

Forum Work Plan – Proposals for Meetings 6 and 8

Forum meeting 6 is presently planned for Istanbul, Turkey on 12-14 March 2009. The main consideration in selecting this location and date was to have the Forum meeting immediately precede the World Water Forum, as many Forum members would be attending the WWF anyway.

The focal area for this meeting is Section C social aspects. Key themes for presentations and discussions would include vulnerable social groups and community acceptance.

There are three issues that have arisen with have the Forum meeting in Istanbul at this time:

- There is no readily identified hydropower scheme to focus on for the desk-top or field-based Protocol assessment, despite pursuing a number of avenues of investigation.
- Accommodation in Istanbul could be a significant problem.
- There is a large gap of 13 weeks between Forum meetings 5 and 6, both of which focus on Section C. This means that there will be some delay in producing the second Forum interim report summarising Section C agreements. At best this report will not be released until April 2009, allowing insufficient time to get review and comment to feed into development of a Draft Revised Protocol. The aim is to have a Draft Revised Protocol in time for release at the IHA Congress in Iceland in late June 2009.

There has been some interest in moving this meeting forward to late February 2009, and having it somewhere in southeast Asia. Discussions have been held with IHA Reference Group members with projects in southeast Asia (notably Statkraft and EdF), with the Mekong River Commission, with the Asian Development Bank and with WWF Lao on potential meeting places and operating hydropower facilities to assess. Ideas that have been brought forward, all of which have social issues involved, include:

- Theun Hinboun, Laos. Statkraft is assisting with investigating the potential for the Forum to hold a Forum meeting with a focus on this scheme. Some complexities in that there is a stage 1 and proposed stage 2, but this could be of interest for the Forum's evaluation of the Protocol. Within the MRC so would provide good linkages. Some potential logistical difficulties with travel and accommodation have been flagged.
- A.Voung, Vietnam. Proposed by Larry Haas who is writing benefit sharing legislation for Vietnam that will be pilot tested on this project. By February 2009 the project will only recently have been commissioned. Larry Haas has indicated that he could help investigate this option. Logistically it is close to Denang which would provide a good meeting and accommodation venue. This is outside of the MRC so misses the opportunities for linkages.
- San Roque, Philippines. Existing project, extensive analysis of social issues. Outside of MRC. Likely to be too sensitive a project to focus on.

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- Salmanewawa, Sri Lanka. Suggested by ADB as a potential candidate for focus. Sri Lanka is not an area where there is likely to be much further hydropower development.

An additional consideration for the Forum is to hold the final meeting number 8, presently targeted to be held in September 2009 at a location yet to be determined, later in 2009 to allow an extensive period of trial testing of the Draft Revised Protocol. A proposal would be to have this meeting in India in early December 2009, and to liaise with The Energy Research Institute (TERI) to identify a potential location. A request for assistance in this matter has been made to TERI, and Forum members will be advised of any developments.