

**Preparatory Workshop for establishment of the Asia Wastewater Management
Partnership (AWaP) (tentative title)
Chair's Summary**

Background

1. In response to the establishment of SDGs (Sustainable Development Target) Target 6.3 in 2015 which is to "halve the proportion of untreated wastewater by 2030 ", in order to achieve this target, further efforts are necessary in Southeast Asia where wastewater treatment ratio is low.
2. The establishment of SDGs also triggered a “Conference on Watershed Management for Controlling Municipal Wastewater in Southeast Asia” involving 6 countries (Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia, Philippines, Myanmar and Japan), that was organized in Nagoya, Japan on July 28th, 2016, to support the activities of Southeast Asian countries. At the conference, participating countries shared the current situation and issues related to the water environment and wastewater management of each country. Participating countries also shared awareness about the need to promote wastewater treatment to achieve the SDGs, and agreed to periodically share information and conduct continual discussions.
3. Based on the results of this conference, in order to promote the mainstreaming of wastewater treatment in the targeted regions, Japan’s Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) and the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) agreed to establish the "Asia Wastewater Management Partnership (tentative title)". MLIT proposed the establishment of this Partnership at the session for Improving Sanitation & Wastewater Management in The Third Asia-Pacific Water Summit (11th and 12th December, 2017 in Yangon, Myanmar) .
4. Based on the discussions in that session, the Summit Yangon Declaration mentioned the necessity of establishing a regional network for knowledge sharing.
5. Following up on the announcement in the Yangon Declaration, this workshop aims to acquire a common understanding among the participants on the issues related to achieving the SDGs, as well as to exchange views on concepts and

action plans of the partnership.

Opening of the Conference

6. On behalf of the host country and co-organizers, Ms. May May Thwe, Committee Member of Yangon City Development Committee, welcomed the organization of this workshop in her opening remarks of the Conference. Recognizing the current situation of inadequate wastewater management in Myanmar, she emphasized the importance of wastewater management and the need for infrastructure improvement in the future. She also expressed hope for a successful outcome from this workshop and the proposed partnership.
7. Representing the organizers in his speech, Mr. Yasuhiro Morioka, Director-General of Sewerage and Wastewater Management Department, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan, emphasized the need to solve the problems in wastewater management in Asian countries and to promote activities to achieve SDG 6. He expressed hope that the exchange of opinions resulting from the proposed partnership will contribute to resolution of sewage management issues in Asian countries.

Part 1: The need to mainstream wastewater management in Asia towards achieving SDGs

8. Several organizations made presentations with the purpose of acquiring a common understanding on mainstreaming of wastewater treatment needed for achieving the SDGs and to exchange opinions on the activities required for the partnership.
9. There was a presentation by UNESCAP on wastewater management initiatives. It was explained that the scope of UNESCAP activities included initiatives for SDGs achievement, drafting environmental policies and sustainable urban development, etc. Furthermore, details were divulged on activities for the purpose of achieving SDGs, such as the Policy Guidance Manual and preparation of regional roadmap. The presentation also threw some light on the challenges faced by the Asia-Pacific region, such as emphasis on the importance of water when dealing with natural disasters and climate change, need for better management of water in urban areas, wider investment in water and sanitation, localization of SDGs to promote deeper understanding of recycling of water and other resources, etc.
10. There was a detailed explanation on SDG6 by WHO, which also introduced a

pilot project on wastewater monitoring as part of activities for the purpose of achieving SDGs. There was also mention of the need to develop indicators to measure achievement of SDGs Target 6.3.

11. JICA, while affirming that the fundamental direction stated in SDGs is consistent with the direction that Japan and JICA have taken, also indicated a strong willingness to work towards realization of the goals of SDGs. It also introduced projects related to SDG 6.2 and 6.3. To achieve these goals, JICA made some recommendations such as further strengthening of the legal system, streamlining of responsibilities among the various agencies involved, judicious selection of technologies, spreading awareness among the public, formulation of suitable plans, and funding approach.
12. An introduction of all activities done till now with regard to spreading public awareness on sustainable wastewater management was given by the Miss Japan 'Water for life' 2017 and is the goodwill ambassador for Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan. She particularly emphasized about the importance of spreading awareness that was felt through PR programs organized for bistro sewage method which is a method of growing agricultural products by utilizing byproducts generated during the wastewater management process.
13. Osaka city introduced its activities of intercity cooperation with Ho Chi Minh City and Yangon City. In specific terms, these activities include dispatching of technical experts, and providing support for capacity building and initiation of projects. The city also declared their intention to continue their cooperation in order to achieve SDGs.

