

Virtual Water Forum: Water and Poverty Session

The Virtual Water Forum (VWF) Water and Poverty Session will be used as a major platform to catalyse interest in and solicit materials for the Initiative. The Session will be structured through three stages as identified during the Planning Meeting at ADB in February 2002:

- **Stage 1: Ideas-** the amended Thematic Framework will be posted, together with detailed background papers, terms of reference for the case studies and a request to send the 'short' case studies to ADB or the VWF site. Key questions on the nature of poverty-water security relationships also will be posted with the idea of stimulating further discussion and debate on the framework and establishing links to other Initiatives and institutions.
- **Stage 2: Experiences-** the second stage will draw upon the case studies sent in and analyzed by the ADB team to discuss and synthesise key experiences through a structure based on the key themes in the thematic framework.
- **Stage 3: Recommendations-** the final stage will use the VWF as a platform to debate and seek consensus on the types of actions (at all levels from local to national and international) that should be put forward as recommendations for Kyoto and beyond. This will be based on, but not confined to, the experiences identified through the second stage case studies and the different stakeholder consultations.

Key Questions for Stage 1

1. What role do water resources (including aquatic ecosystems and their products) play in the livelihoods of poor people?
2. Are there differences between men and women in their roles in water management and the water security problems they face?
3. What are the main characteristics of water security problems faced by poor people in your area?
4. What types of barriers do poor people face in gaining access to water for their domestic needs and livelihood activities?
5. Do existing water laws, policies and programmes reflect the needs of poor communities?
6. What types of disputes and conflicts exist over access to and the management of water resources?
7. What gaps exist in our knowledge of the needs, capabilities and priorities of poor people in water management and coping with water hazards?