

Singapore International Water Week launches Blue Paper and Solutions

Launched at the IDA World Congress 2011, this strategic resource for global water leaders outlines imperatives including the need to price water to reflect its scarcity while ensuring its affordability, and the need to adopt an integrated approach to water planning and management to reap greater efficiencies.

Singapore, 5 September 2011: Key ideas from the Water Leaders Summit 2011 and a recap of the activities at Singapore International Water Week 2011 have been captured in the latest Water Week 2011 publications, *Blue Paper* and *Solutions*, respectively. The publications were launched by Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources at the International Desalination Association (IDA) World Congress on Desalination & Water Reuse in Perth, Western Australia today.

The Blue Paper serves as a strategic resource for global water leaders in the development of sustainable solutions in their own cities. It documents, amongst others, key discussions from the Water Leaders Summit including the inaugural Water Conversation with Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, Water Ministers Plenary, and Water Leaders Roundtable.

Salient takeaways from these dialogues outlines imperatives such as the need to price water not just to reflect the cost of production and delivery but also its scarcity value while ensuring that water was affordable; the need to harness desalination and water reuse technologies to overcome long-term water challenges; recognising correlation between food security and water security; and the need for governments to address the water-energy nexus by adopting an integrated approach for water-energy planning and management to reap greater efficiencies. The full excerpt of salient points captured in the Blue Paper can be found in the Annex.

Themed "Desalination: Sustainable Solutions for a Thirsty Planet", the IDA World Congress 2011 is expected to draw over 1,200 industry professionals and leaders from over 40 countries. One of the key events on the global water calendar, it brings together the desalination industry's greatest thinkers and achievers, from leading scientists and researchers, to end-users, suppliers and manufacturers. The theme of this year's congress underscores the increasing importance of desalination in addressing challenges in the security of water supply, and the impact that climate change has on water resources planning.

Singapore's participation and launch of *Blue Paper* and *Solutions* at the IDA World Congress cements the strong and synergistic partnership between Singapore and IDA in developing sustainable water solutions. In 2005, PUB played host to the World Congress, with a record of over 850 attendees from 47 countries. Both organisations then moved on to organise the Singapore Desalination and Water

Reuse Summit in 2007. That set the stage for closer collaboration between IDA and PUB on the Singapore International Water Week, Water Leaders Summit, research and development, and the IDA Fellowship Award programme.

More significantly, Singapore shares IDA's commitment towards desalination and water reuse as two sustainable sources of water. Recycled water, branded NEWater in Singapore, and desalinated water are part of PUB's Four National Taps, a long term water supply strategy to ensure a robust and sustainable water supply for Singapore.

Singapore's commitment towards pursuing innovation in desalination saw PUB embarking on a partnership with Hyflux in April this year to develop Singapore's second and largest desalination plant – Tuaspring Desalination Plant, with a long term goal for desalination to meet 30% of Singapore's water demand. PUB is also engaged in various R&D collaborations to chart new milestones in desalination, with projects aimed at reducing the energy consumption by over 50%, and using biomimicry to mimic natural desalination systems such as mangrove plants and saltwater fishes to further improve the energy efficiency of desalination processes.

Singapore International Water Week 2012

Following the successful staging of Singapore International Water Week 2011, which saw a record 13,500 participants from 99 countries/regions, the fifth Singapore International Water Week will be held from 2 to 6 July 2012 at the Sands Expo and Convention Centre at Marina Bay Sands.

The United Nations projects that by 2050, urban and industrial water use will double while climate change and rapid urbanisation will place mounting pressures on urban systems. In the face of these global challenges, the Singapore International Water Week 2012 theme "Water Solutions for Liveable and Sustainable Cities" reinforces the pressing need to integrate sustainable water management strategies into the urban planning process.

Held in conjunction with the 3rd World Cities Summit and the inaugural CleanEnviro Singapore, delegates, trade visitors and exhibitors will also have more opportunities to promote practical and sustainable water solutions and tap into a vast network of public and private sector players in urban solutions.

