

ASIA 2020: Update for attendees

The Aqua-Media team, along with our national and international supporting organisations, sincerely hope and are planning for ASIA 2020 to go ahead, with the rescheduled dates of 8 to 10 December, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Our optimism is based on the fact that the Covid-19 crisis already seems to be easing in Asia, with far fewer new cases being reported, although cases in some other parts of the world are still increasing.

A high proportion of ASIA 2020 participants have re-booked for our new dates and we have also received several new bookings in the past days. For those who are understandably undecided about what to do, we would like to announce the following updates:

- We will naturally monitor the world health situation closely, and if things deteriorate to the point where it seems we should not proceed with the conference, we will postpone again, to a significantly later date.
- We would like to reassure those who book/rebook now, that in the event of a deteriorating situation and a further postponement, we would reimburse registration fees and accommodation fees in full.
- Assuming the conference goes ahead, we plan to: adopt a 'no handshake' policy; ensure that no social events or tours take place in confined spaces to avoid crowding; distribute hand sanitizers in the delegate bags, and around the conference halls; and, for those who would feel more secure wearing a mask, we will distribute them to all. The Chinese National Committee on Large Dams will be supplying these, and this thoughtful and generous gesture is gratefully acknowledged.
- The Shangri-La hotel (the ASIA 2020 venue) has already assured us that they are taking extra measures to ensure first-class standards of hygiene at the venue. They have also assured us of the world-class health facilities, both at a clinic adjacent to the hotel and at excellent hospitals nearby. (Full details were circulated earlier.)
- Malaysia has taken major steps from an early stage to limit the impact of the novel Coronavirus at its borders, and has had a high degree of success.

After considering these points, it is for every individual to decide if they feel comfortable travelling to an international event, and to review this decision closer to the time.

We encourage those who feel they may be vulnerable, for example, because of an existing health problem, not to take any risk.

If you are planning to participate in the conference programme, or had previously registered to attend, please keep in contact with us, as we will with you.

Meanwhile, we take this opportunity to express our sympathy and best wishes to all those in countries which have been affected by Covid-19. It is a reminder to all that our planet is increasingly vulnerable to new challenges, which we must work together to overcome. - *Alison Bartle, Hydropower & Dams*

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