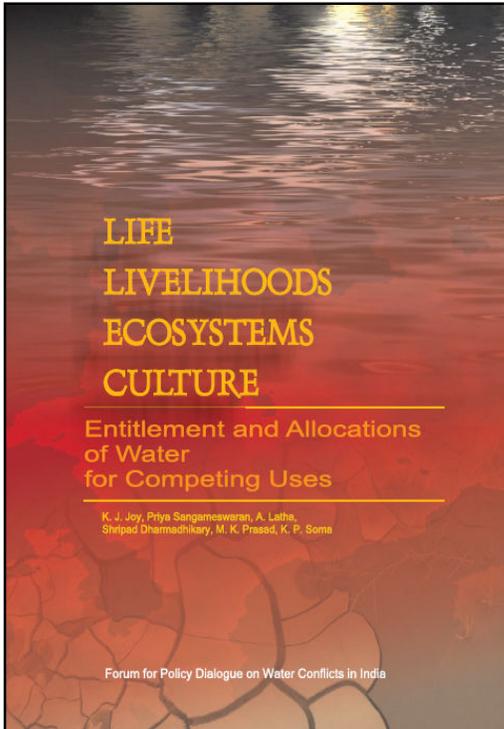


## **Release of the report and panel discussion, March 2011, New Delhi**

### **Life, Livelihoods, Ecosystems, Culture: Entitlements and Allocations of Water for Competing Uses**



Forum organised a release function and panel discussion on the report ‘Life, Livelihoods, Ecosystems, Culture: Entitlements and Allocation of Water for Competing Uses’ on 16 March 2011 from 4 to 6.30 pm at WWF India Office, New Delhi.

The report is the result of the work of the first of the two groups set up in 2009 by the Forum on two important issues, namely, 1) Water Entitlements and Allocation for Livelihoods and Ecosystem Needs and 2) Institutional and Legal Issues Related to Water Conflict Resolution. We are glad to release this report of the first group comprising K. J. Joy, Priya Sangameswaran, Shripad Dharmadhikari, A. Latha, Prof. M.K Prasad and K. P. Soma. We hope that this report would provide some inputs into the ongoing process of the review of the National Water Policy.

Explaining the reason for bringing out the report K. J. Joy of the Forum said that the issue of entitlements and allocations for livelihoods and ecosystem needs has been at the root of most of water related conflicts in India. The report is an attempt at reconciling these competing water uses.

In his inaugurating speech Shri Jairam Ramesh said that the competing water uses, environment protection versus the legitimate needs of a growing population for power and the lack of proper rehabilitation of project affected persons are the main water related conflicts in the country presently. The minister endorsed most of the propositions put forward in the report to resolve the conflicts around competing water uses and the tradeoffs between environment and growth. The minister also cautioned the “environmentalists” against taking one-sided positions against hydro power projects as thermal and nuclear power projects, especially after the recent Japanese experience of earthquake and Tsunami, have serious constraints.

Delivering the keynote address at the function, Dr. Mihir Shah appreciated the efforts of the authors to bring in a nuanced understanding on many of the complex issues confronting the water sector and for bringing in fresh perspectives on many of them. He also stressed the need for bringing in participatory mechanisms for aquifer management and also for deciding on pricing. He also mooted the idea of setting up a National Water Commission to oversee the compliance of the conditionalities that often accompany the sanctions given to various projects. Prof. Ramaswamy Iyer, Navroz Dubash, Vimal Bhai and Rohini Nilekani spoke at the panel discussion that followed the report release. Prof. Vaidyanathan in his concluding remarks argued for a better understanding of the sources of conflicts for any attempts at their resolution to succeed. According to him the ecosystem needs have been a causality so far and only by limiting water use in certain sectors we can provide water for environmental needs. A. Latha welcomed the guests and the audience and Suhas Paranjape provided the vote of thanks. The report is available at a contributory price of Rs. 100/- from SOPPECOM. Please write to Pratima at [soppecom@gmail.com](mailto:soppecom@gmail.com) to order a copy.



**Dr. A. Latha welcoming the guests**



**K. J. Joy's introductory remarks about the report**



**Report release by Shri Jairam Ramesh**



**Inaugural address by Shri Jairam Ramesh**



Mihir Shah delivering key note address



Panel discussion



Gathering at the programme