

**Commission on Sustainable Development  
Report on the twelfth session  
(9 May 2003 and 14-30 April 2004)**

*Economic and Social Council  
Official Records, 2004, Supplement No. 9 (E/2004/29; E/CN.17/2004/21)  
(Excerpts)*

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**Chapter II**

**Thematic cluster for the implementation cycle 2004-  
2005: (a) water; (b) sanitation; (c) Human settlements**

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**Part one  
Review of thematic issues**

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**Water**

**Review of progress**

56. The Commission reviewed progress in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation with regard to freshwater development and management. Delegations generally supported the conclusions contained in the Secretary-General's report on freshwater management.

*Drinking-water supply*

57. There was general agreement on the importance of access to safe water for poverty alleviation and for meeting other Millennium Development Goals. Delegations noted that while substantial progress has been made in expanding access to safe drinking water, progress varies greatly between countries and between rural and urban areas within countries. If progress continues at the current rate, many countries will fail to meet the goals. The poorest countries have the lowest rates of access, and many of the countries that are not on track to meet the targets will require increased external support. The Goal can only be met if efforts are scaled up. Delegations shared the view that poverty reduction would not be achieved without improving water services to poor people. It was stressed that countries should ensure the inclusion of their water agenda in their poverty reduction strategy papers and other national development strategies.

58. In some countries with economies in transition, the water and sanitation infrastructure is collapsing and in serious disrepair because of deferred operation and maintenance. The delegations of some small island developing States noted that providing adequate water and sanitation has been hampered by the lack of trained staff, basic data and information, as well as inadequate funds to upgrade or rehabilitate deteriorating infrastructure.

*Decentralization of services*

59. Several countries emphasized the importance of decentralizing water supply services and of improved operation and maintenance of water supply systems as conditions for long-term sustainability of water sector investments. Some delegations stressed the principle that decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level and that the involvement of local communities and municipalities is a means of raising awareness and creating local ownership among beneficiaries. Many delegations shared the view that transferring responsibility to the local level could strengthen water sector governance, but a number emphasized that the limited institutional capacity of local governments and limited command over financial resources would need to be adequately addressed. An important lesson from the experiences of federally structured countries was that clear mandates and decision-making focal points are indispensable for successful policy and institutional reforms.

#### *Partnerships and private sector involvement*

60. Some delegations, particularly from developed countries, stressed the importance of public-private partnerships for mobilizing investment finance, technical and managerial expertise. Other delegations, particularly from developing countries, called for caution concerning such partnerships. Some expressed concern that partnerships were being promoted to cover a lack of political commitment by Governments. While many delegations recognized the emerging role of public-private partnerships in the water sector as a means to generate additional funding, it was noted that in the partnerships surveyed in the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.17/2004/16) private partners have thus far contributed only a small share of total funding. Other delegations and major groups expressed the view that it is not in financing that the private sector would make a major contribution, but in providing managerial skills, technical support and technology transfer. Many delegations called for further study and dissemination of information on successes and failures of partnerships, and for a transparent accounting of total resource mobilization and the uses to which funds are put.

61. Some delegations emphasized that enabling environments in terms of policy and regulatory frameworks were a key challenge to encourage private sector investors. It was noted that encouraging private investment does not mean privatizing water. There was widespread agreement, including from the business sector, that it was up to communities to decide to what degree and in what way they want to involve the private sector in the provision of public services. It was noted that, given the complex and difficult process of negotiating effective public-private arrangements, local authorities may need capacity-building assistance in this area, among others. Some delegations expressed the view that it was too early to conclude that partnerships are not working.

#### *Integrated water resources management*

62. While reviewing progress in the preparation of water resources management and efficiency plans by 2005, as called for in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, delegations generally reaffirmed their commitment to integrated water resources management as an appropriate holistic approach and guiding principle for implementing water sector reforms and balancing water use among competing uses, including ecosystem services. A widely shared view was that integrated water resources management should be considered as a process leading to sustainable development and management of water resources with active stakeholder involvement and participation. Several countries noted that there is no single generally agreed approach to integrated water resources management, and that different countries are at different stages of the process. Considering the progress that has been made to date in developing strategies and legal frameworks for water management, a considerable number of countries are expected to meet the 2005 target. However, a number of developing countries indicated the need for further technical assistance to achieve the target. Several delegations noted a need for more refined indicators to determine trends and progress in this area, while emphasizing that the Commission's work should not go beyond the scope of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

63. Some delegations considered integrated water resources management to be a development goal related to poverty alleviation, and thus to be included in poverty reduction strategy papers. This could be done through the health chapter of the papers, given the water-health nexus. Some delegations expressed the view that the social and economic costs of not achieving the water-related targets provided the necessary rationale for assigning high priority to water in national development agendas. Others pointed to the difficult tradeoffs Governments face, particularly in Africa, as they struggle to address the heavy costs of treating and caring for those suffering from HIV/ AIDS while maintaining other basic services.

