

Water Environmental Governance in Asia-Pacific: Understanding the Policy Implications and Lessons of the Global Environmental Governance Process

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Presentation Outline

- **Why** has there been such limited progress on water governance issues in the Asia-Pacific region and **what** if any can be done to improve the scope and outlook for Asian water environmental governance?
- **Accounting for the limited progress on Asian water environmental governance**
- **Improving Asian water environmental governance in an era of global marketplace**
- **Bottled water as a business, environmental, and social phenomenon**

Accounting for the limited progress on Asian water environmental governance

- **Faulty Premise#1**

An excessively state-centric approach to water environmental governance approach has not deliver an effective solution yet. The continuing problem of “states shall” ...

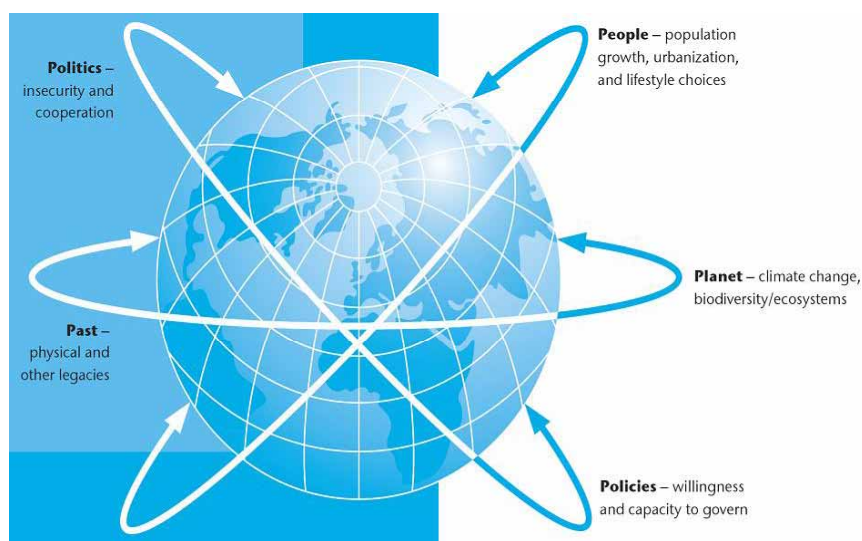
- **Faulty Premise#2**

Inability to adequately conceptualize the scope and scale of water-related environmental policy dilemmas. How many purely “local” or “national” water governance issues do we really have?

- **Faulty Premise#3**

Failure to understand the underlying dynamics of industrial development, technological change, and economic globalization

Coming to grips with the complex interplay of local and global influences on water governance issues



Improving Asian water environmental governance in an era of global marketization

- **Strategy#1**

Instead of marginalizing the voice of civil society via perfunctory “stakeholder consultation” process, the Asia-Pacific region needs a more serious discussion and investment in engagement, participation, and distributive justice

- **Strategy#2**

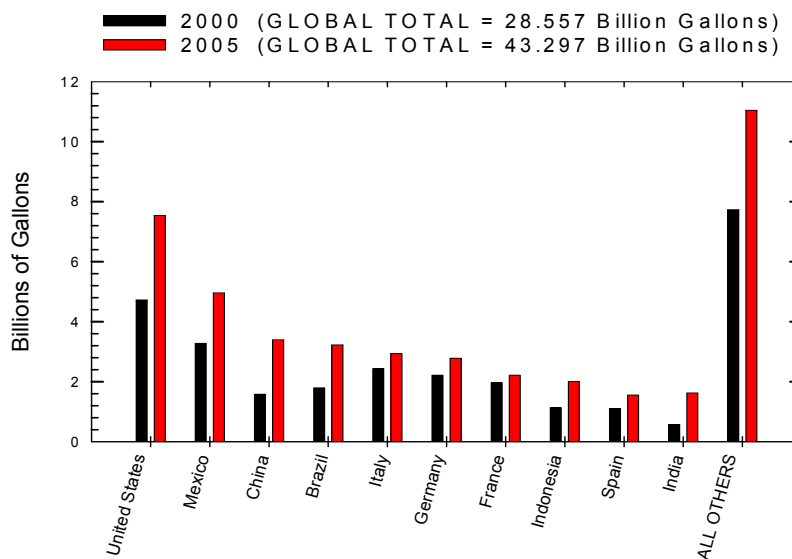
Going behind “states shall, a need to develop a more effective, multi-level public-private linked policy architecture. What can the Asia-Pacific as a region learn from the experiences of the Global Compact, GRI, etc.?

- **Strategy#3**

Taking seriously the concept of and the challenge posed by “water marketization”, a broader set of policy concerns dealing with prices, property rights, and the boundary between the public and private sphere

GLOBAL BOTTLED WATER MARKET Leading Countries' Annual Consumption

Source: Beverage Marketing Corporation



Bottled Water as a Business Phenomenon

“Thirty years ago, bottled water barely existed as a business in the United States. Last year, we spent more on Poland Spring, Fiji Water, Evian, Aquafina, and Dasani than we spent on iPods or movie tickets -- \$15 billion. It will be \$16 billion this year.”

... 24% of the bottled water we buy is **tap water** repackaged by Coke and Pepsi.”

(Fast Company Magazine, July 2007)

Bottled Water as an Environmental Phenomenon

- Producing the bottles for American consumption required the equivalent of more than 17 million barrels of oil, not including the energy for transportation
- Bottling water produced more than 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide
- It took 3 liters of water to produce 1 liter of bottled water

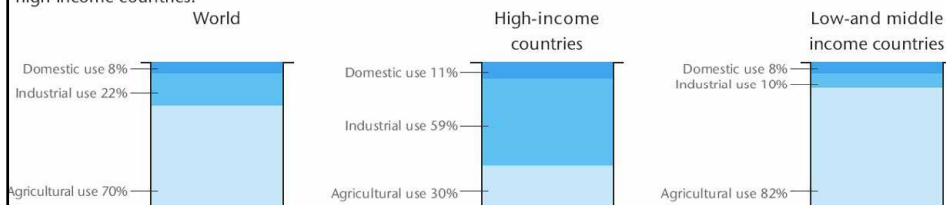
SOURCE: Pacific Institute (2006)

Bottled Water as a Social Phenomenon

- Because Fiji is more than 8,000 miles from NY City ports (yes, the water does come from the island of Fiji!), half of the wholesale cost of Fiji water comes is due to transportation
- The water bottling facility in Fiji produces more than 1 million bottles a day, while half of the people living in Fiji do not have access to clean reliable drinking water
- At the Peninsula hotel in Beverly Hills, where the rooms start at \$500 a night, the mini-bar in all 196 rooms contains six bottles of Fiji Water. Before Fiji Water displaced Evian, Diet Coke was the number-one-selling mini-bar item. Now, "the 1 liter of Fiji Water is number one. Diet Coke is number two. And the 500-milliliter bottle of Fiji is number three" (SOURCE: Fast Company, July 2007)



Industrial use of water increases with country income, going from 10% for low- and middle- income countries to 59% for high-income countries.



Ref. 6: "Water for People, Water for Life" United Nations World Water Development Report, UNESCO, 2003
www.unesdoc.unesco.org