



**Press release: Friday 24 May, 2013 – Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia**

## **Hydropower stakeholders come together to build knowledge and address challenges for hydropower**

Stakeholders concluded today on the priorities for furthering the sustainability of the hydropower sector.

Over 500 participants from 60 countries convened this week in Malaysia at the International Hydropower Association's 2013 World Congress on advancing sustainable hydropower. Stakeholders from industry, civil society, non-government organisations, academia, finance, and others joined together to address opportunities and challenges for hydropower development around the world.

The Congress delegates discussed key questions relating to the future of hydropower during the three days of the Congress, such as: who are the investors and where are the markets, how to work with project-affected communities, how does hydropower integrate with other renewables, what are the expectations from modern energy systems, are water and energy policies well-coordinated, how do we incorporate sustainability into business practice, what are the relationships between hydropower and climate change, and have social aspects become the most important challenge to sector?

Key outcomes of the Congress include:

- **Hydropower and Regional Development**

IHA, in cooperation with the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank, hosted a workshop to share experience on common themes of regional hydropower development – regional interconnections, river basin perspectives, and bringing markets to the resource. Participants agreed that hydropower can be an important driver for economic

development, and noted that political will is a key component of success, while expressing the need for more awareness and learning on the key challenges and solutions for regional hydropower development. IHA, along with its partners from the international financial institutions will continue to explore these themes in regions around the world through a series of regional development workshops and related programme work.

- **Climate Change**

Participants in an expert working group on GHG emissions associated with freshwater reservoirs agreed: *“UNESCO/IHA and IEA hydro agree to cooperate with the objective to establish a common definition of the net change in the GHG profile of a freshwater system resulting from the introduction of man-made water storage. We believe that this definition is required to allocate GHG impact to the multiple uses of water storage over its life cycle”*

- **Sustainability**

Wide-ranging debate around sustainability in the hydropower sector included the challenges of achieving sustainable development in a rapidly-changing world and the complexities of working with project affected communities, with contributions from local communities putting a human face to the high-level debate. Participants explored avenues to incorporate sustainability into business systems, including the multiple roles for the Hydropower Sustainability Assessment Protocol. Practical sessions introduced the Protocol to those with no prior knowledge of the tool. The session was amply attended by over 60 interested delegates, indicating the large level of interest in this rapidly growing assessment methodology.

The topics included above are important components of IHA's work programme and will be further explored through the on-going work of the Association.

## **Notes for editors**

These issues were discussed at the IHA World Congress in Malaysia from 21-24 May. Further details on the Congress and IHA's work programme are available at <http://www.hydropower.org>

The International Hydropower Association (IHA) is a non-profit organisation, working with a network of members and partners to advance sustainable hydropower.

IHA's mission is to build and share knowledge on the role of hydropower in renewable energy systems, responsible freshwater management and climate change solutions. IHA champions continuous improvement in the hydropower sector through dialogue with all stakeholders.

Membership is open to individuals and organisations that support its mission. IHA networks include: public and private companies, governments, NGOs, financial institutions, communities and academia.