64. Delegations from disaster-prone countries highlighted the interactions among climate change patterns, water supplies, forests and agriculture, and the limited understanding of those interactions as a constraint on effective strategies for long-term water management. Some delegations suggested that there was a need for improved access to research and data in this field, others called for greater use of scientific and educational tools for capacity building and mainstreaming holistic concepts such as integrated water resources management. It was also noted that there was a need for a comprehensive approach to natural disasters, addressing preparedness, management and recovery.

65. Some delegations stressed that strengthening international river basin management at all levels based on existing legal instruments and pragmatic measures and programmes was an important avenue for meeting the Millennium Development Goals. Other delegations noted the need for progress in international law for the efficient management of international watercourses to promote peace and development. The view was expressed that bilateral agreements for dealing with international waters were preferable to the notion of international river basin management at all levels.

#### *Water as a social and/or economic good*

66. Several delegations and major groups stressed the need for pro-poor cost recovery policies and targeted water subsidies to extend coverage to the unserved poor. Some countries supported the view that the costs of providing water supply services, water infrastructure and wastewater disposal should be borne by users through general tax revenues and/or user tariffs. Other delegations considered water as a basic human right and were against treating it as an economic good and charging for its use. It was also pointed out that while water in nature may be free, bringing safe water to users requires investments that must be paid for. Some delegations distinguished between water for basic human needs and water for economic uses, supporting a socially balanced pricing scheme that addressed the economic and social dimensions of water together.

#### *Balancing competing uses*

67. It was noted that after meeting basic needs, the major competition for water was between agricultural use and environmental requirements. It was noted that healthy ecosystems are a prerequisite for clean water and that the value of ecosystems has to be appreciated in the planning process. Since agriculture, forests and the environment all provide important services and contribute to poverty reduction in their own ways, balanced and judicious allocation between them is required. Many participants shared their experiences in using various policy options, demand management measures, and technological solutions in balancing competing demands.

#### *Water resources management units*

68. The issue of the basic unit for water management was the subject of lively discussion, and there was no agreement as to whether a “basin approach” or “ecosystems approach” was best. Chapter 18 of Agenda 21 calls for integrated water resources management at the level of catchment basin or sub-basin. Many countries have been undertaking water management reforms using this approach and have demonstrated its usefulness, and have established river basin committees and organizations. Other delegations expressed the view that using the

ecosystems approach to integrated water resources management had led to better management of water resources. Some countries referred to their comparatively advanced environmental legislation today as the end result of long experience with industrialization and intensive agriculture and the often disastrous consequences for water quantity and quality, health and the environment. Both approaches call for active stakeholder participation and are useful for avoiding water-related disasters, including floods and droughts.

#### *Policies, laws and institutions*

69. Many delegations and major groups emphasized the need to design and adopt water policies and reforms to make the use and governance of water resources more effective and sustainable, contributing to pro-poor development. A number of delegations mentioned innovative reforms undertaken by their countries to ensure equitable and sustainable provision and distribution of water, including institutional reforms (separation of policy and regulatory functions from resource development and management functions), legislation to protect water resources, and pro-poor water management policies. Empowerment of the poor and broad public participation was also held up as a key to success.

#### *Financing water-sector needs*

70. Inadequate financial resources were cited by many delegations as the major obstacle to meeting the internationally agreed goals and targets. The majority of poor people live in rural areas, and attracting finance to rural areas, particularly from the private sector, has proven difficult. Many delegations stated that water services for the poor should be supported through transparent and targeted subsidies, including cross subsidies, and that developing countries would need continuing external assistance. Many delegations agreed that ODA grants should be used to support national efforts to create an enabling environment and to support programmes targeted at financing safe drinking water for the poorest, while loans and cost-recovery instruments were more appropriate for financing economic uses of water.

