

# What's INWEPF?

## Purpose and Background

The agricultural water not only produces substantial provisions but also provides wide range of services related to community, culture and environment. Such multiple functions and the value of the agricultural water should be recognized and evaluated for the development and the management of the water resources. However, since the ratio of rice growing country is not high around the world, the general understandings for the rice growing, which requires considerable amount of water, is relatively low. Thus, there is a strong need to promote understandings for the rice growing and the establishment of international network has been proceeded to resolve the common problems among rice growing countries.

On the occasion of the 3rd World Water Forum, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations co-organized the Ministerial Meeting on Water for Food and Agriculture on March 21, 2003. The Ministerial Recommendation highlighted three challenges, "Food Security and Poverty Alleviation", "Sustainable Water Use" and "Partnership".

The INWEPF is established to provide a forum to realize the three challenges by promoting dialogue, exchanging knowledge and experiences, creating synergy among existing forums and strengthening capacity building in agricultural water management in paddy fields with due consideration for environmental aspects.

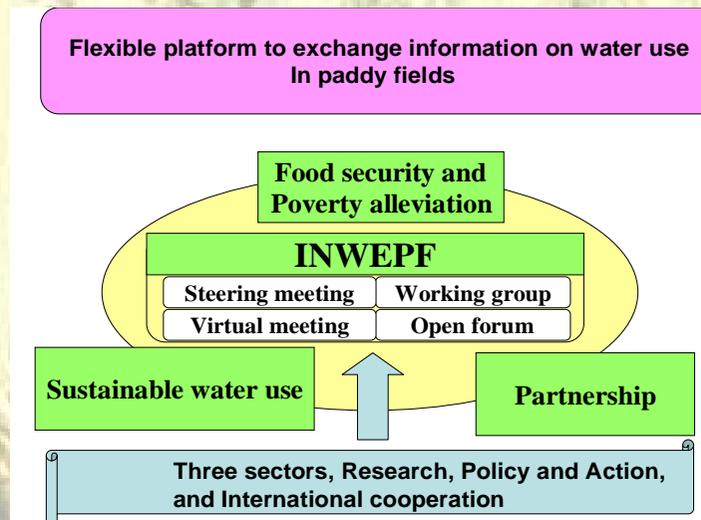


## Objectives

The ultimate goal of the INWEP is to realize the three challenges endorsed at the Ministerial Meeting on Water for Food and Agriculture on 21 March 2003, namely "Food security and poverty alleviation", "Sustainable water use" and "Partnership".

In order to achieve these goals, the INWEPF is established to provide a framework for promoting better management of water for paddy fields toward rural development with due consideration for the environment through a variety of activities including Virtual Meeting, workshops, symposiums and other knowledge exchange and capacity building activities.

## Framework of INWEPF



## INWEPF Japan Secretariat

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## International Network for Water and Ecosystem in Paddy Fields



[www.maff.go.jp/inwepf/index.htm](http://www.maff.go.jp/inwepf/index.htm)

# Water systems for rice are a keystone to sustain life and ecosystems

## Water, Environment and Agriculture

Agriculture is the biggest user of freshwater, accounting for 70% of all water withdrawals worldwide and more than 80% in Asia. Water is essential for broad-based agricultural and rural development and its management must be improved in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals by improving food security, alleviating poverty and conserving environment, under rapidly increasing/changing demand for food in the world.



## Recommendations from the INWEPF

In order to pursue sustainable water development and use, considering the above aspects of paddy fields, we strongly advocate the following policy recommendations:

- 1) The multiple use, roles, values, services and other aspects of agricultural water in paddy farming regions should be recognized, evaluated and incorporated into water resources development plans and management strategies.
- 2) The traditional wisdom and experiences of local communities and the value of their participation in water planning and management should be fully acknowledged.
- 3) It should be recognized that governmental assistance (e.g. policy, legal, financial and educational services and capacity building) is important and often necessary for adequate investment, modernization and management of rice water systems, in order to achieve food security, to alleviate poverty and to conserve ecosystems.

## Multi-functionality of Paddy Agriculture

Water for rice in paddy systems is not only vital for food production, but also provides a broad range of services related to society, culture and the ecosystem (e.g. fish cultivation, flood control, ground water recharge, biodiversity conservation, culture heritage, etc.). Thus paddy-systems can be defined as wetlands which have good potential for maintaining both human cultures and natural ecosystems in a sustainable manner.

## Members of INWEPF

**Countries:** Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam

**International Organizations:** Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Mekong River Commission (MRC), International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), International Society of Paddy and Water Environment Engineering (PAWEES), World Bank (WB), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), International Network on Participatory Irrigation Management (INPIM), Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Asian Development Bank (ADB)

## Water System for Paddy Fields

### In Asia Monsoon Region

In the Asian monsoon region, where more than half of the world's population lives, rice is the most important staple crop. The most important water system for rice is the flooded or paddy-based system which provides multiple benefits and it depends on agricultural water infrastructure and integrated water management systems, some of which have been developed through long-term traditional wisdom and experiences of local communities and their participation since the start of human history.

