



**YELLOW RIVER CONSERVANCY COMMISSION AWARDED
LEE KUAN YEW WATER PRIZE**

Award recognises the efforts of Yellow River Conservancy Commission in sustainable river basin management

Singapore, March 3, 2010 – The Singapore International Water Week today announced that the Yellow River Conservancy Commission (YRCC) has been awarded the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize 2010, a prestigious award that recognises outstanding contributions towards solving global water problems by either applying technologies or implementing policies and programmes which benefit humanity. With its success in transforming China's second-longest river, YRCC outshone 49 other nominees to become the third recipient of the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize.

The Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize Council recognised YRCC's remarkable progress in overcoming natural and man-made challenges through innovative and sustainable policies and solutions that have enabled the Yellow River to flow unabated over the last 10 years. YRCC's integrated water allocation programme balances water availability with social, economic and ecological developments. The improved, reliable supply of water brought about by YRCC's efforts have benefitted and enhanced the quality of life for over one hundred million people both in the basin and in regions served by the river. Large areas of wetlands and biodiversity in Yellow River Delta have also been restored over the years, returning life and vitality to the river.

By regulating water and sediment flow in a river that has the highest average annual sediment transporting volume and concentration in the world, YRCC has been able to significantly reduce the risk of devastating floods that the Yellow River was previously associated with – protecting





the 90 million people living in the flood-prone areas downstream of the river from loss of lives and damage to livelihoods and property.

Commenting on the achievements of YRCC, Mr Tan Gee Paw, Chairman of the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize Nominating Committee said: "The Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize celebrates the outstanding achievements of YRCC in integrated river basin management that is unrivalled in scale. In rejuvenating the Yellow River and managing floods, YRCC has brought about widespread and sustainable social, economic and environmental benefits to over one hundred million people. We look forward to YRCC sharing its innovative, holistic and sustainable river basin management practices at the Water Week, and inspiring greater impetus in establishing sustainable water solutions for increasingly urbanised communities worldwide."

YRCC will receive the award from Singapore's first Prime Minister and present Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew at Singapore International Water Week 2010 which will be held from June 28 to July 2, 2010. YRCC will also deliver the acclaimed Singapore Water Lecture to 300 government, business and academic leaders at the Water Leaders Summit, where the Commission will share its experience and success factors in returning life and vitality to the Yellow River.

The winning factors include its river management approach "Maintaining the Healthy Life of the Yellow River", a systemic and holistic approach to the management, allocation and regulation of water supply. With 9 provinces and regions along the 5,464-kilometres long river, YRCC adopts a consultative approach to secure the support of the provincial governments and the people to equitably allocate water for domestic, industrial and agricultural uses, thus preventing abuse and over-exploitation of water resources. YRCC has also implemented an integrated operation of reservoirs along 3,000 kilometres of the river, to regulate river flow and boost storage capacity. Remote sensing and automation is employed to collect real-time river system information to monitor and control the reservoirs and dams. Through the coordinated operation of Xiaolangdi Dam and other reservoirs, YRCC has carried out 9 flushing operations since 2002 to regulate the flow of water and sediments in the lower reaches of the Yellow



River. This has deepened the riverbed by an average of 1.5 metres for some 900 kilometres downstream of the river and more than doubled the river's maximum flow capacity from 1,800 m³/s to 3,880 m³/s to substantially improve flood safety.

Instead of facing frequent no flow periods in the 1990s before integrated flow allocation and regulation practices were implemented, the Yellow River has been experiencing continuous flow throughout the year since 1999. To augment its integrated water allocation programme, YRCC also puts in place emergency response plans to manage, control and mitigate major water pollution incidents. The Commission works closely with environmental protection agencies and has implemented a public notification system to inform the public of any major water pollution incident.

"The work of Yellow River Conservancy Commission has resulted in a reversal of a disastrous trend of over-exploitation of the river by the riparian provinces which resulted in zero flow in the downstream portion and estuary for a number of years. Through the work of YRCC, and supported by demand management measures implemented by the provinces in consultation with YRCC, the river has flowed again throughout the year, during the past years. This constitutes a remarkable achievement with significant ecological and other benefits," said Wouter Lincklaen Arriens, Lead Professional (Water Resources Management) from the Regional and Sustainable Development Department of the Asian Development Bank.

"The YRCC is deeply honoured to receive the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize for our efforts in revitalising the Yellow River. We recognise that more can be done to enhance the ecosystem along a river that plays such a vital role in China's economic development and holds an important position in the hearts of its people. This endorsement reaffirms our long-term commitment to nurturing and improving the quality of life along the river through sustainable river management strategies," said Li Guoying, Commissioner, YRCC.



A record number of 50 nominations for the 2010 Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize were received, compared to 39 in previous years. Nominations for the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize underwent a rigorous selection process by a Nominating Committee comprising chief executives of multi-national water companies, leading academics and government officers. The Committee's recommendations were endorsed by the Water Prize Council, which is chaired by Dr Tony Tan, Chairman of the Singapore National Research Foundation.

Previous winners of the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize include Canadian researcher and technopreneur, Dr Andrew Benedek who received the prize in 2008 for pioneering the development of low-pressure membranes; and Professor Gatze Lettinga from the Netherlands whose ground-breaking development of anaerobic technology for used water treatment won him the prize in its second year.

The winner of the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize receives a cash prize of SGD300,000, an award certificate and a gold medallion. The award is solely sponsored by the Singapore Millennium Foundation, a philanthropic body supported by Temasek Holdings that has pledged SGD1.5 million over five years since 2008.

This year, the inaugural Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize Laureate will also be unveiled. The biennial Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize is sponsored by Keppel Corporation, which includes a cash prize of SGD300,000, an award certificate and a gold medallion. Keppel Corporation will be sponsoring the LKY World City Prize for the next five cycles of the award, pledging a total of SGD1.75 million over the next 10 years, including the gold medallion. The joint awards presentation ceremony and banquet will be held at the Ritz Carlton Hotel, Singapore on June 29, 2010.

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Attachments

- 1) Citation of Yellow River Conservancy Commission
- 2) Fact Sheet on Yellow River and Yellow River Conservancy Commission
- 3) Fact Sheet on Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize
- 4) Brochure on Singapore International Water Week
- 5) Biography of Commissioner Li Guoying
- 6) Factsheet on World City Prize

About Singapore International Water Week 2010

The Singapore International Water Week is the global platform for water solutions. It brings policymakers, industry leaders, experts and practitioners together to address challenges, showcase technologies, discover opportunities and celebrate achievements in the water world.

Comprising the Water Leaders Summit, Water Convention, Water Expo and Business Forums, it culminates in the presentation of the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize, a prestigious international award to recognise outstanding contributions in solving global water issues. The third Singapore International Water Week will be held from June 28 to July 2, 2010. The theme is Sustainable Cities – Clean and Affordable Water.

For more information, log onto www.siww.com.sg



For media enquiries and interview requests, please contact:

Aaron Yeo

Burson Marsteller for Singapore International Water Week

Tel: +65 6829 9333

Email: aaron.yeo@bm.com

Sally Toh

Singapore International Water Week

Tel: +65 6731 3108

Email: Sally_TOH@pub.gov.sg