

TOWARDS LAKE CONSERVATION 2

The meeting

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, India, is organising a day-long meeting on lake conservation in Dhaka on September 26, 2012 in partnership with Work for Better Bangladesh (WBB) Trust. The meeting will be attended by regulators, researchers, environmental lawyers and prominent NGOs from India and Bangladesh.

This is the second meeting to be conducted on this topic; the previous one was held in August 2011 in partnership with Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP). Such meetings help focus attention on the threats, existing laws, policies and conservation measures of urban waterbodies in India and Bangladesh.

The meeting hopes to influence the policy debate on the status of waterbodies in south Asian cities, and to push policies that encourage participatory and locale-specific systems for their conservation. It will build upon the previous meeting by strengthening the network of researchers, lawyers and regulators involved in lake conservation in the two countries.

Background

South Asian cities are facing a massive water crisis, and Dhaka is no exception. Although it receives an appreciable amount of rainfall, Dhaka's water crisis is exacerbated by rampant encroachment and pollution of the city's waterbodies. Urban lakes have become easy targets of housing and commercial developers. Urban waterbodies – marshlands, ponds, wetlands and lakes – play a vital role in ground water recharge, flood control and storm protection. They secure water for drinking, agriculture and industrial purposes.

Concerned citizens across the country have come together to halt the rapid degradation of urban water bodies. Citizens and NGOs have filed legal cases and public interest litigations (PILs) for protection of urban lakes. Courts likewise have given some outstanding judgements in favour of saving waterbodies in and around Dhaka.

In July 2012, the High Court of Bangladesh ordered the Department of Environment to stop issuing environment and site clearances to a corporate group that had plans to construct an industrial park on a lake. Likewise in 2010, a Detailed Area Plan (DAP) was gazetted for the city of Dhaka, which set aside 21 per cent of the city's land for flood flow zones, water retention and waterbodies.



ABOUT CSE

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) is a public interest research and advocacy organisation based in New Delhi. CSE researches into, lobbies for and communicates the urgency of development that is both sustainable and equitable.

The scenario today demands using knowledge to bring about change. The challenge, we see, is two-pronged in the developing world. On the one hand, millions live within a biomass-based subsistence economy, at the margins of survival. On the other hand, rapid industrialization is throwing up new problems: growing toxification and a costly disease burden. The answers will be in reinventing the growth model of the Western world for ourselves, so that we can leapfrog technology choices and find new ways of building wealth that will not cost us the earth.

CSE's Water Programme has been looking at water management from a holistic perspective – from water supply, demand management to wastewater management and reuse of wastewater. The focus of this ongoing research is to document and disseminate multi-pronged strategies required to deal with the growing urban water crisis.

Water Programme in South Asia

CSE is now extending its research to the cities of south Asia to understand the crisis faced by these cities. As part of its regional outreach, CSE's Water Programme creates **model projects** on rainwater harvesting (RWH) and decentralised wastewater treatment (DWWT) that promote evidence-based advocacy on prudent water management in the south Asian region; anchors **conferences, rain conventions and meetings** to share contemporary **research and policy dialogues** on urban water management; and strengthens capacities of key regional stakeholders through focused **training programmes** on RWH and DWWT.

The team works in close collaboration with a host of civil society partners and key government agencies in the region. Leading regional partners include:

- **Water Aid** (Bangladesh)
- **Bangladesh Institute of Planners** (Bangladesh)
- **Ministry of Physical Planning and Works** (Nepal)
- **Centre for Integrated Urban Development** (Nepal)
- **Ministry of Water Supply and Drainage** (Sri Lanka) and the
- **Lanka Rainwater Harvesting Forum** (Sri Lanka).

TOWARDS LAKE CONSERVATION 2

2012, Monsoon

Invitation

Conserving urban lakes in south Asia

A day-long meeting to
save the lakes of Dhaka

September 26, 2012

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)
New Delhi

and

Work for a Better Bangladesh Trust (WBBT),
Dhaka



Encroached water body source: WBB Trust

TOWARDS LAKE CONSERVATION 2

Venue:

Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs (BILIA)

11.00 – 11.25

Welcome Tea

11.30 – 11.40

Welcome note

Saifuddin Ahmed, Executive Director, WBB Trust

Session 1: State of lakes/waterbodies in Dhaka

Chairperson:

Dr. Sarwar Jahan, Professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning (URP), BUET and Ex-President, Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP)

11.45 – 11.50

Introduction

Dr. Sarwar Jahan

11.50 – 12.35

Detailed Action Plan: Revised version focused on lake

Engr. M. Saidur Rahman, Project Director, Lake Development, RAJUK and Ishtaque Zahir, Director, VIITI Sthapati Brinda Ltd.

12.40 – 13.10

Threats on the existing lakes/ water bodies in Dhaka

Dr. Isharat Islam, Associate Professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, BUET, Dhaka

13.10 – 13.30

Positive examples from different district of Bangladesh perspective of save water bodies

Advocate Syed Mahbubul Alam, Director, Program and Planning, WBB Trust

Lunch 13.30 – 14.15

Session 2: Existing laws and policies for saving lakes/waterbodies in India and Bangladesh

Chairperson: Dr. Abdul Matin, General Secretary, Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA)

14.15 – 14.20

Introduction

Dr. Abdul Matin

14.25 – 14.55

State of water bodies and existing policies and laws in India

Susmita Sengupta, Deputy Programme Manager, Water Programme, CSE, New Delhi

14.55 – 15.25

Existing laws and policies to save the lakes in Bangladesh and recent court orders

Advocate Syeda Rizwana Hasan/Advocate Iqbal Kabir
Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA)

Session 3: Facilitated discussions

15.25 – 16.00

Summing up the agenda and valedictory

Open floor discussion

16.00 – 16.15

Sum-up and closing

Susmita Sengupta, Deputy Programme Manager, Water Programme, CSE, New Delhi

Closing Tea 16.15-16.30



Venue:
Bangladesh Institute of
Law and International Affairs
(BILIA)

Convener:

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Meeting venue

Bangladesh Institute of Law and
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Date: September 26, 2012

Time: 11.00 - 16.30