71. Some delegations called for implementation of the commitments made at the International Conference on Financing for Development, which could make an important contribution to overcoming financial constraints. It was noted by some delegations that ODA in the water sector could be more productive if directed to programme budget support and a sectorwide approach rather than to specific projects. It was noted that countries could use economic instruments such as tax incentives to encourage investment by domestic companies rather than relying solely on foreign firms. The need for better donor coordination was stressed, particularly at country level. Positive examples were mentioned that this can reduce transaction costs and enhance sustainability.

72. A number of delegations highlighted the need for exploring multiple avenues of financial resource mobilization nationally and internationally, including partial loan guarantees, revolving funds, and microcredit schemes. Some distinguished among three approaches: raising private capital for public utilities; seeking private sector involvement in operation and maintenance; and transferring ownership out of the public sector. The limits of private financing for the water sector first need to be tested in order to be able to gauge better the magnitude of ODA requirements. It was also noted that the complex administrative requirements of some international lending agencies, combined with limited technical capacities in recipient countries to meet the requirements, discouraged countries from using those sources.

#### *Capacity-building*

73. There was general agreement that capacity-building for national and local institutions, notably for staff of local water authorities, was vital for ensuring sustainability of water supply systems, and thus for meeting the international goals and targets. One major group mentioned that capacity in science and technology to address the problems of freshwater remains woefully inadequate because of extremely low levels of funding for research and extension. Most delegations viewed capacity-building as a continuous challenge

because of the dynamic nature of the water sector. Another major group called for improving the working environment in the water sector. The interrelationship of agricultural and food policies with water resources management and the mutual interdependence of those policies with trade policies was highlighted by a number of delegations, who noted that unfavourable trade policies restrained investments in improved water resources management. Addressing such issues and making sound choices require careful analysis, for which many countries lack capacities. Several participants noted the need for scientific and educational tools for capacity-building.

#### *Technology transfer*

74. Many delegations stressed the importance of appropriate low-cost technologies for meeting the Millennium Development Goals and the need for transferring innovative technological solutions from developed to developing countries. The reuse of treated wastewater for agricultural purposes (irrigation), including the use in household gardens, and household use (flushing toilets) was supported by many participants as a technological solution for a more efficient use of water. Rainwater harvesting was mentioned as another option for water-scarce countries, as was desalination of saltwater, at least for those who could afford it. It was noted that civil society can play an important role in mobilizing local communities to participate in water governance structures and in the implementation of innovative low-cost technical solutions.

#### *Gender mainstreaming*

75. It was generally recognized that women bear most of the burden of securing water supplies for household needs and have an important role in water resources management. Their role as “active water managers” and agents of change includes a broad range of daily tasks that benefit the whole community, such as hygiene education, provision of water, monitoring and maintenance of water infrastructure, and conservation. One major group called for changing conventional thinking in favour of recognizing women as active citizens with full rights, including land tenure rights and equal access to credit for business.

#### **Constraints and obstacles**

76. Many developed countries supported the view that lack of reforms and good governance, together with inadequate funding and inefficient use of available financial resources, are the critical factors impeding progress. However, a number of developing countries stated that they had demonstrated political will through concrete actions in terms of policy and institutional reforms, but limited means of implementation including finance and technology have constrained their abilities to make progress. They emphasized that both ODA and private sector investment in the water sector have been declining, and domestic resource mobilization policies remain weak.

77. Other constraints on water sector development include fragmented institutional structures, limited technical capacities, and inadequate policy frameworks. Low levels of community involvement and empowerment in water resources management and governance were also widely noted, although more participatory processes are gradually progressing in many countries.

78. Many countries noted the lack of reliable and easily accessible data on water resources as a major obstacle to meaningful reform efforts and to assessment of needs, demands and supplies. The need for improved international cooperation was stressed, including through the United Nations system, for strengthening information systems and developing capacity-building tools. The importance of strengthening databases and developing performance indicators for measuring progress on goals and targets was also stressed.

79. Water demand management was acknowledged as a promising solution for bridging the growing gap between water supply and demand by using easily available and well-established technologies. It was also noted that demand management to change the water-use behaviour of households and enterprises is a long-term process, and Governments

often opt for short-term solutions to increase water supply. A large amount of water is wasted because of poor operation and maintenance of water infrastructure, resulting in revenue loss. Furthermore, weak enforcement of demand management measures and limited public awareness further inhibit water management efforts.

