



Concept note DWIH Annual Symposium: WaterScapes

Under the auspices of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, German House for Research and Innovation (DWIH, New Delhi), together with prominent institutions from India and Germany, will organize its annual flagship symposium ‘WaterScapes’ at the India Habitat Centre, between October 5 and 6, 2017.

Climate change, urbanization, industry advancement and associated pollution, and growing world population are constantly raising the demand for water resources. Water scarcity has increasingly received attention as being a severe threat to human well-being and to the safety of the planet, in general. The complexity of these challenges goes beyond the analytical framework of any one single method or discipline. There is an urgency for a holistic, integrated, trans- and interdisciplinary approach to water resource management in urban, peri-urban and rural areas, which will closely link the natural and engineering sciences with the social sciences and humanities. There is an urge for the development of innovative technologies, strategic processes and system solutions for a sustainable management of water resources.

In India and in Germany, scholars and practitioners stress the need for a new paradigm in water management and governance, the overarching goal in the water domain being water security. The paradigm should include both top-down as well as bottom-up participatory approaches. There is a greater need to engage citizens in planning, designing, and monitoring water management by, for example, involving them in implementation processes of decentralised options for water management.

The DWIH flagship annual symposium ‘WaterScapes’ aims at bringing together eminent scholars, leading experts and practitioners from Germany and India. In a knowledge transfer environment that bridges science, policy and practice, the participants will present their work, initiatives and ideas, exchange their views and approaches, and jointly seek for commonalities and innovative solutions (e.g., transforming hazards into opportunities) to secure a sustainable and efficient water resource management. Moreover, the symposium, will aim at promoting the awareness and disseminating the information on the water sector trends, ground-breaking research and mobilizing efforts of all parties at all levels involved in the water problems solution in Germany and in India.

The DWIH flagship annual symposium ‘WaterScapes’ will be organized around four broad themes:

Hydro Hazards (e.g., floods, water scarcity, water pollution, climate change leading to irregular rainfall patterns, the degradation of aquatic ecosystems, rain fed agriculture, irrigated agriculture and watershed management, etc.)

Urbanisation and water resource management (e.g., waste water treatment, recycling and reuse, supply of safe and clean drinking water, drainage systems, water stress, contamination of ground and surface water, water usage efficiency, sanitation, stakeholder engagement etc.)

Integrated River Basin Management (i.e., balance between economics and ecology, river basin organisations/authorities, ecological restoration and conservation of aquatic biodiversity, etc.)

Water Security and Governance (e.g. trans-regional water sharing, water system governance, water diplomacy, multi-level stakeholder dialogues and negotiations)