Part 2: Overview of water environment in Asia

14. IGES introduced the activities on water quality management and water environmental governance being organized in Asian countries as part of the WEPA programme. Although the efforts to set water quality standards and effluent standards and to monitor water quality are being promoted, it was mentioned that the ratio of wastewater treatment in Asian countries is still low. IGES stressed on the fact that domestic wastewater is a major source of pollution in many Asian countries and that it is important to make efforts to reduce pollution while giving due consideration to the socio-economic situation in the target regions.

Part 3: Establishment of Asia Wastewater Management Partnership (tentative title)

15. Mr. Tamoto from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan, introduced and explained about "Asia Wastewater Management Partnership (tentative title)", a new partnership proposed by Japan at the Third Asia-Pacific Water Summit held in Yangon, Myanmar from December 11th to 12th. He stated that mainstreaming wastewater management is the most important aspect in this partnership. In addition, the structure of participating countries and institutions, and the three pillars of activity plan of this partnership were proposed. These three pillars include regular face to face meetings, setting up a platform for knowledge sharing, and implementing joint project to tackle issues that are common to the participating countries. Furthermore, it was proposed that the first meeting of this partnership be held at Kitakyushu City, Fukuoka Prefecture in 2018.

i Challenges faced by the participating countries

16. Firstly, participating countries made presentations on issues concerning wastewater management in each country.
17. In Vietnam, although a large part of the capital investment for sewage management is covered by the national budget and ODA, they are still not sufficient to meet the demand. In addition, even though there is recognition of the need to do capacity building, there is no training infrastructure in the country. Besides, it was mentioned that environmental monitoring system in industrial areas is limited.
18. In Indonesia, it was reported that the centralized wastewater management system currently covers only 3% of the nation and that on-site treatment is common. It was also reported that to improve this situation, Indonesia is now preparing a master plan accompanied by a roadmap for every city/regency to have strategy of sanitation and master plan for planning of sanitation development. Also, it was pointed out that funds are limited since the sanitation field is not ranked as the highest priority for the local government bodies and that cooperation with various entities such as public institutions, the private sector, the academia, donor agencies, NGOs, and local communities is necessary.
19. In Cambodia, it was shared that currently there are almost no wastewater management facilities to carry out centralized management and that it is limited to setting up of septic tanks and urban wastewater treatment facility with high technology. Also, it was pointed out that the functioning of the septic tanks is poor, the sludge treatment is inadequate, public awareness regarding

wastewater management is low, human resources are insufficient, and the monitoring system for environmental water quality and effluents leaves a lot to be desired. It was stated that it is necessary to formulate laws sub-decree regulations and national guideline, establish network institutions cooperation, formulate master plans on wastewater management, human resource capacity building and improve public awareness and participation.

20. In Philippines, it was stated that the shortage of funds and capacity in rural areas are the challenges being faced.
21. In Myanmar, it was pointed out that infrastructure development for wastewater management, management of industrial wastewater in particular, is inadequate. Furthermore, issues such as lack of technical capabilities and budget, low awareness regarding rural wastewater management, low sustainability due to low cost technology were reported. It was stated that it is necessary to establish cooperative relationships between ministries and stakeholders, ensure implementation of guidelines, build capacity and carry out proper overall management to improve the situation. In addition, the challenges faced with regard to the monitoring system include shortage of equipment, insufficient funds, a weak data storage system, and inadequate data sharing mechanism among stakeholders.

ii Ideas and comments on the draft of the concept of AWaP (tentative title) and its approach

22. The establishment of AWaP was welcomed by the participants, after which, discussions were held regarding the concept and approach of the draft. The following points were made in the discussions.
23. Public-private partnership and involvement of donor agencies such as ADB is very important. Furthermore, since each country has different priorities and governmental policies, it is necessary to fill the gaps among them.
24. For wastewater management, cooperation between government, industry and other stakeholders should be strengthened for capacity building in the respective countries and regions.
25. Donor agencies should raise funds for implementing activities in AWaP from not only JICA or ADB, but also from other institutions.
26. Since SDGs are extremely ambitious goals, depending on the existing ODA support only is insufficient to promote wastewater management. The AWaP must flexibly incorporate innovative initiatives, including utilization of private

funds, without limit itself to conventional wastewater management promotion by ODA.

iii Ideas and comments on the draft of AWaP (tentative title) activity plan

27. The various new ideas and suggestions given by participants for the action plan are described below.

(General)

28. In the proposed AWaP activities, it is hoped that implementation of the project will lead to improvement in the technical capabilities of the developing countries. Activities at AWaP can also serve as learning opportunities for development of projects through collaborative projects, workshops and seminars.