### **Lessons learned**

80. Participants identified a number of lessons learned relating to expanding access to safe drinking water and integrated water resources management:

(a) Meeting the water and sanitation Millennium Development Goals is crucial to achieving progress towards poverty reduction and towards a number of other Millennium Development Goals, for example, on infant mortality, gender equality and education. Development of the water sector therefore needs to be integrated into the poverty reduction strategy papers process and national sustainable development plans;

(b) Providing water and sanitation services to unserved people is a shared responsibility. The challenge is too big to be met by any party alone, but Governments have a primary responsibility to create a framework that ensures affordable access. Governments will need strong political will and commitment if the challenges are to be addressed;

(c) A flexible approach, with simultaneous and complementary actions on all fronts (technical, institutional, financial) and “learning by doing”, would not only facilitate progress but would help countries define their priorities and seek support for means of implementation;

(d) Partnerships do not free Governments from their responsibilities and should be sought not only for funding purposes, but also for sharing technical knowledge, technology transfer and managerial skills;

(e) Promoting private sector participation should be based on corporate social responsibility. Strong regulatory frameworks have helped to attract private sector investment and to ensure consistency of their practices with social policy objectives;

(f) Integrated water resources management, with strong stakeholder participation, was considered a useful concept for developing and promoting more sustainable patterns of water consumption and production.

### **Continuing challenges**

81. There was general agreement among delegations on the huge needs and challenges ahead, particularly with respect to finance, technology, and institutional capacity-building. Participants identified a number of continuing challenges relating to expanding access to safe drinking water and integrated water resources management:

(a) Scaling up of efforts is needed on all fronts to reach the international goals and targets, with a focus on service delivery, for which infrastructure development plays an indispensable role, as does effective water sector management;

(b) Improved regulatory frameworks and effective enforcement mechanisms are critical to protect water resources from pollution and minimize threats to human health and ecosystems, as well as to overcome water scarcity;

(c) Effective local governance and empowerment are essential to extend access to safe drinking water, with the active participation of major groups and women, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. Local and traditional knowledge also needs to be more effectively tapped. Local communities including indigenous people can often provide low-cost solutions that are more sustainable in the long run;

(d) The role of women in water policy-making, planning and decision-making needs to be enhanced;

(e) Science and technology have not been fully harnessed. In particular, linkages between science and farmers should be strengthened to improve water management. There is a need to bridge the North-South gap in technological and scientific research and to promote the transfer of knowledge;

(f) Innovative resource mobilization approaches, such as debt-swap arrangements, taxes on pollution, loan guarantees and other means of financial leveraging, strengthening of sub-sovereign capacity to access domestic capital markets, as well as general budgetary support rather than project-based support, could help to overcome financial constraints;

(g) Strengthened international cooperation is required on water, including more coordinated work by UN agencies and international financial institutions in delivering country level support to meet the above challenges.

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## **Part two High-level segment**

### **Introduction**

202. The participation of more than 100 ministers with environment, water, housing, development, finance and agriculture portfolios as well as heads of a number of United Nations agencies and international organizations and the broad-based participation of major groups is indicative of the importance that these parties attach to their commitments to reach the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation goals and targets on water, sanitation and human settlements, and to the work of the Commission. The role of the Commission on Sustainable Development as the high-level intergovernmental body on sustainable development and for monitoring progress towards implementation of Agenda 21, as well as achieving the goals and targets contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation was highlighted. In his opening address to the Commission, Secretary-General Kofi Annan urged the Commission to keep a close eye on progress, to be a “watchdog”.

203. Ministers valued the richness of the discussions and the sharing of experiences and best practices on national and local implementation efforts as well as on the constraints, obstacles and challenges faced. They welcomed the active participation of major groups throughout the session. They also appreciated the outcome of the regional implementation forums, the diversity of activities at the twelfth session and the opportunities for capacity-building, including through partnership fairs, the Learning Centre and side-events. The session was organized in a manner that encouraged interactive discussions and ministers expressed satisfaction with these working methods and suggested that their example could be followed in subsequent review sessions of the Commission.

204. Ministers and heads of delegation who addressed the Commission during the special segment on small island developing States underscored the importance of ensuring that the International Meeting for the 10-Year Review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States secures a renewed political commitment by all countries to the Barbados Programme of Action and that the meeting’s outcome focus on practical and pragmatic actions for its further implementation. The unique characteristics that result in the vulnerability of the small island developing States were stressed, as were new and emerging issues such as HIV/AIDS and security concerns.

