

International Waters Science Conference 2012

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Panelist statement:

My comments are related to the imbalance between the results obtained through scientific research and its associated application and how to increase the synergy between them. What are the causes for this imbalance? There are several reasons. One of the most important is related to the socio-economic reality of the majority of countries participating in the GEF projects.

Obtaining scientific data and information involving an improvement in groundwater management is, in most cases, expensive and more time-consuming compared with that for surface water, and are available in different and non-connected institutions. If the aquifer under study is transboundary, this complexity is greater because of the different social, environmental, physical and economic characteristics among countries. These conditions are aggravated when the aquifer is located in developing countries.

In this case, the percentage of financial and human resources allocated by governments to scientific research is always uneven among countries, and very small compared with the amount (or percentage) allocated by developed countries.

For this type of situation it is necessary to look for the development of technologies adapted to regional conditions having, as a main target, the search for cheaper and easier to handle equipments and methodologies. Sometimes these scientific findings might not be the best, but they are the most applicable considering the specific conditions of each country.

Financial resources from international bodies such as the GEF are generally effective in achieving increased systematized scientific knowledge about transboundary water bodies, mainly because they facilitate integration among countries, to achieve the project objectives.

The inclusion of components in GEF' portfolio projects that seek to develop more economical and locally oriented technologies, can minimize the conditions of today's imbalance between the development and the application of scientific advances related to the management of transboundary aquifers.