

Water cooperation helps preserve water resources and protect the environment

Report of the breakout session during World Water Day, 22 March 2013, The Hague

Delta Alliance together with Deltares and UNEP convened a session on the subject 'Water cooperation helps preserve water resources and protect the environment' during the World Water Day on 22 March 2013 in The Hague, the Netherlands. Around 100 persons from governments, knowledge institutes, international NGO's and intergovernmental organizations attended the session and discussed 8 different topics under the main theme.

The session started with a compilation of main statements on the topic and reflections on the previous day by Mr. Pasquale Steduto (FAO & UN-Water), Mr. Bertrand van Ee (Netherlands Topsector Water), Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias (UN-CBD) and Mr Francisco Pereira, vice-minister of Public Works of the Republic of Mozambique. Statements made concerned alignment of the biodiversity and development agenda, the involvement of large businesses in the water sector, the role of the agricultural sector in relation to water and environment and management of floods. After some reactions from the public, 8 roundtable discussions started, each addressing a specific theme under the main topic of cooperation to preserve water resources and protect the environment. Delta Alliance led the session on 'worldwide knowledge exchange for the resilience of deltas and on land-ocean interactions'. The results are presented in the box below.

Delta Alliance session outcomes:

Challenge:

Given that an increasing majority of the world population is living in deltas, we have to secure a sustainable development of deltas around the world

Proposed Solution:

To develop and sustain a common knowledge base (of both best and bad practices) on delta issues (learn from each other)

Recommendation for Action

- To increase political and financial support
- To further develop an international "network of networks" for sustainable delta development.

After 45 minutes of engaged discussions the 8 roundtables presented their findings. From this, general challenges, solutions and recommendations were compiled covering the main session theme on water cooperation. These general findings can be found in the box below. An illustrator was present during the whole session, putting the essence of the discussions into nice cartoons.

Overall outcomes WWD 2013, Session 3: Water cooperation helps preserve water resources and protect the environment
Final output as has been presented at the High Level Forum, by Ania Grobicki

One challenge: Ensure that the water cycle delivers the ecosystems services people need : sufficient clean water for all uses and users, including food security, energy and growing urban demands, and reducing risks from extreme events such as floods and droughts

One solution: Develop a shared benefits approach on a basin scale, taking opportunities to integrate ecosystem services into water resources management; Reduce pollution@source, Reuse and Recycle (3Rs); decentralise governance and action to appropriate local levels (such as deltas), and bring stakeholders together.

One action: Build platforms for sustainable dialogue and negotiation, trust, transparency, skills development and knowledge sharing. Develop law enforcement and regulatory frameworks. Value and invest in nature as part of water infrastructure; show successful examples of private sector cooperation from multinationals down to SMEs.

