IWRM Action Hub

RESOURCE

Community participation in water governance: is it achievable through the apex bodies in Asia?

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Description / Abstract

Finding solutions to water challenges in any country requires not only top level government interest and involvement, but also full consultation of and participation by communities. In Asia, one significant development in the way governments are attempting to tackle water resource management (WRM) issues is the establishment of apex bodies.

So called because they have the highest Government representative at the apex of a triangle – indicating the importance of water issues - but inclusive of the heads of other ministries and top civil servants too, apex bodies aim to put water resource issues at the top of the political and policy agenda, and to better co-ordinate what is often a fragmented sector.

In 2004 WaterAid commissioned a study of the operation of the apex bodies in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Thailand, funded by the Asian Development Bank through its Knowledge Partnership programme.

The study asked how far apex bodies have provided leadership and co-ordination on water issues, and how far civil society organisations (CSOs) have benefited from the spaces for participation which the apex bodies , or the consultation processes they organise, should provide.

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Tool

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