

## **Fourth South Asia Water Forum**

### **Background.**

Consequent to the development of Water Vision- 2025 and Programmes for Action which were presented at the Second World Water Forum in The Hague in 2000, there was the holding of regional water fora as a sequel to and in tandem with the above three year events. The preparation of the Water Visions and Frameworks/Programmes for Action was a GWP initiative. In the context of SAS, these documents provide the broader context within which water resources management programmes are located in GWP South Asia. The South Asia Water Forum (SAWAF), first held under the auspices of SASTAC/ RWP in Kathmandu Nepal in February 2002 (for 2001), in Islamabad in December 2002 and in Dhaka in July 2004 brought together water experts, policy makers, academics and partners for deliberation on topical regional issues to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation thereby enabling agreement to be reached based on identified priority concerns. The SAWAF as regional platform both for deliberation of issues and regional interaction among the water community also sought to upstream regional concerns to the global water agenda, enlighten policy makers and politicians on possible way forward and highlight to the donor community the aspects needing support. With participation of around 250 participants linked directly to water from the region, it also enabled GWP to highlight both its presence and impact in South Asia and for the region to link to global initiatives such as MDG's and WSSD. The SAWAF, held back to back with the Partners General Assembly and Regional Council Meetings enabled optimising costs of statutory and institutional requirements. The costs of SAWAF were met by mobilisation of local and regional resources and were also supported by a grant from GWP of around US\$100,000/= for each event. Unfortunately the decision by GWP to not proceed with the grant had repercussions in that the institutional requirements had to be met by pooling resources from within, without much room for a broad based event. This resulted in a smaller gathering at Roundtable Conferences with less number of participants (around 40-50) in Sri Lanka in 2006 and another in India in 2009. On a programme basis this impacted adversely on a regional focus and led to a gradual reduction of regional activities. The momentum for regional cooperation which had been created and nurtured over the years dwindled.

### **Rationale for SAWAF 4.**

The GWP SAS Learning Review of 2005 and subsequent reviews have all highlighted the need of South Asia to reinforce its strong country based programmes with equally strong regional activity to seek visibility and credibility as an institutional arrangement of regional consequence in the water sector. It needs to be both a platform for deliberation and recommendation of regional perspectives on water and related livelihood issues and as a strong lobby for the region to attract resources to overcome its many challenges which are immense.

## **Draft II. Concept Note RR 2011 03 14**

With over a quarter of the world's population and over one third of it suffering endemic poverty and increased water insecurity now compounded by issues of climate change being identified as one of the global hot spots, the need to mobilise as a region has never been more acute. Increasing incidence of never before encounters of floods, landslides and droughts occurring in rapid succession and unimaginable magnitude has stretched to the limit the usual stoical resilience of its population and resources.

Flood and Drought Management linked to issues of Climate Change Adaptation and Food and Water Security have reached threshold levels in that deliberations and action cannot be postponed any longer. To these are linked other regional issues such as transboundary water issues both inter and intra state and issues of basin based allocation and use of water. These are again further linked to aspects such as energy security where hydropower plays an important role considering the high untapped potential in the region. Issues of governance and associated legal and institutional changes to meet these challenges and overall addressing of livelihood, poverty and health sanitation are seen as overarching and needing attention.

The 16<sup>th</sup> Regional Council Meeting of GWP SAS held in Karachi in November 2010 resolved to hold the next SAWAF in 2011 in Islamabad. A number of related events have also contributed towards addressing the water and climate change livelihood issues in SAS.. GWP SAS convened an expert working group meeting on regional experts on Integrated Drought Management in SAS, which came up with a regional proposal on Integrated Drought Management. GWP SAS continues to get fundraising support from GWPO. GWP TEC held a Climate Change Food and Water Security workshop in Colombo on February 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 2011. The workshop identified the need for strengthening the GWP SAS Virtual Platform as an effective mechanism for fostering cooperation in the region. This platform would also draw considerable additional expertise to address the specific regional issues identified at the workshop from the participants. GWP SAS requires the foundation for the connected regional initiatives to be strengthened without delay, the region already plans to build concrete proposals from the Colombo workshop ideas, which include Drought/ Flood monitoring and forecasting, Ground water management, Best practices in irrigation management and Legal framework for addressing water governance and regulation in the region. The regional project ideas and issues emanating from Colombo need to be laid before a larger regional forum and to facilitate building of concrete proposals from them and to secure the commitment of stakeholders including policymakers and politicians.

