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“Development on the margin”

Water Resources for the Production Systems on the Margin

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Abstract

Rising population, growing economic activities, rapid urbanisation, changing lifestyles, rapidly increasing demand for food coupled with changing consumption patterns, growing demand for bio energy have all combined together to put greater pressure on available water resources. Demand for water is fast overtaking the available supply. The impending climate change projections have made the situation scarier. Many countries in the world have already been facing or are destined to face serious water shortages in the near future.

India, the second most populous countries in the world, is likely to face acute water scarcity. The estimated demand for water in India is set to surpass the available water supplies from all sources by 2025 threatening food security and economic development. India faces a turbulent water future. The current water development and management system is not sustainable. Unless dramatic changes are made and made soon in the way in which government manages water, India will neither have the cash to maintain and build new infrastructure nor the water required for the economy and the people.

The present talk focuses on two major questions facing India's water economy:

(a) what are the major water development and management challenges facing India? and

(b) what are the critical measures that can be taken to address these challenges?

The presentation describes the evolution of the management of India's water, describes the achievements of the past and identifies a looming set of challenges. The presentation then discusses what changes need to be considered to deal with these challenges and how to manage the transition from the 'ways of the past' to the 'ways of the future' so that a more sustainable path of water development and management can emerge.

Keywords: Bio energy, climate change