

BBC Record

March 13, 2014

Islamabad: Water shortage may turn out to be a worse crisis than the ongoing energy crisis as phenomenon of climate change may reduce water availability up to 40% pushing Pakistan to be a water starved country.

This was stated by Federal Minister for Planning Development and Reforms, Professor Ahsan Iqbal, while delivering an inaugural address at International workshop on the use of Modern Technologies against flood as a chief guest.

If available water resources are not managed, Pakistan may face Thar like drought in half of the country.

The Planning Commission, in collaboration with Ministry of Water and Power, will organize Pakistan Water Summit on 20th March 2014, in order to develop country's first National Water Policy for proactive development and management of the country's water resources.

The workshop is organized by Space & Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), the national space agency of Pakistan, in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, and supported by Government of Japan.

Natural disasters are major risk to country's sustainable development. The impact of some of these disasters such as floods could be reduced if accurate and timely early warning and forecasts are issued thereby enabling better planning and execution of evacuation and rescue operations.

Recent advancements in Space and Remote sensing technologies and its various applications have proven to be valuable tools to help in prevention, monitoring and mitigation of disasters, as well as in relief operations.

GIS has assumed very important role in development sector. It is no longer a tool rather has become way of work and the concept of G-Government has to be adopted at all levels for better design, planning, management and delivery of development programs said, the Minister.

The Minister appreciated SUPARCO for its significant contributions to the socio-economic development of the country, especially in areas such as agriculture, forestry, water resource management, environmental monitoring and crucial role played by it in recent disasters like the 2005 earthquake and the floods of 2010 to 2013. He further appreciated the Government of Japan and UNESCO for the support they have provided in strengthening of Flood Warning and Management capacity in Pakistan.

Source: <http://www.bbcrecord.com/live/10-pakistan/24424-water-reservoirs-indispensable-to-avoid-thar-like-drought-ahsan-iqbal.html>