SAWAF offers an excellent forum not only to establish GWP and GWP SAS as contributing meaningfully to the discourse and debates on these issues, but as a mobilizer of effort, a catalyser of change and platform for discussion and interaction at a critical juncture where the region needs concerted and integrated action. SAWAF will therefore not only be the vehicle for moving the concrete regional project ideas forward into elementary proposals through the support of regional experts, but also allows GWP SAS to strengthen its expertise base and to reach out to regional stakeholders to build a common purpose.

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It is expected that the SAWAF 4 would be the ideal launch pad for the now envisaged extended platform helping to reach out to a more broad based audience of experts and stakeholders on the aspect of Climate Change Food and Water Security as proposed by GWP TEC. SAWAF also provides opportunity for donors who finance activities in the region to inform and alert themselves to issues and expectations of the region. The timing is also conducive to up streaming to the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum to be held in 2012 in Marseilles France under the appropriate theme of “**Time for Solutions**”

### **Timing and Organisation**

Provisional timing is for ....and.... **November / December 2011 in Islamabad.** First two days for SAWAF and the third day for holding of the GWP SAS General Assembly to approve changes to the GWP SAS Working Guidelines amended in 2009 and 2010 and for the 17<sup>th</sup> Regional Council Meeting . Total number of participants is expected to be around 150-200 with 66 regional delegates from the regional participating countries representing CWP and Partners.

The usual practice of the relevant Country Water Partnership handling the organisation and logistical aspect of SAWAF as earlier with assistance of key partners in the public/private sectors and relevant academic institutions will prevail. The Pakistan Water Partnership (PWP) with oversight by GWP-SAS will handle all arrangements in relation to SAWAF 4. Once Funding is pledged to an acceptable extent the first announcement is expected to be made in April with the second announcement in August

### **Themes and Workshop Structure**

Considering the great importance of addressing Climate Change Adaptation in relation to Food and Water Security in the context of floods and droughts and challenge of water and land productivity improvements, the main theme would be **Climate Change Food and Water Security** with emphasis on flood and drought management and **Transboundary Water Issues** as an associated issue with reference to above. SAWAF is likely to constitute 4 Technical Parallel Sessions with Plenary sessions at inauguration and conclusion. About 20-25 presentations based on these themes covering strategies, policies, operations, technical aspects, institutional and legal frameworks are anticipated to be covered. A 75% -25% split between the main and sub theme is expected. While some country issues will be highlighted the thrust of SAWAF would be to elicit the regional context and develop a basis for regional cooperation. Consideration will be given to use the availability of several experts at this event to mobilise their expertise to further develop proposals based on GWP SAS priorities

### **Output:**

In the context of the geo political realities of the region where bi lateral rather than multi lateral approaches are encouraged, it is considered that a paradigm shift would be essential to establish a regional operational environment where all issues could be meaningfully addressed multi laterally.

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Given these realities and the encouraging results of cooperation on technical issues that have and are obtaining the proximate objective would be to reinforce and consolidate this position. The last SAWAF in Dhaka in July 2004 had the Dhaka Declaration and it is envisaged that a similar declaration will be possible both in relation to the region and the global agenda on these topics.

SAWAF 4 would provide the ideal launch pad for the envisaged GWP SAS Network expanded to function as a *Virtual Platform* to address the main theme and related IWRM issues. Consensus, support and the visibility gained would be of major advantage to its credibility, sustainability and ability to attract financing.

The region needs a medium term (five year) regional work programme to be developed based on existing work on the main theme and connected aspects and the outcome of the SAWAF would strengthen both the programme content and financing potential of such a programme.

### **Budget:**

The direct costs for the Workshop are estimated at US \$ 120,000/=. Considering that approximately US\$ 20,000/= could be mobilised within the GWP SAS Budget (RC Meeting) a grant of US\$ 100,000/= is required. Contribution by associated partners is expected to be around US \$ 20,000/= including with in kind contributions.

**Annex 1** gives the breakdown of the main cost items.

### **Annex 1:**

#### **Fourth South Asia Water Forum, Islamabad, Pakistan**

Budget Estimate in USD

No	Description	Qty	Rate	Amount USD	GWP/ Donor	SAS
1	Preparation	Lumpsum	2000	2000	2000	
2	Printing and Stationary	Lumpsum	2000	2000	2000	
3	Halls, Lunches and Tea/Coffee (3 Days)	3	2500	7500	7500	
4	Travel ( International )	65	625	41000	32000	9000
5	Accommodation for Delegates (4 Nights)	260	96	25000	16000	9000
6	Per diem to 65 Delegates for 5-Days Each	325	45	15000	15000	
7	Visa Fees, Incidentals, Local Travel, etc	65	310	20000	20000	
8	Overheads and Contingency	Lumpsum		7500	5500	2000
	Total USD			<b>120000</b>	<b>100000</b>	<b>20000</b>