### **Meeting the targets**

205. Ministers emphasized that achieving the targets for water, sanitation, and human settlements and achieving the poverty eradication target are inextricably linked and play a crucial role for sustaining economic growth. It was noted that the status of implementation of the goals and targets is as follows:

(a) A considerable number of countries are expected to reach the target of developing integrated water resources management and efficiency plans by 2005 but many countries would need further technical assistance to achieve the target;

(b) A considerable number of countries are on track to halve the population without access to safe drinking water by 2015 but progress is uneven among countries and continents and many countries will fail to meet the goal if progress continues at the current rate;

(c) A large number of countries are not on track to reach the target of halving the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015, either in rural or urban areas, unless substantial additional resources were raised; and

(d) Some countries are close to achieving the target of significantly improving the lives of slum dwellers by 2020 in relative terms, while several countries are not on track. In many countries slums are growing at an alarming pace.

206. Although many countries are not currently on track, the targets for water, sanitation and human settlements are achievable in the time frame agreed. Achieving them, however, will require high level political commitment and strengthened governance at all levels, and substantial efforts at mobilizing and effectively using resources. Ministers stressed their commitment to implementation and to making this a decade of kept promises and emphasized the importance of providing safe drinking water, sanitation and shelter as a prerequisite for achieving other Millennium Development Goals.

### **Creating an enabling environment**

207. Each country is responsible for its own progress towards implementing Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation targets and commitments, taking into account that there are common but differentiated responsibilities. Ministers acknowledged that developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, continue to need support from donor countries, United Nations agencies and international financial institutions and other organizations, particularly in the areas of planning, finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building. There was widespread support for integrating water, sanitation and human settlements into national sustainable development strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers.

### **Capacity-building and transfer of technology**

208. Ministers recognized that capacity-building efforts had not kept pace with evolving needs, and that substantial technical and institutional gaps remain at all levels. Monitoring programmes for water, sanitation and human settlements need to be strengthened at national level if progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation targets is to be measured.

209. National capacities could usefully be strengthened in scientific and technical know-how to conduct assessment and monitoring of water resources, water quality, and aspects of water vulnerability — including to natural disasters, particularly in small island developing States. Closer and more focused North-South, South-South and regional scientific and technical cooperation would facilitate this. Local communities, including indigenous peoples, organizations and individuals possess a wealth of knowledge and practical experience that could be more effectively utilized and more widely shared with strengthened regional and international mechanisms for knowledge exchange in these areas.

### **Governance**

210. Ministers stressed that strong institutions and good governance are essential to ensure proper and efficient use of scarce government resources and affordable service delivery to the poor and noted progress made in many countries. Democratic and inclusive participation of all stakeholders, the rule of law, conducive regulatory environments, accountability, transparency, and corporate social responsibility, including efforts to combat corruption, were recognized by Ministers as important dimensions of good governance. Political stability and security, and sound economic management were also recognized as particularly important for mobilizing investment and productive private-sector entrepreneurial initiatives. Strong local institutions are necessary for effective service delivery, especially to support decentralization and to make service provision demand-driven.

211. Whereas national leadership and authority for sustainable development policies rest with Governments, responsibility-sharing initiatives with local authorities and communities, non-governmental organizations, public-private partnerships and individual citizens, including indigenous peoples, are all important for effectively addressing sustainable development issues. Enhancing the participation of women in decision-making at all levels is crucial to effective water, sanitation and human settlements planning and management.

212. Good governance at the international level is crucial to providing an enabling environment for sustainable development.

### **Finance**

213. Ministers noted that the public sector remains the principal financier of water, sanitation and human settlements infrastructure investments. With decentralization of services, local governments bear a growing share of financial responsibility. Attention was drawn to the importance of measures to provide them with, and/or empower them to mobilize, the needed resources.

214. A broad-based appeal was made for development partners, in the spirit of mutual accountability, to move towards meeting the full Monterrey commitments, and to target an increased amount of funding specifically for investments in water, sanitation and human settlements. Official development assistance could help to leverage private capital through a variety of financing schemes, including market-based financing models for small and medium-sized enterprises, with a potentially large multiplier effect on domestic resource mobilization. Ministers recalled the commitment made in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to promote open, equitable, rules-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial systems that benefit all countries in the pursuit of sustainable development.

