

His Excellency Dr. Seleshi Bekele Awulachew

The Minister of Water, Irrigation and Electricity of Ethiopia, Dr Engineer Seleshi Bekele Awulachew, has 30 years of experience and expertise in leadership, research, teaching and advisory work in the water, energy, land, climate change, capacity development, and policy areas.

He is educated as Civil Engineer at Addis Ababa University, received his M.Sc. in Hydraulic Engineering and Hydrology at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK, and Ph.D. in Water Resources and Hydraulic Engineering at Dresden University of Technology, Germany.

At early stage of his career, he already worked in a highly responsible position as a Dean and CEO of the Arba Minch University in Ethiopia, where he established prominent graduate programmes in dams and hydropower, irrigation and drainage, water resources and hydrology. He taught the courses in hydropower, water resources, watershed management and environmental impact assessment in Ethiopia and Germany.

Subsequently, for 7 years, Dr. Bekele led the regional office of the International Water Management- (IWMI) - for Nile Basin and East Africa, where he also served as a Senior Researcher, based in Addis Ababa. He developed this office from a small group into the major regional research hub, which still flourishes today. He led the coordinated multi-million programs of over 15 major research projects on water management and agriculture. He also acted as a lead editor of the first comprehensive book on The Nile River Basin: Water, Agriculture, Livelihood and Governance coordinating the efforts of over 45 scientists from Africa and other regions.

Dr Bekele Awulachew then moved on to join the United Nations System, where he worked for 6 years. He worked first at Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) as a Senior Water and Climate Change Specialist at African Climate Policy Center (ACPC). And, subsequently, joined the UN HQ in New York, as Interregional Advisor in the Division of Sustainable Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). During his period at UN he made significant contributions to mainstreaming sustainable development into national development plans of the Member States in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Caribbean countries.

Dr. Bekele Awulachew now leads the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Electricity of Ethiopia. The Ministry has significant portfolio in advancing water and energy development in one of the most rapidly growing developing countries in Africa. Ethiopia is putting in place the unique development partnership models for achieving rapid water supply and sanitation targets, water for advancing rapid irrigation development to ensure national food security. Ethiopia is currently developing the biggest hydropower dams in Africa that will generate 6,000 MW that is owned by the Ministry.