

World Water Congress, Edinburgh 2015



Special Session 24: *Water Policy, Practice and Science Interface: delivering relevant and meaningful research in a multidisciplinary sector. 28th of May at 16:45 in the Carrick Suite.*

The strategic questions that the session will debate are:

How do we identify research priorities that will help protect and improve water resources?

How do we ensure research is implemented in such a way that it delivers meaningful and useable outputs to those developing and implementing policy?

How do we better engage scientists with policy development and its implementation?

Scotland's Centre of Expertise for Waters (CREW) is a demand driven science based organisation that provides an interface between policy makers, academics and industry. CREW facilitates engagement to ensure knowledge building and transfer effectively across partner organisations.

In this session we explore, through a panel discussion with policy makers, industry representatives and researchers, the importance of water policy on global sustainability. The debate will centre on the science/policy interface and how this is critical to delivering meaningful strategy. We discuss the emerging and existing policy direction relating to water management, both nationally and internationally. The session will be framed around the issue of sustainable rural communities where there are specific challenges around developing local solutions to water and energy supply/demand balance that deliver community benefits.

The planned session will discuss these research priorities within the context of national and international policy. Drawing on experiences from the UK, Europe, North America and Asia, the panel will debate the nature of water demands in terms of quality and quantity as well as the pressing need to improve sanitation for close to 2.5 billion people globally. The discussion will centre on the actions required by policy makers, academia and industry to deliver innovations where they are most needed in the context of sustainable water management. The session will include references to the water:food:energy nexus. Furthermore the session will focus on the science/policy/practice interface. How do we better engage scientists with policy development and its implementation? This is as important as the often quoted 'how do we engage policy in our science'.

Rural communities face particular challenges for access to affordable energy, treatment and disposal of waste and the provision of drinking water supplies. The Sustainable Rural Community (SRC) concept envisions a paradigm shift in delivery of these services and aims to deliver a closed loop system that would be carbon and energy neutral, cost-effective and resilient.