify stakeholders especially small farmers' groups, (ii) to engage more multiple users through improving communication, transparency, and better education, (iii) to mobilize local organizations at village/community level, (iv) to promote and increase the opportunities for consultation between city water users and irrigation water users, (v) to promote the activity of coordination bodies such as RBOs, and (vi) to establish the plan for

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## Topics of this issue

### Activities (Thematic Workshop)

- The NARBO Thematic Workshop on Water Rights
- The 1st Thematic Workshop on Sustainable Management for Water Resources Infrastructures

### (Benchmarking)

- The Last Performance Benchmarking Pilot and Peer Review of the RRBO

### From the secretariat

- Report on NARBO Secretariat Meeting - NARBO Secretariat
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water uses at basin level through stakeholders' consultation as well as recognizing water demand and supply in the basin.

#### How to manage transition from "implicit" to "explicit":

Participants understood that explicit scheme for water allocation is vital for appropriate water allocation from the viewpoint of good governance. In addition, participants concluded that (i) it is necessary to raise awareness on the explicit water allocation scheme and disseminate the advantage of it, and (ii) enforcement power is needed for explicit water allocation scheme.

#### How to coordinate surface water and groundwater:

participants concluded that the followings are needed to coordinate surface water and groundwater appropriately; (i) to collect necessary data and information

on availability of groundwater and surface water, (ii) to develop plans for uses of groundwater and surface water, and (iii) to establish strong coordination between groundwater management organization and surface water management organization.

### 3. Field Trip

Field trip was held on 30th May (Day2), and participants visited to 3 venues as follows.

#### •Tagaytay City Water District:

The purpose of this field trip was to see the case of conflict on water permit application in an urban context, between water supply utility and private firms

#### •National Irrigation Administration (NIA):

The purpose of this field trip was to see the good example of water allocation among multiple irrigation water users conducted by NIA, which is a government entity under

the Department of Agriculture, the Philippines.

#### • Ayala Property Management corporation:

The purpose of this field trip was to see the good example of well-functioned water rights system relating to the Laguna Lake, which is the biggest lake in the Philippines.

### 4. Conclusion

Thanks to the contributions from the participants, we could made good discussion on water rights system, which is one of the important water issues in Asia. The drafted technical paper was intensively discussed with valuable comments from participants received, including on the roles of RBOs on water rights. Now, ADB HQ is deliberating the technical paper the outcome of the workshop. Further information will be posted onto the NARBO Website



Session in the workshop

## The 1st Thematic Workshop on Sustainable Management for Water Resources Infrastructures

Masahiro Sugiura \*

### 1. Introduction

The 1st thematic workshop on sustainable management for water resources infrastructures was held on 11th-14th June 2007 in Hanoi, Vietnam (at the meeting room of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)). The thematic workshop was highlighted as one of the important activities in the action plan (2006-2007) decided at the Second NARBO General Meeting. Japan Water Agency (JWA) will lead "the workshop on sustainable management of Water

Resources Infrastructures" based on the action plan, that called as "the workshop on facility management". The sustainable management becomes a very important perspective to practice water resources management and it has been worked on by various methods in each country. In this respect, NARBO respects the characteristic of water resources management being implemented by each country. Therefore, we would like to take this opportunity to discuss a concrete measure for ahow NARBO members' country

has endeavored to improve the management of water resources infrastructure by sharing experience and major issues faced with each country. This workshop was composed of field visits and discussion.

This workshop is proposed to be held four times during 2007-2008. Theme of each workshop is planned as follows:

"The 1st Workshop "Characteristic and Issue on sustainable management of water resources

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in the near future. Infrastructures of each country” in Vietnam by hosts of General Office for RBOs, Department of Water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD).”, “The 2nd Workshop “Identify of problem and consultation toward resolution” (To be held in a participant’s country in October 2007 as proposal).”, “The 3rd Workshop “Setting goal and approach to problem solution” (To be held in a participant’s country in December 2007 as proposal).”, “The 4th Workshop “Presentation of the next step by each participant” (To be held in a participant’s country, and date will be decided later).

## 2. The 1st thematic workshop on sustainable management for water resources infrastructures

The host organization of The 1st thematic workshop on sustainable management for water resources infrastructures was the Department of Water Resources, MARD. Eighteen participants from 6 countries (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and Japan) discussed each session theme actively, and we could reach the consensus about the improvement for water resources infrastructures management issues. The main objective of the 1st workshop was “Characteristic and Issue on sustainable

management of water resources Infrastructures of each country”.

