

UN Commission on Sustainable Development #16, May 2008

Business & Industry Major Group Key statements on water & sanitation

1. Economic development. Developing access to water and sanitation stimulates economic development. Access to water & sanitation is important for health, dignity, education, protection of the environment but also for economic development^(ref 2, 3, 4, 5, 7). Business needs the MDGs to be met^(ref 3, 4, 7). The water and sanitation MDGs must be met for all the other MDGs to be met^(ref 3).

2. Need for more projects and more ambitious targets^(ref 2, 4, 5)

2.1. The need to accelerate the pace of projects that deliver access to drinking water and sanitation for people is more important now than it was three years ago^(ref 1, 2). The acceleration that was agreed at CSD13 is not apparent. The pace must be increased substantially now and progress better monitored^(ref 3, 5).

Suggestions that go in the direction of acceleration and ambition^(ref 6):

- a) Strong and clear recognition of the Right to Water and Sanitation.
- b) Strong commitment to Sanitation and to "Integrated Sanitation Management" (ISM1)
- c) Reinforcement of the "Joint Monitoring Programme" and alignment of national and international targets and monitoring
- d) More scope for meaningful engagement for local governments
- e) Finally it is essential to include serious discussion of sustainable finance for water and sanitation services which should include Sustainable Cost Recovery as identified by the Camdessus Report and the Gurria Panel.

2.2. People expect a better level of access to water than is currently called for through the water MDG^(ref 1, 2).

2.3. More ambitious goals are necessary to master all sanitation needs. People do not only need toilets. They also need their solid and liquid waste to be removed from their homes; they also need to be protected from contamination by neighbours. Their waste waters need to be collected. In many parts of the world, pollution needs to be removed from these waste waters to protect the environment and the people living downstream. Integrated Sanitation Management (ISM) is necessary to manage water after use, man-made pollution, waste water flows and water reuse in a context of growing water stress and increasing environmental challenges in many countries^(ref 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8).

3. Water operators and local authorities

3.1. Creating controversy over public versus private management is a waste of time and energy. This is not the issue. Both are necessary. The real challenge is to succeed in providing universal access to water / sanitation services. The private sector is contributing to meeting the MDG water and sanitation targets^(ref 2, 3).

3.2. Preconditions for success in delivering water and sanitation services are mostly the same for public and for private service operators. They must be provided in all countries^(ref 2, 5).

3.3. Private operators are increasingly used by governments as implementing tools for their water and sanitation policies. Their experience is being used for solving technical, managerial, financial or even societal challenges. The implementation of successful partnership programmes largely depends on the existence of a stable environment in which to operate^(ref 7).

3.4. Foster public-private partnerships to implement locally national water and sanitation policies: Local Authorities must be enabled through national frameworks to choose the best available options on a case-by-case basis^(ref 8).

4. Equitable allocation of water resources

Increasing Water scarcity in many countries makes it necessary to ensure that available water resources are allocated equitably between the various categories of users: population, industries, agriculture, power generation^(ref 3, 4, 7).

References

AquaFed delivered 8 public statements and press releases. All are available from the Documents Section on the AquaFed website at: <http://www.aquafed.org/documents.html>

1. AquaFed's press release
http://www.aquafed.org/pdf/CSD16_1_AquaFed_UN-CSD16_PressRelease_EN_Pd_2008-05-12.pdf
2. AquaFed's key messages
http://www.aquafed.org/pdf/CSD16_2_AquaFed_UN-CSD16-KeyMessages_EN_Pd_2008-05-12.pdf
3. Business and Industry press release
http://www.aquafed.org/pdf/CSD16_3_Business_and_Industry_Major_Group_at_UN-CSD16_Press_Release_2008-05-13.pdf
4. May 12, Plenary, Payen
http://www.aquafed.org/pdf/CSD16_4_UN-CSD16_Water_Sanitation_PLENARY_MajorGroup_B&I_Speech_Payen_2008-05-12.pdf
5. May 13, Plenary, Moss http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/statements/business_13may_water.pdf
http://www.aquafed.org/pdf/CSD16_5_UN-CSD16_Water_Sanitation_PLENARY_MajorGroup_B&I_Speech_MOSS_2008-05-13.pdf
6. May 13, Plenary, Moss – Statement on the Chair's Summary
http://www.aquafed.org/pdf/CSD16_6_UN-CSD16_Statement_by_B&I_JMM-on_Chair_Summary_plenary_Pd_2008-05-13.pdf
7. May 14, Ministerial roundtable, Payen, http://www.wbcsd.org/web/projects/water/sanitation/UN-CSD16BusinessandMajorGroup_High%20levelroundtable_final_asdelivered_GP_2008-05-14.pdf
http://www.aquafed.org/pdf/CSD16_7_UN-CSD16_Business_and_Major_Group_High_level_roundtable_final_asdelivered_GP_2008-05-14.pdf
8. May 15, High-Level segment – Interactive discussion with Major Groups, Payen
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http://www.aquafed.org/pdf/CSD16_8_UN-CSD16_Business_and_Industry_Major_Group_Dialogue_May_15_finalasdelivered_2008-05-15.pdf