

Integrated Water Resources Management with Reference to Developing Countries

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SUMMARY

Water is vital for human survival and for economic development of a region. The need to maintain available water resources for water resources development, provision of good quality water for utilization by the increasing population and for the optimum benefit in development of the region should therefore be a priority for any country hoping to improve and sustain adequate standard of life for its populace. However conflicting demands for this resource often make decisions very critical: a case in point is the utilization of the water resource for hydropower generation against the downstream development for irrigation. There is a need therefore to have clear, long-term management policies to ensure optimum benefit to the region. The Integrated Water Resources Management facilitates appropriate planning, feasibility and implementation of water resources projects and management through development of policies, legal framework, appropriate manpower development and consideration of important driving factors including economics, social aspects, environment and political climate. International organizations and donor agencies also have a critical role in this process by providing necessary support through sharing of knowledge and best practices and ensuring that lessons learnt from the past are fully incorporated into new ventures. . This paper looks at the problems of water management, various aspects of *Integrated Water Resources Management*, implementation of such management policies in general, with special reference to specific cases undertaken in the past. The paper concludes by highlighting why integrated water resource management is so crucial in developing countries and the important role that international organizations will be required to play in ensuring the success of such projects through facilitation of development of multi-disciplinary professional teams and organization of international and collective funding for such projects.