215. Mobilization of investments from the private sector for water and sanitation was considered of crucial importance although the view was expressed that investments by

private companies would be insufficient to fill the water and sanitation gap for the poor. With appropriate policy and institutional support, including the further development of supportive regulatory frameworks and innovative financing schemes, the role of small-scale entrepreneurs in providing affordable services to the poor could be strengthened.

216. Appropriate financing arrangements are needed to meet the housing requirements of the poor and, in particular, residents of informal settlements. It was noted that traditional mortgage lending institutions had begun to extend lending to low-income households, though generally not the poorest, and that this needed to be further encouraged through schemes like partial loan guarantees. Also, microcredit finance can provide valuable support to home improvements of slum dwellers lacking access to formal credit markets. Scaling up microcredit facilities to benefit more of the poor, and especially the poorest, remains a challenge.

217. It was recognized that the partnership approach taken at Johannesburg and beyond could be a valuable and important modality to leverage additional resources for sustainable development. It was noted that partnerships should respond to the needs of developing countries and not the priorities of donors and that they should complement and not substitute for intergovernmental efforts.

## **Water**

### **Integrated water resources management**

218. Ministers stressed that meeting the target of developing integrated water resources management and efficiency plans by 2005, addressing water quantity and quality concerns, should be a political priority, and efforts at implementation need to be accelerated.

219. They acknowledged that governance of the water sector was often hampered by unclear division of responsibilities and accountability and limited coordination among various agencies. Integrated water resources management plans offer the opportunity to rationalize water management and break down sectoral compartmentalization. Agencies responsible for land management could usefully coordinate more closely with those responsible for water resources.

220. The experiences and the value of cooperation and the management of water resources on the basis of river basins were noted, particularly in the context of international watercourses. Further development and implementation of an ecosystem approach, including recognition of the services ecosystems provide, was recognized as one of several options that should be promoted, depending on priorities and circumstances. Ministers emphasized the importance of improving water efficiency, particularly in irrigated agriculture, and expressed concerns over water scarcity and depletion and pollution of ground water resources in many areas. The need to consider the interlinkages between freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems was recognized.

### **Drinking-water supply**

221. Ministers stressed that providing access to safe drinking water is essential to improve health, particularly for children, and alleviate poverty. They noted that financing investments in water supply systems required a mix of public investment and cost-recovery through user fees, combined with targeted subsidies to ensure access to affordable water for essential purposes by poor people.

222. Rehabilitation of water and sanitation infrastructure requires actions on several fronts. Funds must be available not only for construction of water facilities but also for long-term operation and maintenance. Some countries have moved towards fuller cost recovery to strengthen financing for maintaining, expanding and improving water supply. It was noted that targeted subsidies were an important means for ensuring access for poor people.

223. Ministers emphasized that Governments retained responsibility for the provision of safe drinking water and that effective private sector involvement required a sound regulatory system. They noted the need for further assessment of the role of the private sector as a source of both investment and expertise in utility management, including operation and maintenance. However, water resources themselves are considered to be in the public domain.

224. The urgent need to improve water supply and sanitation in Africa was recognized and ministers welcomed new initiatives to that effect.

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### **Responding to challenges: the way forward**

236. Ministers identified a number of challenges that need to be addressed in the course of the policy year in an effective follow-up to the twelfth session of the Commission, consistent with the programme of work adopted at the eleventh session, with a view to strengthening implementation to meet the agreed goals and targets in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements, including:

(a) Mobilizing resources from all sources, international, regional, national and local, public and private, to meet the Millennium Development Goals and goals and targets of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

(b) Water, sanitation and human settlements in national sustainable development strategies and poverty reduction strategy papers, and ensuring that both processes are inclusive and nationally driven and that their implementation is monitored;

(c) Strengthening governance at all levels to ensure proper and efficient use of scarce resources;

(d) Improving inter-agency cooperation and cross-sectoral coordination among international organizations in accordance with their mandates and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, as well cross-sectoral cooperation and donor coordination at the national level contributing to the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan;

(e) Enhancing the role of partnerships in mobilizing new and additional resources, and encouraging those that effectively contribute to meeting national needs;

(f) Building capacity for water management, sanitation and human settlements planning and development in developing countries, with financial and technical assistance from developed countries and international organizations. Capacity-building at the local level is particularly important in view of the trend towards decentralization of service provision;

(g) Increasing the transfer of appropriate technologies and scientific and technical cooperation;

