

Integrated River Management Strategies in Korea

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An integrated approach to national and basin-wide water resources management has been emphasized but the process for implementing this approach in Korea is really challenging. The reason for this is two fold. First, water resources management has been implemented in a fragmented manner. The Ministry of Land, Transport, and Maritime Affairs (MLTM) is in charge of water allocation, flood control, and operation of multi-purpose dam in river. The Ministry of Environment (ME) regulates water quality in river and manages drinking water system. The Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MFAFF) controls irrigation reservoirs. The Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MPAS) is responsible for disaster management and emergency plan. The Ministry of Knowledge Economy (MKE) is generating hydro-power and supply industrial water. Second, the self-interested department with the lack of budget leads to a state of conflict. The complex legal structure for water resources in Korea has been developed due to the today's institutional framework.

Recently, the Korean government's the nation wide four river refurbish project is an ones in a life chance to implement integrated water resources management because this comprehensive project addresses the problem of water pollution, water deficiency and flood for four nation wide four rivers and their tributary. In addition, the project will spend 16.95 trillion won and the state-run Office of National River Restoration will have an overarching authority. The authority has fully support from the Korean government and aims to achieve open inter-ministerial negotiation and mutual benefit between central government and local authorities through financial support.

Sectoral strategies and practices regarding the environment highlighted the need for one powerful authority to provide a framework for environment protection. The focus of the policy will be on the integrated river-basin approach including regulation on not only water quality but also aquatic ecosystem, water quality accident management, point and non-point source

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management and environmental statement assessment. Adopting an integrated and holistic approach addresses environmental protection and water resource management to ensure sustainable development. The authority's plan recognizes the need for the formulation of a national water policy to ensure water conservation and management as well as clean rivers, flood protection, cultural river event. Institutional framework for intrabasin and interbasin water transfer and legislation on protection and overuse of groundwater is strengthened. These regulations ensure sustainable development and prevent occurrence of uneven distribution of limited water. The cultural event will improve awareness on the need to preserve rivers.