

## **BBMB Successfully Organises the 1st International Conference on Sustainable Water Management under National Hydrology Project**

Growing pressure on water resources due to population growth, economic expansion, urbanization, pollution, and other challenges has major impact on our social, economic, and environmental well-being. Creeping effects of climate change are likely to aggravate the position by causing higher frequency & magnitude of extreme weather events as well as by changing the quantum & pattern of precipitation. Water stress gets even more compounded for countries like India with disproportionately low freshwater resources i.e. 4% against 18% of global population) and per capita storage of only 210 cubic meters even when most of its annual precipitation of 4000 BCM falls in just three months. It is in this context that BBMB has successfully organized the 1st International Conference on Sustainable Water Management on December 10-11, 2018, under inspiring leadership of Sh. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Chairman, BBMB, at Indian School of Business, Mohali under National Hydrology Project of the Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR, Govt. of India.

National Hydrology Project (NHP) is being implemented by the Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR, Govt. of India across the country through 49 nos. implementing agencies including BBMB. The objectives of NHP are to improve & expand hydrology data & information systems by timely and reliable data acquisition, storage, collation & management, to strengthen water resources operation & planning systems and to enhance institutional capacity for water resources management to facilitate evidence-based informed decision support systems at the basin scale across India using the latest technology & tools for water resources assessment, flood management, reservoir operations etc. NHP will contribute to the GOI's Digital India initiative by integrating water resources information across state and central agencies. To achieve the objectives as above, NHP envisages to promote international level knowledge exchange, networking and interaction between various stakeholders such as practitioners and academia through a series of annual international conferences to be hosted by different implementing agencies.

In this backdrop, BBMB had the honour of being chosen to host the 1st International Conference on Sustainable Water Management under National Hydrology Project on December 10-11, 2018 at Indian School of Business, Mohali.

Honourable Governor of Himachal Pradesh, Acharya Dev Vrat ji was the Chief Guest for the conference. Other dignitaries for the inaugural session included Sh. U.P. Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR, Govt. of India; Sh. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Chairman, BBMB; Sh. S Masood Husain, Chairman, CWC; Sh. Akhil Kumar, Joint Secretary (IC & GW); Sh. Sarvjit Singh, Principal Secretary, Dept. of WR, Govt. of Punjab; Sh. Anurag Rastogi, Principal Secretary, Dept. of Irr. & WR, Govt. of Haryana; Sh. Felix B. Reinders, President, International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID); Prof. Nick Schofield, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Water Partnership (AWP) and Sh. Eduardo Sánchez, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Spain in India. Addressing the participants, the Chief Guest stressed on the need for rejuvenating natural farming techniques, besides emphasizing the need of sustainable water management for the posterity,

The Plenary Session comprised of presentations on very relevant topics by national and international luminaries having vast experiences in the water resources sector such as Water Resources Management Initiatives in India (presented by Sh. S. Masood Husain, Chairman, CWC), Bhakra Dam – A modern temple for sustainable development in India, (presented by Sh. Devendra Kumar Sharma, Chairman, BBMB), Water Resources Planning and Management – An international experience (presented by Dr. Kees Bons, Expert on Integrated Water Resources Management, Deltares, Netherlands) apart from a brief talk by Deputy Chief of Mission Embassy of Spain regarding common water resources issues for India and Spain and initiatives undertaken in Spain, particularly for integrated water resources management. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman, BBMB underlined the stellar role of Bhakra Dam as the force multiplier in ushering green & white revolution, industrialization, urbanization, employment generation, flood prevention etc. and emphasized the need of storage projects for water conservation water & energy security.

The Conference witnessed huge participation i.e. about 500 participants comprising national and international water resources professionals, experts from academia, research institutions, NHP implementing agencies & industry and students/research scholars including foreign experts from 10 countries (Australia, United Kingdom, USA, Spain, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Canada, Germany, Sri Lanka & Vietnam) participated in the event. The conference provided an excellent platform to exchange ideas & best practices, create & strengthen partnerships, learn & discuss new developments in respect of sustainable water management i.e., meeting the current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their water needs. Besides the inaugural, plenary & the industry session, poster competition and very well received cultural programme, there were 15 technical sessions that were held in three conference halls in parallel wherein thought provoking discussions & presentations were held on various aspects of Sustainable Water Management such as River Basin Planning, Conjunctive Use of Surface and Ground Water, Climate Change and Adaptive Measures, Integrated Water Resources Management, Hydro-informatics, Innovative Irrigation Practices, Flood Modeling, Water and Energy Security, Sediment Management etc. Despite very short time being available for organising the conference, overwhelming response was also received from Industry putting up exhibition stalls showcasing various state of the art products & technologies in the area of water resources monitoring and management.



