

Australia, The Netherlands and United Kingdom

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Cluster 3

Water and Sanitation

We welcome the recent letter by 57 Member States committing to a dedicated sustainable development goal on water and sanitation. Indeed, water and its sustainable management are essential for human health and wellbeing, poverty eradication, food and energy production, social and economic development, for protecting and maintaining healthy ecosystems and for disaster risk reduction. However, water is also a finite and vulnerable resource under mounting pressure from population growth, urbanization, pollution, unsustainable production and consumption patterns, and climate vulnerability. Hence, we need an ambitious SDG on water and sanitation.

The focus areas document provides a solid basis for shaping the SDG on water and sanitation. We would like to welcome the good technical recommendations of UN water in this regard and suggest the following five targets.

1. Ensure **universal** access to safe drinking water, sanitation and **hygiene**, (6a) taking into account the importance of health impacts related to good water and sanitation management.

2. Improve the sustainable use and development of water resources (6e),

3. Reduce wastewater pollution and improve water quality by reducing the discharge of untreated domestic, agricultural and industrial wastewater and increasing the safe reuse of wastewater (6c, 6d).

4. Reduce the risk of mortality and economic loss from natural and human-induced floods and droughts (6l)

5. Strengthen equitable, participatory and accountable water governance (6f)

Moreover, we would like to underline the important relationship between access to sanitation and wastewater treatment to avoid pollution of rivers, aquifers and coastal areas.

Furthermore, it is important to specifically address water related disasters that impact on cities, such as flooding. Flood risk strategies are often neglected in urban development. Coastal cities in developing countries are expected to grow significantly in the coming decades, making them more vulnerable.

Another area of critical importance is ensuring the promotion of development strategies to ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities can achieve universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene.

Sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition

The chairs' summary on this focus area captures very well the current discussions and considerations. We observe and appreciate that most of the areas mentioned in the summary correspond to food and nutrition security frameworks that recently have been proposed internationally and that can count on wide support, such as the Zero Hunger Challenge and the report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons. We feel that areas that relate to the targets that these frameworks have in common should in any case be recognizable in an SDG on food and nutrition security.

We propose the following six targets:

1. end hunger and ensure universal access to sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious food (2A),
2. reduce stunting, wasting and anemia for all children under five (2B), and maternal undernutrition.
3. increase agricultural productivity (2C),
4. increase open and functioning markets and trade, including by eliminating harmful agricultural subsidies
5. adopt sustainable agricultural, ocean and freshwater fishery practices and systems (rebuilding designated fish stocks to sustainable levels) (2D)
6. reduce post-harvest losses and food waste (2L).

Concerning specific issues that need to be taken into account in the elaboration of these 6 areas, we would like to highlight the following:

- With regard to malnutrition and stunting of young children, we want to emphasize the crucial nexus with women's equality and sexual, reproductive and gender rights.
- At the same time we would like to highlight the importance to stop the increase in proportion of children overweight.
- With regard to increasing agricultural productivity, we would like to highlight the importance of an enabling and inclusive environment for rural entrepreneurs, especially smallholders and women entrepreneurs, i.e. their access to land, water, nutrients, knowledge, finance and markets.
- In the area of sustainable agricultural and fishery practices, we call attention to the growing need for climate smart and resilient ways of increasing agricultural production. Efficiency of water and nutrient use and conservation of biodiversity are crucial elements in that respect.
- On global level an open, fair, transparent and equitable trading system is a prerequisite for access to nutritious food and sustainable agriculture.

Finally, regarding the title of this focus area, we would argue to put the ultimate objective of 'ending hunger and achieving food security' (rather than 'food security and nutrition') up front as the overarching goal, followed by sustainable agriculture which is a necessary, but in itself not sufficient, condition to realize this objective.