

United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)

Topic 1: Securing Water Country: Bangladesh

Name: Ghufrana Yasmeen University: City University of Hong Kong

Status Quo:

This country mainly relies on surface water in the monsoon summer. The major resources of water other than the above include rivers and internal renewable water resources. One of the major treaties named The Ganga Water Sharing Treaty allows it to receive a minimum amount of 35,000 cubic feet per second (990 m³/s) during the dry season

Main Challenges Faced By Bangladesh:

One of the biggest problems that this country faces regarding the water resources for human use is the natural contamination of water with arsenic. Approximately, 97% of the drinking water for rural areas and a significant amount of urban water is contaminated with arsenic which leads to chronic arsenic poisoning. But the country has been keenly working to overcome the problem and in 2004 it was estimated that still 74% of the population has access to arsenic free water.

Conventions and Resolutions signed by the Country:

The country as mentioned before is facing the problem of arsenic contamination, one of the steps to consider the durable solutions and steps include Dhaka Declarations, which mainly focuses on arsenic contamination and related health and environmental problems. In ninth Dhaka Declaration some of the recommendations were

- Arsenicosis mitigation needs to be continued and expanded and Co-ordinated action is necessary between agencies involved in mitigation activities.
- Awareness, Education of villages about the dangers of drinking Arsenic Contaminated water is important to mitigate the problem.

Currently implemented Policies:

National Water Policy as being one of the major policies carries 6 major objectives to ensure the quality water supply to the both urban and rural population. Other than this, the government adopted the National Policy for Safe Water Supply and Sanitation in 1998 and in 2004 it also adopted a National Policy for Arsenic Mitigation.

References:

The Ministry of Water Resources.(1999,january 30).*National Water Policy*.

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_supply_and_sanitation_in_Bangladesh

Dhaka Declarations (2011,January).

http://users.physics.harvard.edu/~wilson/arsenic/countries/bangladesh/Dhaka_declaration.html

