

Positive splash made by IWP at 5th World Water Forum



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The Institute of Water Policy (IWP) recently presented their reflections on the prestigious World Water Forum to the participants of the Water Policy and Governance module PP5257 here at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. The IWP was represented by Research Fellow, Mr. Anthony D'Agostino, who was in Istanbul for the 5th World Water Forum in early March along with his co-presenter, Ms Ruth Khan, a manager in the Industry Development Department of the Public Utilities Board (PUB).

The Forum, which was organized by the World Water Council (WWC), was attended by water policy makers and water technology innovators from the public, private, academic, and non-government sectors. According to the France-based WWC, this recent forum was attended by about 31,000 delegates from more than 120 countries.

The theme for this year's Forum was "Bridging Divides for Water" during which participants acknowledged and recognised the numerous divides that globally exist between the affluent and the poor, as well as between the developed and the developing nations, in regards to access to safe drinking water and sanitation services.

Khan, who attended the forum as a delegate of the PUB team, had participated in a series of preparatory meetings for almost a year, supporting Singapore's Minister for the Environment and Water Resources, Dr. Yaacob Ibrahim. Ministers who attended the Forum released a 22-point Istanbul Ministerial Statement which offered policy recommendations for how decision makers worldwide might address the growing number of urgent water and sanitation issues.

There was wide consensus throughout the political process, which had brought together politicians, parliamentarians, and ministers from various sectors, of the importance of setting appropriate policies and of enacting reform measures to improve efficiencies in the water sector so as to curb corruption, and to incentivise water conservation.

Khan and D'Agostino also shared with the module participants on how the numerous Forum presenters emphasised the effects that climate change would have on the water sector. According to D'Agostino, the forum speakers drew attention to the probability by using illustrations from increased frequency and magnitude of natural disasters, to decreased freshwater supplies because of saline intrusion from sea-level rise, to unpredictable changes in the world's hydrological cycle.

The module participants were further informed, that the output from Istanbul are expected to be shared at the upcoming United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, this December, where international climate change negotiators will attempt to develop a plan for responding to climate change which will succeed the Kyoto Protocol.

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