

One-day Pre-conference Workshop

Introduction to Water Ethics

Organised by:

Forum for Policy Dialogue on Water Conflicts in India (Pune)
Water-Culture Institute (New Mexico)
Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment (Bengaluru)

Increasing water stress in many countries is driving social and environmental conflicts. Unless we have a better and more reliable way to find consensus amongst different stakeholders and conflicting parties as how water should be shared and managed, it would be rather impossible to transform conflicts. Water ethics is emerging globally as a distinct approach to conceptualise water and also manage conflicts. When each stakeholder understands what s/he values most, and when s/he also understands what the other stakeholders want, the stage is set for finding creative solutions that can meet many of the most critical priorities. Water ethics can drive innovations and motivate creative solutions by establishing values-based parameters and helping each party reflect on the long-term implications of their decisions. It provides both conceptual tools to address questions about water values, and uses arts to engage the emotions and relate to water issues viscerally and creatively.

Water ethics as a distinct approach to water governance is one of the themes of the “Towards a Sustainable Water Future” conference (24 – 27 September 2019, Bengaluru), and will be discussed in several sessions. In addition, we are organising a 1-day pre-conference workshop on water ethics to delve into the theory and practical implementation of ethics in planning and water-related decision-making. The pre-conference workshop is structured as a training-cum-sharing workshop, where we would introduce the concepts of water ethics, and discuss how to apply the concepts in real cases.

The workshop will be held on 23rd September 2019 from 9am to 5pm, with about 30 participants spanning across disciplines and backgrounds. It would have the following sessions:

- Session 1: Intro and overview of water ethics (discussion of categories and contexts)
- Session 2: Application of water ethics approach to cases
 - Plenary presentation of Mahanadi and water allocations across competing sectors and interests, as an example of how conflicting values about water can be sorted out systematically through an ethics framework
 - Small group discussions of four case studies, each led by a resource person familiar with the case: a) water provision and environmental justice in informal settlements in Chennai, b) contestations around urban lakes in Bengaluru, c) water pollution and tribal rights in Nilgiri Hills, and d) further discussions on the Mahanadi case
- Session 3: Feedback from the groups about what the ethical issues are and how a values framework can facilitate mediation and solutions
 - Discussion about how to identify and discuss values among conflicting stakeholders
 - Wrap-up and conclusions

Who can and how to apply?

Anybody who is involved in water issues – students, researchers, activists/NGOs, teachers, media persons, government officials, private sector personnel – can apply. There is no registration fee. Lunch and tea/coffee would be provided. If you would like to apply then send an email by 15 July 2019 to waterconflictforum@gmail.com along with: 1) a **1-page CV** with details of gender, nationality, educational qualifications, institutional affiliation (if any), experience in water sector, etc., and 2) a **brief write up** (not more than 1 page) about why you would like to participate in the workshop. Selected candidates would be informed by 20 July 2019.

K. J. Joy
Forum for Policy Dialogue
Water Conflicts in India

David Groenfeldt
Water-Culture Institute

Siddhartha Krishnan, Veena Srinivasan
Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and on
Environment

Organising institutions

1. Forum for Policy Dialogue on Water Conflicts in India

Forum for Policy Dialogue on Water Conflicts in India (Water Conflict Forum to be brief) is a network of individuals and organizations interested in the water sector, particularly, conflicts and cooperation, since 2004. The Water Conflict Forum has about 800 members mainly drawn from civil society, academia and media. It is committed to the core values of equity, justice, environmental sustainability, efficiency of resource use and democratization of water governance. It has evolved over the years, from simply documenting conflicts to actively participating in preventing and resolving conflicts and creating conditions like knowledge generation and building common platforms for negotiations between conflicting partners in order to backstop conflicts. The core strength of the Water Conflict Forum has been in stakeholder interaction, knowledge creation, policy advocacy, networking, training and outreach. The Forum has completed three phases of work; each phase ranging from three to four years. The Forum is a critical voice in the water sector and will continue to work towards its mission of namely, a) influence policies and actions at all levels, b) help prevent and resolve water conflicts in an environmentally and socially just manner, and, c) achieve participatory, equitable and sustainable water use. It is housed in Society for Promoting Participative Ecosystem Management (SOPPECOM), Pune. Website: www.waterconflictforum.org

2. Water-Culture Institute

The Water-Culture Institute (WCI) is a non-profit think tank in Santa Fe, New Mexico (USA) working globally and locally (Southwest US) to promote a new water ethic that is socially just, environmentally sustainable, and culturally meaningful. Our activities revolve around networking (through the Water Ethics Network, waterethics.org), awareness-raising (through books, blogs, op-eds, social media, and talks), and applied research. Current research programs focus on (a) establishing a field of water ethics within the water sector, (b) Strategies for supporting Indigenous water sovereignty, and (c) reconnecting communities to their local water ecosystems. Website: www.waterculture.org

3. Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and Environment

Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) is a non-profit research organisation. For over two decades, ATREE has worked to generate rigorous interdisciplinary knowledge for achieving environmental conservation and sustainable development, to enable the use of this knowledge by policy makers and society, and to train the next generation of environmental leaders. ATREE has consistently ranked in the top 20 environmental think-tanks globally. The ATREE Academy for Conservation Science and Sustainability Studies' doctoral programme, with over 50 students, offers interdisciplinary coursework covering both natural science as well as social science theories and methods.