

NGO Intervention - IWRM Session Tuesday 12th April 2004.

In response to the Chair's call for responsive and targeted replies to her questions – on the 'how', the 'who' and the 'what', the NGO Major Group had hoped to make the following intervention in the IWRM session, but time did not permit.

We welcome the several interventions that have highlighted the importance of ecosystems to integrated water resource management. We call on CSD 13 to:

“HOW”

- (i) *Reaffirm* the importance of producing and implementing IWRM and water efficiency plans **using an eco-system based approach, taking into account the strong call for policy change to address degradation in our life support systems from the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Synthesis report.**
- (ii) *Agree* UN-based mechanisms for monitoring and reporting progress on water, sanitation and human settlements after CSD 13, including for IWRM noting the soon-lapsed target date of 2005. Regional mechanisms supporting river basin cooperation and information exchange could support agreed international process(es).

“WHAT”

Acknowledge critical elements to be considered in IWRM, including:

- ✓ an open and transparent participatory process,
- ✓ assessment and valuation of ecosystem services,
- ✓ objectives for ecosystem management, and
- ✓ establishment of environmental flows to balance various demands for water, protect downstream users and ecosystems and ensure long term prosperity of a river basin or catchment.

“WHO”

- *Agree* that all member states make specific reference to IWRM plans in their National Sustainable Development Strategies and poverty reduction strategies.
- *Urge* donor countries to provide technical assistance, especially for capacity building, and funding to ensure that IWRM and water efficiency plans are developed and operationalised as soon as possible.
- *Request* the World Bank (whose engagement we welcome) and IFIs uphold their agreed safeguard policies.
- *Request* the Global Water Partnership, and other organisations assisting governments, to review their methodologies for IWRM to ensure that the conservation and management of ecosystems is incorporated adequately.
- *Ensure* all member states take due recognition of linkages between poverty reduction, IWRM, and environmental sustainability targets and objectives (in particular MDG7, the JPOI 2010 biodiversity target) in policy and decision making.
- *Urge* governments to involve all relevant departments and agencies (including those working on Multilateral Environmental Agreements), and other stakeholders including women's groups, NGOs, farmers and the private sector to engage openly and transparently in the IWRM planning process. This is crucial to ensure social equity and vital to develop local entrepreneurship, to find locally appropriate solutions as well as develop capacity and awareness to support long term sustainable solutions.

NGOs are working, and will continue to work, in partnership with governments and others towards achieving these commitments.