

## **ACCRA STATEMENT ON WATER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

***Water is life ! Without water there can be no future.***

We, as representatives of Governments, international, continental and regional organisations as well as members of civil society, professionals from the water sector from 41 African countries together with partners from other continents, met in Accra, Ghana to seek ways to ensure that water assists Africa to achieve its sustainable development goals. The New Partnership for Africa's Development, NEPAD provides an important opportunity for this.

Water can make an immense difference to Africa's development if it is managed well and used wisely. Given clear policies and strategies and real commitments to action, we can use water to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development in Africa by:

- Improving access to safe water supply and sanitation to reduce the proportion of Africans without access to basic water supply and sanitation by 50% by 2015 and 75% by 2025.
- Promoting efficient and sustainable use of water to address food security and income generation, helping to halve the number of malnourished people by 2015 through investment in irrigated agriculture focusing on economic development as well as on food self-sufficiency, enhancing access to markets and building partnerships for funding and learning.
- Using integrated water resource management (IWRM) to promote cooperation in national and shared water basins for the mutual benefit of all water users and their communities and to increase public awareness and strengthen the political will.
- Acting to prevent, mitigate and manage water-related disasters by developing a prevention based culture, strengthening capacity to monitor and mitigate climate variability and to manage disasters.
- Focusing empowerment and capacity on improving equity and gender and promoting pro-poor water governance and water policies.

All these activities must be undertaken in a manner designed to protect the natural environment.

It will only be possible to sustain access to safe water and hygienic sanitation and create sustainable livelihoods using water if we tackle the underlying poverty of many African people. Water-based initiatives must link with broader efforts to promote sustainable development in Africa. Cooperation to improve economic conditions so Africa can meet its own needs is crucial.

Water is a public good and should be funded as a social good for social purposes and charged as an economic good where used for economic purposes. Governments must mobilise resources first from internal sources, using public funds for services for the poor and mobilising private sector funds to meet national economic

objectives, paying as much attention to funding operations and maintenance costs as to initial investments.

Financial flows will have to be dramatically increased through the appropriate mix of generic development aid, foreign direct investment and support to broad economic development in Africa. Essential investments which cannot be supported using local or private sector resources will require approximately US\$6 billion annually to meet basic water supply and sanitation targets, US\$2 billion to promote irrigated agriculture and US\$2 billion for institutional development, capacity building, research and education.

A dedicated water fund for Africa should be established to achieve this and to support integrated water resource management and cooperation in shared basins. Funding and compensation instruments to mitigate the impact of water-related disasters and climate change should reflect the "polluter pays" principle with those who have contributed most to the problems contributing to their solutions.

Water is everybody's business and African people and their governments hold the key to their own future and should establish effective institutional and policy frameworks with participation of all elements of civil society and governance delegated to the lowest appropriate level. Africa's partners have a vital role in achieving the goals of the Millennium Declaration and sustainable development through technical and financial support and policy reform.

International water basins provide opportunities for regional co-operation, development and integration. Arrangements must be established and strengthened to benefit all riparian countries with assistance to and support for local and national initiatives.

The achievement of Africa's development goals as articulated by NEPAD and the African Water Vision require coordinated action by governments at a national, sub-regional and continental level. We offer our technical, professional and secretariat support to the African Ministers Conference on Water (AMCOW) when it is established.

Successful action requires monitoring, evaluation and accounting. The 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development where we will meet in the African Water Village at the Water Dome and then the Kyoto Third World Water Forum should be used to account on progress made on the Frameworks for Action established at the Hague World Water Forum in 2000. They also be used to identify and propose actions to bridge any gaps that may appear between commitments, delivery and goals.

Accra  
17th April 2002