In addition, we visited the Nui Cook dam site and Bac Hung Hai system and could obtain information on the water resources infrastructures in Vietnam, which are quite useful.

## 3. Conclusion

Thanks to the participants’ efforts, we could complete the 1st thematic workshop successfully. Finally, we would like to express our thanks for all participants and staff of MARD in Vietnam, also secretariat is hoping that we will have close relationships with each other in the future.



Information Exchange and Discussion on Water Resources Infrastructures Management (First day)



Site Visit (Second day)



Site Visit (Third day)

## Activities(Benchmarking)

### The Last Performance Benchmarking Pilot and Peer Review of the RRBO

Inocencio Arlene \*

#### What was it About

The NARBO performance benchmarking pilot nears its completion with the peer review visit of the Red-Thai Binh River Basin Planning Management Board (RRBO) on 12 – 15 June 2007. The RRBO pilot benchmarking is the last of four pilots, after which NARBO will decide on how to proceed with its Benchmarking Initiative. \*1 A team of NARBO Certified Peer Reviewers (PR) from Jasa Tirta I Public Corporation (PJT I), Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL) and Ping River Basin Organization with support from Japan Water Agency (JWA)/Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI)/NARBO Secretariat and the

International Water Management Institute (IWMI) conducted the peer review.

The PR Team was chaired by Supaporn Thongpook, President of Ping River Basin Organization. The peer review was fruitful and had the full support and cooperation of the host organization.

The June 2007 peer review visit was preceded by a self-assessment process which began in February this year. At the start of the process, the RRBO designated a Self-Assessment (SA) Team composed of nine (9) key officers and chaired by the Deputy Head, Mr. Le Van Hoc. A one-day orientation for the SA Team was

conducted by IWMI in early February. It laid down the guidelines in carrying out performance assessment using the NARBO Benchmarking Tool, which is anchored on five (5) critical river basin organization (RBO) performance areas and 14 performance indicators. The SA Team facilitated the self-assessment process within the RRBO using the NARBO tool. Testing the applicability of the Benchmarking Tool is one of the objectives of the pilot.

With the completion of the SA Self-Assessment Report in May 2007, the peer review process was commenced and a team of

\* ) Economist, International Water Management Institute, Southeast Asia Office, Penang, Malaysia

peer reviewers was composed in coordination with the RRBO. The implementation of this process is in accordance with the other aim of the pilot which is to test the usefulness and appropriateness of a peer review approach in RBO performance benchmarking. A few weeks before the visit, the selected Peer Reviewers were given the SA Report and the key support documents for them to read in advance to better prepare them for the task.

As in past peer reviews, the RRBO Peer Review (PR) visit included a series of activities. Just before the start of the 4-day peer review, the PR members briefly met, discussed as a team and appointed its chair. A quick refresher on RBO Peer Review objectives, process, guidelines and expectations followed. The first day of the peer review was filled with presentations by the SA Team, review of key RRBO documents to support the self-assessment ratings and interviews with the RRBO top management and staff. The second and third days were spent meeting the staff and viewing some facilities of two sub-RBOs in the Red River basin (the Day and Cau sub-RBOs) as part of the RRBO stakeholder consultations. On the last day, the PR Team prepared the draft PR Report, had a dialogue with the SA Team and presented the key findings to the RRBO top management. The activity was officially closed by the NARBO Vice-Chair, Dr. Michio Ota, with some inspiring messages and a confirmation of NARBO's commitment to supporting its members and the Benchmarking Initiative.

**Some Peer Review Highlights**

During the Peer Review, the SA Team showed confidence and trust in the PR Team by freely sharing and discussing its performance ratings. The SA Team also showed objectivity in defending its high ratings and explaining the low ratings. In two indicators, while appreciative of the higher marks the PR team thought the RRBO deserved, the SA Team stood its ground and expounded on why the lower ratings were appropriate. This shows that the SA Team recognizes well that the RRBO as an organization has yet so much to improve in terms of realizing and implementing integrated water resource management (IWRM) objectives. \*2

The PR team was really focused in its task, had well-thought questions and comments and came up with some interesting recommendations. The PR Team included Tjoek Subijanto of PJT I and J.A.S.A. Jayasinghe of MASL. All the three PR members have been involved in two other pilots, so they have the benefit of accumulated experience and understanding in performance benchmarking and peer reviewing.