"Beyond the basic provision of water supply and sanitation, water management is crucial for cities to be liveable and sustainable. At Singapore International Water Week 2012, we will continue to look at water solutions for cities, focusing on the essential integration of sustainable water management

strategies into the process of urban planning,” said Maurice Neo, Managing Director of Singapore International Water Week.

Nominations for the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize 2012, a highlight of the Water Week, are now open till 31 October 2011. The Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize is an international water award that honours outstanding contributions towards solving global water problems by either applying technologies or implementing policies and programmes which benefit humanity. For nomination guidelines and form, please visit www.siww.com.sg.

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About Singapore International Water Week

The Singapore International Water Week is the global platform for water solutions. It brings policymakers, industry leaders, experts and practitioners together to address challenges, showcase technologies, discover opportunities and celebrate achievements in the water world. Comprising the Water Leaders Summit, Water Convention, Water Expo and Business Forums, it culminates in the presentation of the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize, a prestigious international award to recognise outstanding contributions in solving global water issues.

About World Cities Summit

The World Cities Summit is a premier event that brings together practitioners and policy makers with leading experts in their field to identify innovative solutions to the most pressing challenges facing cities today. For more information, visit www.worldcitysummit.com.sg.

About CleanEnviro Singapore

The inaugural CleanEnviro Singapore showcases waste management, energy and resources recovery companies, plant, machinery and equipment and cleaning technologies. Trade visitors will be able to source new waste management solutions and environmental technologies, meet global clients and hear experts on emerging issues on industry trends. For more information, visit www.wastemetasia.org.

Annex

From the *Blue Paper*

Key Messages from the Water Conversation with Singapore's Prime Minister

- The role of water as a strategic necessity has to be understood by all segments of society – government, private sector, the general public and even children.
- Water should be priced not just to reflect the cost of production and delivery but also its scarcity value. The poorer segments of society can be given assistance to pay their utility bills.
- When governments provide the enabling framework, water can become a growth industry.
- Over the long-term, desalination and water reuse technologies have tremendous potential to tackle water challenges.
- Only by looking at the water cycle as a whole can there be an incentive to optimise it. Integrated water resources management allows water to be used more efficiently.
- Every country has to solve its water challenges on its own – others can help with their expertise and investments but unless governments make it a priority and lay the framework, the international community can only offer limited support.

Key Messages from the Water Ministers Plenary

- The demand for a safe and reliable supply of water as well as its disposal has dramatically outstripped supply as populations are multiplying and cities are expanding.
- Many Asian and African governments are trying to create a favourable regulatory climate to allow the private sector to participate in various capacities and to rein in the gargantuan water and sanitation deficits.
- Tackling non-revenue water (NRW) has been recognised by the Ministers as one of the first steps towards managing the water challenges and many countries have embarked on NRW reduction projects.
- Pricing water to reflect its value while subsidising the poor at the same time is acknowledged by the Ministers as a necessity but it is a challenge to change tariff structures quickly.
- Food security is linked to water security.
- The ownership and management of water resources by the different states in a federal political system such as in India and Malaysia adds a new complexity to the challenges.

Key Messages from the Water Leaders Roundtable on Energy-Water Nexus

- There is an urgent need for governments and policymakers to take the lead in addressing the water-energy nexus by coming up with policies and regulatory frameworks to foster integrated water-energy planning and management. Greater advantages of efficiency can be reaped by integrating energy, water, food and climate policies, than by merely considering each of them separately.
- With a massive scale of urbanisation in progress, there are opportunities to bring together water and energy solutions in a way that has not been done before.
- As the market for renewable sources of energy grows, there is a need to assess their water budget and efficiency.
- Through R&D and innovation solutions, the industry can also help to maximise water-energy efficiency by exploring untapped opportunities.
- With technologies, there are opportunities to reduce the energy currently needed for seawater desalination by half and to generate energy from wastewater.

A copy of the *Blue Paper* and *Solutions* can be downloaded at <http://www.siww.com.sg/>.