Monitoring Systems (GEMS), a worldwide water quality monitoring system based at NWRI in Burlington; RAISON -- decision making for watershed management; Canadian Water Quality Guidelines; ecological monitoring and assessment; risk and environmental impact assessment; pollution control and management of toxic substances; database management; hydrologic applications; environmental decisions support systems)

- experience and expertise in capacity building (i.e., application of river basin management; ecosystem and community-based approaches; education; technology transfer -- especially low cost technology to developing world)
- The involvement of civil society in water-related policy was also raised as an important component of any strategy, especially by Stephen Owen, University of Victoria.
- The need to bring together the major players for better collaboration in order to build coherent international capacity was voiced. The problem of coherence was also raised in relation to NGOs, international organisations dealing with water-related problems as well as the Canadian government itself (CIDA, DFAITD).
- Canada could lead the necessary move from strategizing to implementing concrete practical solutions. Many participants pointed out that despite a myriad of meetings and conferences aimed at alleviating water-related problems, little has been done to actually implement the ideas they have generated. Others addressed the general ineffectiveness of formal agreements and protocols and suggested new practical ways of approaching water-related issues have to be found.
- Canada could play a role of a skilled "neutral" facilitator to water-related disputes and conflict.

CONCLUSION

The idea that Canada is in a unique position to pursue a global strategy for water was reaffirmed by Ralph Daley and others. He said that given the good reputation Canada has in the world there is room for developing a Canadian foreign policy niche in water-related issues. Canada could, for example, produce the annual World Report on Water.

Steven Lee pointed out that many of the strategies suggested in the discussions reflect the soft power approach to foreign policy advanced by Minister Axworthy. Through the contributions of Canadians in science and monitoring, technology, capacity building, use and sharing of institutional models as well as coordination to help develop a cohesive international water management network Canada has a unique opportunity to impact positively a world water strategy.

In order to pursue these options, there is a need for commitment by the Canadian government as well as civil society sectors and the international community. Before a Canadian-based strategy for water is developed some key and difficult questions have to be answered. Among them are, for example: Should Canada get involved and why? Does Canada have sufficient resources to pursue such a strategy? What are our ultimate goals and expectations?