At the end of the activity, a project management expert working on the Second Red River Basin Sector project has challenged the RRBO to put to use the results of this performance benchmarking and come up with a road map to help the organization become better. \*3 As he aptly put, the whole performance benchmarking is a tool for seeing where the organization is headed and knowing how to get there.

**Some Lessons from the RRBO Benchmarking**

- The successful implementation of the RRBO benchmarking pilot can be attributed to several key factors:
  - the strong commitment and full support of the top executive and management of RRBO backed by commitment of some resources. Without the buy-in and support of the top management, the performance benchmarking initiative cannot go far.
  - the appointment of highly capable and focused SA Team which facilitated the self-assessment process and completed a clearly written SA Report;
  - the openness to learn and experience new things, the desire to improve performance and willingness share and contribute own knowledge and experience, as reiterated in the opening address of the RRBO Head; and
  - a committed team of technically knowledgeable and experienced RBO peer reviewers which lent credibility to the whole benchmarking process. NARBO has currently a very limited number of Certified Peer Reviewers who can carry out peer reviews. This points to the need to do another round of training and certification of a new batch of peer reviewers. \*4
- Among the early benefits of the benchmarking initiatives is the increased awareness of RRBO staff on the potential usefulness of performance benchmarking with a balanced scorecard framework in identifying the organization's strengths and weaknesses, and supposedly investment gaps and areas to focus resources on to achieve target improvements in performance and implement IWRM. \*5 The balanced scorecard framework presents a more systematic way of understanding the organization's position in terms of 5 critical performance areas which all lead to the achievement of IWRM objectives. This knowledge should make possible setting of clear targets and correspondingly



Session in the RRBO pilot benchmarking

allocating resources. However, with the uncertainty on the immediate future of the RRBO, the SA Team thought it prudent not to set targets and identify the corresponding initiatives.

- Despite initial reservations that the tool may not be appropriate for the RRBO given its relatively narrow mandate and limited activities compared to the other three pilots, both the SA and PR Teams realized that the tool makes sense even for a “young” and “small” RBO in transition, with some refinements. \*6

- A better understanding of the NARBO Benchmarking Tool and the balanced scorecard approach will require a lot of practice. In turn,

a better understanding of the Tool will allow the RBOs a better handle and reaping of greater benefits in terms of improved performance and achieved targets.

#### What Next

For the RRBO, the PR Team will soon be submitting its final report to its top management for consideration and appropriate action. Two actions should be encouraged. First, the RRBO top management which holds concurrent and more regular positions in IWARP can apply the results and lessons to IWARP as an organization. Second, both the SA and PR Reports can be shared with the new river basin management body if it will be constituted

soon enough while the findings and recommendations are still relevant.

For NARBO, however, the lessons from the RRBO performance benchmarking will be useful in several ways: (1) confirming that the balanced scorecard framework is appropriate and satisfactory for RBO performance assessment; (2) establishing the benefits of a peer review approach; (3) revising and improving the indicators; and (4) developing reporting formats. There is now a plan to hold a NARBO workshop by end of the year to learn the lessons from the pilots, get updates on the responses and actions from the reviewed RBOs and draw the next steps for the Benchmarking Initiative.

\*1)The 3 other pilots were done by Jasa Tirta II Public Corporation (PJT II) in late July to October 2006, Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka in mid September to early December 2006, and Laguna Lake Development Authority in late January to April 2007.

\*2) This view does not reflect the impending reorganization and restructuring in river basin management with the transfer of this responsibility from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) this year and the finalization and implementation of the Government Decree on River basin Management most likely within the year.

\*3)Even with the transfer of river basin management, the Institute of Water Resources Planning (IWARP) which is hosting and manning the RRBO can benefit from the experience.

\*4)This need not be as intensive and long if members of the SA teams from all the pilots will be considered for the next batch.

\*5)The same can be said of the staff of the RBO members which were reviewed and or served as peer reviewers.

\*6)For instance, the PR Team had difficulty validating the Technical Development rating because it does not see the RRBO as maintaining infrastructure and operational assets while the SA Team could not give a rating for Cost Recovery because it feels that it is not a relevant indicator.



Participants in the RRBO pilot benchmarking

## From the secretariat

### Report on NARBO Secretariat Meeting – NARBO Secretariat

#### 1. Introduction

NARBO Secretariat Meeting was held on 1 June 2007 at ADB Headquarters to report the record of the NARBO activities after the NARBO 2nd General Meeting (February 2006) and to discuss the future orientation of NARBO. Attendants of the Meeting are as follows.

