

Workshop focus on importance of groundwater

Staff Reporter

A WORKSHOP entitled 'Groundwater as a Main Source for Agriculture in Qatar' was held yesterday on the campus of Texas A&M University at Qatar (TAMUQ) in Education City.

The event was jointly funded by the General Department of Agricultural Research and Development (GDARD) within the Ministry Affairs and Agriculture (MMAA), and the office of the vice-president for research at TAMU and TAMUQ.

Opening remarks were offered by GDARD director Sheikh Dr Faleh bin Nasser al-Thani, TAMU vice president for research Dr Richard Ewing, and TAMUQ's associate dean for research Dr James Holste.

Sheikh Faleh said that the workshop is planned to be the first one in a series to discuss several critical issues in the agricultural sector and try to find suitable solutions for them. "It is decided to give a special priority to maintain and protect our sole natural water source which is groundwater," he explained.

The workshop began with a presentation entitled 'The State of Groundwater in Qatar,' by Dr Kamel M Amer from GDARD, which gave an overview of the groundwater management and policy issues.

Internationally renowned researchers from Germany, Norway and the US then dis-

cussed various practices and issues for underground water systems, saltwater intrusion, and groundwater quality, and then examined mathematical challenges involved in modelling and simulation of groundwater systems in subsurface regimes like those found in Qatar.

Dr Ewing observed that it was interesting to see a team of interdisciplinary experts in groundwater modelling and management from around the world come together with water management experts from Qatar to discuss common issues, to share best practices, and to build potential collaborations.

The workshop was the culmination of two days of scientific presentations by researchers at the First Annual Doha Conference in Applied Mathematics and Computational Science, which was held on Sunday and Monday.

TAMUQ dean and CEO Dr Mark H Weichold said he was pleased that the mathematics conference and water workshop brought the university's experts together with Qatar's expertise and experience in water resources.

"The mission of our university is teaching, research, and service. Collaborations of this nature between academia, government and industry support all three parts of our mission and we are proud to support Qatar in this way," he added.

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