(h) Disseminating knowledge and experience, particularly on low-cost and locally adapted approaches and technologies, and scaling up successful experiences;

(i) Strengthening monitoring, assessment and reporting mechanisms to improve decision-making and to enable measurement of progress towards targets, while recognizing the need to reduce the reporting burden;

(j) Addressing the special needs of Africa, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries;

(k) Enhancing the roles and status of women, as participants and agents of change, and mainstreaming gender in planning, decision-making and management;

(l) Accelerating implementation of commitments to develop integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005, addressing economic

development, poverty reduction, environmental protection and sustainable consumption and production, including water efficiency in agriculture;

(m) Increasing recognition of the importance of sanitation and hygiene to health, poverty reduction and other aspects of sustainable development, as a basis for mobilizing public and private resources;

(n) Addressing the major challenges to urban planning and land-use management posed by rapid urbanization, and ensuring the effective participation of local authorities and communities, including the poor, in these processes;

(o) Improving the conditions in informal settlements, including through linking them to the broader urban and national economies, creating employment opportunities and promoting entrepreneurship among the poor, in particular for women.

## Annex III

### Learning Centre: list of courses

*Title*, (subject area), instructor(s) and instructor affiliation for each course are listed in the order that they were scheduled:

*Strategic Planning for Sustainable Development: The national sustainable development strategy from concept to action* (institution/capacity-building), Mr. Mersie Ejigu, Partnership for African Environmental Sustainability

*Consensus Building for Natural Resources* (institution-building), Dr. Pietronella van den Oever and Ms. Marguerite Monnet, World Bank

*How to Apply for GEF Projects* (institution/capacity-building), Mr. Frank Pinto and Tehmina Akhtar, UNDP/GEF

*Investing in Communities* (human settlements), offered in French, Ms. Marguerite Monnet and Dr. Pietronella van den Oever, World Bank

*ICT Networking Approaches and Development Solutions for Sustainable Development* (institution/capacity-building, water, sanitation), Ms. Radhika Lal, UNDP

*Urban Governance Tools to Support Sustainable Urbanization* (human settlements), Dr. Dinesh Mehta, Ms. Shipra Narang, Mr. Rafael Tuts, UN-Habitat

*Learning about Water Management* (water, capacity-building), Mr. Karl Torstein Hetland and Dr. Faye Benedict, University of Oslo, and Ms. Astrid Sandås, National Board of Education (Norway)

*Science and Technology for Decision Making* (institution/capacity-building), Dr. Calestous Juma, Harvard University

*Restoring Urban Waterways* (water), Ms. Bonnie A. Harken, Nautilus International Development Consulting, Mr. Sean C. S. Chiao, EDAW Urban Design and Mr. George Stockton, Moriyama and Teshima Planners

*Integrated Water Resource Management* (water), by Dr. Colin Mayfield, United Nations University and University of Waterloo, Canada, Dr. Velma Grover, United Nations University International Network on Water, Environment and Health

*New Integrated Water Resource Management Concepts, including non-conventional water resources such as desalination* (water), Ms. Else Boutkan and Mr. Allerd Stikker, Ecological Management Foundation

*Improving cities and the lives of the urban poor* (human settlements), Dr. Elliot Sclar, Columbia University, and Dr. Pietro Garau, University of Rome “La Sapienza”

*Water Supply, Sanitation and Health: Public Health Aspects* (capacity-building, water, sanitation), Professor Magara, Hokkaido University

*Gender and Sanitation* (sanitation), Ms. Maria Arce Moreira, Gender and Water Alliance, Ms. Ethnè Davey, South Africa Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, Ms. Karin Krchnak, World Resources Institute

*Finance for Water and Sanitation* (water, sanitation, capacity-building), Mr. John Wasielewski, USAID, Mr. Paul L. Freedman, USAID, Mr. Martin Baker, Salans, Mr. Gersan R. Zurita, Fitch Ratings

*How to address the Millennium Development Goals in relation to water*, Mr. Kees Leendertse, Cap-Net/UNDP, Mr. Ingvar Andersson, UNDP and CapNet

*How water decision makers and water professionals can address integrated water resources management* (water), Mr. Kees Leendertse, Cap-Net/UNDP and CapNet

*Use of the Global Environment Facility Processes for Collaboration on Transboundary Waters* (water), Dr. Martin Bloxham, University of Plymouth

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