- Basuki Hadimuljono (NARBO Chair) – DG, Agency of Research & Development, Ministry of Public Works
- Ivan de Silva (NARBO Vice Chair) – DG, Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka
- Michio Ota (NARBO Vice Secretariat General) – Director, International Affair Division, Japan Water Agency (JWA)
- Wouter Lincklaen Arriens (NARBO Vice Secretariat General) – Lead Water Resources Specialist, ADB
- Ian Makin – Water Resources Engineer, ADB
- Sudharma Elakanda – Project Director, Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka
- Michitaro Nakai – NARBO Associate, ADB Institute
- Shinobu Ifuji – Administrator, International Affair Division, JWA
- Dennis Von Custodio – Consultant, ADB

#### 2. Highlights of the Meeting

The followings are the highlights of the meeting.

##### 2.1 Website

JWA will continue the operation and maintenance of the website; and will continue requesting contributions (case studies, insights, news items, etc.) from members.

JWA will coordinate with ADB water web team for possible improvements, including on gathering statistics and determining which pages or topics in the website are popular.

##### 2.2 Newsletter

JWA will continue circulating the newsletter on a quarterly basis; and will continue to remind members to submit news items.

JWA will consider strategies to further improve the substance of the newsletter, covering among others: (i) regular messages from Chair and Vice-Chair; (ii) new projects; (iii) weblinks; and (iv) recycling or repackaging important news articles.

##### 2.3. Media Relations, NARBO Promotion and Dissemination

NARBO Secretariat will (i) consider having a booth for NARBO at the upcoming 5th World Water Forum in Turkey; and (ii) consider participating in the upcoming world conference on climate change in Bali, Indonesia.

JWA will support the Vice Chair, Mr. Ivan de Silva's participation at the 3rd Southeast Asia Water Forum to be held 22-26 October in Malaysia to represent NARBO.

##### 2.4 Workshops

JWA will evaluate the current NARBO workshop methodology in terms of (i) output (product) and outcome, (ii) level of participation and targeting limited candidates to attend several times, (iii) inputs from experts, and (iv) number of times to be conducted, and share with NARBO Secretariat a short note on the evaluation.

## From the secretariat

### Report on NARBO Secretariat Meeting – NARBO Secretariat

#### 2.5 RBO centers of excellence

JWA will include the proposed center of excellence on water resources management in Indonesia as an activity under this program (NARBO Action Plan).

#### 2.6 Twinning programs

JWA will include as one of the resulting activities under the twinning program the pilot and demonstration activity on water quality for the Citarum river basin. JWA plans to exchange some staff between JWA and Indonesian NARBO this year pursuant to the MOA for Twinning Program between JPN and INO.

#### 2.7 Financial resources

ADB review the proposed financing working group and thereafter circulate a note to NARBO Secretariat.

#### 2.8 Membership Drive

NARBO Secretariat will target new RBO members from (i) INO; (ii) PHI; (iii) South Asia; (iv) SIN; and (v) PRC. NARBO Chair will help in getting new members from INO RBOs. MASL will review and advise if there is need to secure separate individual memberships from RBOs under the MASL organization.

#### 2.9 3rd General Meeting

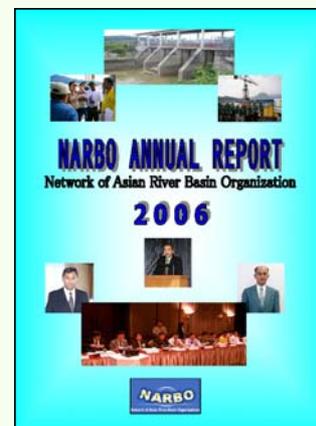
NARBO Chair will advise on the venue in Indonesia for the next general meeting (NARBO 3rd General Meeting will not be held in December 2006 as the OPEN EVENT for the Asia Pacific Water Summit).

### 3. Conclusion

As mentioned above, NARBO secretariat will make efforts to promote and expand the network; organizing more attractive events, attracting other RBOs, or seeking more stable financial sources etc. Thus, member organizations' more proactive participation in NARBO is appreciated. In addition, we are eagerly seeking the information and experiences on water resources of member countries, so that contribution to the NARBO website and the NARBO Newsletter from member organizations is also appreciated.

### Member's Annual Report 2006

"NARBO ANNUAL REPORT" that summarizes our activities in the year 2006, has just been issued and the report is available on NARBO website. Regarding compilation of the NARBO Member's Annual Report, we greatly appreciate your cooperation and help.



### Network of Asian River Basin Organizations

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