

Professor Asit K. Biswas

Third World Centre for Water Management

Prof. Asit K. Biswas was born in Balasore, India. He is a graduate of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, which is India's elite engineering university. After graduation, he worked as a Civil Engineer at Ward, Ashcroft and Parkman, Liverpool, England. Thereafter, he was a Research Fellow at the Loughborough University of Technology, England, and a Lecturer at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

He moved to Canada in 1967 as a Visiting Professor at Queen's University, Kingston. Later, he joined the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources as a senior scientist. When the Government of Canada established a new Ministry of Environment, he played an important role during its formative years.



Professor Asit K. Biswas
(Photo by Revista Summa)

In 1974, he was invited to help in formulating the programme of the newly established United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in Nairobi, Kenya. He spent 15 months in Nairobi under the Executive Interchange Programme of the Government of Canada. Thereafter, he continued to be the Senior Scientific Advisor to the Executive Director of UNEP, Dr. Mostafa Kamal Tolba, until his retirement in 1992. At the request of Dr. Tolba, Prof. Biswas acted as a Senior Advisor to Mr. Yehia Abdel Mageed, Secretary General of the UN Water Conference. During 1980-81, he was a Senior Research Fellow at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) at Luxemburg, Austria. He spent 1981-1997 in Oxford, U.K., pursuing his research interests and advising national governments and international organisations. He chaired the Middle East Water Commission during 1993-1997.

He is the founder of the Third World Centre for Water Management in Mexico, which is an independent, knowledge-based think tank focusing on knowledge generation, synthesis, application and dissemination. Under his dynamic leadership, the Centre has established a unique international identity in pursuing cutting-edge and forward-looking research. Within eight short years, by ensuring world-class research and focusing on out-of-the-box thinking, the Centre has established for itself a unique reputation in the world of water as a generator of new and innovative ideas. The work of the Centre has been published extensively in several languages by major international publishers.

Prof. Biswas was one of the most active members of the World Commission on Water. He was instrumental in establishing the International Water Resources Association and World Water Council. He has been an advisor to six Heads of the United Nations Agencies, and most major bilateral and multilateral aid organisations and 17 national governments.

Prof. Biswas is the founder of the International Journal of Water Resources Development and has been its Editor-in-Chief for the past 21 years. He has been the author or editor of 64 books (7 more are now under publication) and published over 600 scientific and technical papers. His work has now been translated into 31 languages.

Among his numerous prizes are the two highest awards of the International Water Resources Association (Crystal Drop and Millennium Award), Walter Huber Award of the American Society of Civil Engineering, and Honorary Degree of Doctor of Technology of the University of Lund, Sweden.

Prof. Biswas is married to Dr. Cecilia Tortajada, who is currently the Vice-President of the International Water Resources Association. Their daughter, Andrea Lucia, is currently a student at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Andrea Lucia received an award for her poster at the 2005 Stockholm Water Symposium.