

Urban watershed management under rapid urbanization

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Recent years have witnessed a trend of rapid urban growth, accompanied by a significant impact on the environment, in many parts of the world. For example, in China, an extraordinary urbanization process has exerted enormous pressures on water resources and the urban environment as well as ecological systems. Protecting the water environment is now one of the most important and pressing issues that demand great attention. Urban watershed management is therefore critically important to the sustainable use of water resources and the protection of valuable eco-systems. The objective of the International Conference on Urban Watershed Management (ICUWM), inaugurated in 1997 at the University of Virginia, is to provide a forum for international professionals to share research and experiences in watershed management practices.

The 8th ICUWM was organized and hosted by the School of Environment at Tsinghua University in Beijing, China during September 6–8, 2011 as part of the university's Centennial celebration activities. Co-organizers and sponsors included the Urban Water Resources Research Council (UWRRC) of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Environmental and Water Resources Institute (EWRI), the Urban Watershed Management Branch (UWMB) of the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the University of Virginia, and the H₂-O China. In addition, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) sponsored a parallel "Workshop on Water-Food-Energy Security", which is a subject of critical importance that intertwined with subjects of the ICUWM.

Specific topics for the 8th ICUWM ranged from urban water environment management, such as water sustainable urbanization, lake/river restoration; water environment research, such as planning/design/monitoring of best management practices (BMPs), low impact development (LID), to regulatory and institutional aspects of urban water management. A total of seven keynote speeches and sixty-eight papers from many parts of the world were presented at the Conference. In order to make the significant presentations available to a broader readership; a number of papers were selected and, after the normal peer-review process, published in this issue of *Frontiers of Environmental Science & Engineering (FESE)*. The FESE Editorial Office's assistance is much appreciated.