(Information sharing / networking)

29. It is important to formulate strategies to bridge the gap between SDGs goals and the current situation in wastewater management. We need to make use of past experience collated from meetings and workshops to identify problems, find problems that are common to the participating countries, and prioritize them for the purpose of resolution. Also, establishing joint projects between the participating countries may prove to be effective.

(Provision of practical information)

30. The activities of the partnership need to incorporate certain specific indicators for the target. Furthermore, sharing information may be effective if methods such as newsletters and web magazines are implemented in addition to setting up a platform on the web. It would be prudent to share information that is practical, and it is hoped that a good number of success cases can be built up through execution of pilot projects.

31. We should focus on public awareness activities and capacity building at the regional level. Online based capacity building could be considered for that purpose. Furthermore, as knowledge sharing is important, it is desirable to visit countries where sewage management is advanced and examine their execution case studies.

32. It is necessary to clearly define what kind of information should be provided. Effluents are roughly divided into three types: domestic, animal husbandry, and industry. Which of the three should be focused on may become a subject of debate.

33. Since Japan succeeded in solving the problem of domestic effluent in a relatively short term, it would be useful to share experiences related to how both onsite and offsite systems were simultaneously implemented in Japan.
34. Using the “seaweed” distributed at this workshop as a metaphor, it is important to adopt an innovative approach that ‘harmonizes’ thought processes and offers actionable ideas. UNESCAP already has a platform on information sharing, which can be leveraged to approach policy makers.

(Collaborative projects)

35. Although the goals and targets of SDGs are very ambitious, the lack of data to monitor the parameters is a major stumbling block. From experience based on WHO’s activities, it is understood that even if numerous parameters are prepared, only a few countries apart from the developed countries can do adequate justice to them. For this reason, it is necessary to incorporate a viewpoint of risk management in the approach. For example, it is extremely important to identify areas with high incidence of health issues such as infectious diseases, etc., and adopt an approach that gives priority to preparation of wastewater management infrastructure in such areas.
36. It would be beneficial to cooperate with WEPA and AWaP to share related data, formulate response scenarios in specific regions and plan long-term actions, involve the private sector, and collaborate with other fields from the viewpoint of economy and health.

**iv Ideas and comments for effective collaboration between WEPA and AWaP
(tentative title)**

37. WEPA is a network of administrative officials of central government agencies in charge of water environmental management in Asia to share the current situation of water environment management, and various kinds of knowledge including issues and best practices. Analysis of situations of WEPA member countries shows that domestic wastewater is a major source of pollution in Asian countries. To take discussions forward and take concrete measures, it is necessary to cooperate with government officials on environmental regulation, monitoring, and development of wastewater treatment facilities. Furthermore, cooperation between WEPA and AWaP is also important.
38. Creating a parallel roadmap for both parties to promote collaboration between WEPA and AWaP may be an effective approach. For further cooperative efforts,

it is desirable to hold regular meetings with WEPA and ASEAN.

39. To prevent duplication of strategy, AWaP and WEPA need to clarify their respective terms of reference (ToR). It may be effective to establish a strategy for collaboration between AWaP and WEPA and conduct joint meetings on topics concerning both WEPA and AWaP. For example, WEPA can be in charge of industrial wastewater, while AWaP can be in charge of domestic wastewater.
40. WEPA and AWaP should appropriately divide roles between them. Documents related to TOR should be prepared at least by the next fiscal year.
41. WEPA publications contain the latest information on water quality management and are quite useful. On the other hand, technical and policy guidelines or manuals can be published as part of AWaP activities.
42. WEPA is concerned with water quality, monitoring and regulation. AWaP can be a network for project implementation, planning, manual design, technology and finance. These can be connected by the same keywords SDGs, and it is hoped that the activities will be implemented in an effective way.
43. While WEPA has accumulated information on monitoring pollution sources and various regulations, it hasn't implemented actual projects for wastewater treatment yet. We hope that AWaP can take charge of this part.

v Discussion about future schedule

44. Participating countries agreed to hold the first meeting of AWaP in the summer of 2018 in Kitakyushu city, Japan.
45. It was agreed that the ideas and comments on the AWaP concept and activities plan discussed during this workshop will be collated, and the AWaP secretariat will prepare an action plan with reference to this summary and share it with the participating countries for review before the rollout of the plan.