



**SUMMARY OF THE STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE
ON SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT –
PRIORITIES FOR POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND
BEST PRACTICES
25-26 APRIL 2002**

The Stakeholder Dialogue on Sustainable Water Management – Priorities for Policy Frameworks and Best Practices convened from 25-26 April 2002 at the Swiss Re Centre for Global Dialogue in Rüschlikon, Switzerland. Organized by the Swiss Federal Government, which was represented by the interdepartmental working group, IDARio, and Swiss Re, the Dialogue brought together over 140 participants from governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and the academic, investment and business communities.

Goals of the Stakeholder Dialogue included: identifying priority problem areas; identifying and assessing technical, regulatory, procedural and market solutions, as well as measures to improve equity and efficiency of regional and global water supply; fostering public-private partnerships in the areas of water management and framework conditions; and providing relevant input to awareness-raising programmes and media coverage, regional and international debates on water conservation, education, and in-depth solution-oriented research. The Dialogue also aimed to further develop the conclusions of the International Conference on Freshwater, which took place from 3-7 December 2001 in Bonn, Germany, and to contribute to discussions on the freshwater issue at the upcoming Implementation Conference and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

The Dialogue's deliberations will feed into a thesis paper, which the Swiss Government plans to use when developing its position for negotiations on freshwater issues at the WSSD, and as a means of communicating its intent to play an active role in the international debate on water. Swiss Re will also use the outcome for risk assessment, awareness building, development of water-related risk-mitigating activities, and screening of projects related to corporate social responsibility.

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL
DISCUSSIONS ON FRESHWATER POLICY**

The International Conference on Water and the Environment held in Dublin, Ireland in 1991 provided input on freshwater issues for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Among the UNCED outcomes was Agenda 21, a 40-

chapter plan of action for achieving sustainable development in the 21st Century, with Chapter 18 focusing on protection of the quality and supply of freshwater resources. The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was created in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of the UNCED agreements.

At the 19th Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS) in June 1997, delegates conducted a five-year review of progress achieved since UNCED and adopted a Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, which contained recommendations for action in the area of freshwater. It also called for a dialogue under the aegis of the CSD, beginning at its sixth session, to consider initiating a strategic approach for the implementation of all aspects of the sustainable use of freshwater for social and economic purposes. CSD-6, which met from 20 April-1 May 1998 in New York, reviewed Chapter 18 of Agenda 21 and welcomed announcements by several countries of their plans to organize international conferences on water-related issues as a contribution to the future work of the CSD.

The Second World Water Forum convened from 17-22 March 2000 in The Hague, the Netherlands, to raise public awareness of the global water crisis. A Ministerial Conference that met in parallel issued a Ministerial Declaration, which called for regular review of implementation progress and periodic assessment of the state of freshwater resources.

The International Conference on Freshwater, which met from 3-7 December 2001 in Bonn, Germany, was convened as a preparatory step for consideration of freshwater issues at the upcoming WSSD. Outcomes from this Conference include a Ministerial Declaration and Recommendations for Action that will be presented to the WSSD.

In early 2002, Switzerland identified six priority issues for the WSSD, with freshwater resources being among them. To further international efforts and promote stakeholder engagement in the issue, the Swiss Government worked in partnership with Swiss Re to organize the Stakeholder Dialogue on Sustainable Water Management.

REPORT OF THE STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE

The Stakeholder Dialogue on Sustainable Water Management opened on Thursday morning, 25 April 2002. At the outset of the Dialogue, participants were provided with a thesis paper produced by the Swiss Federal Government and Swiss Re, which was to serve as the basis for discussion. The first day of the two-day meeting consisted of an opening Plenary, two substantive sessions and a

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closing session. The first substantive session consisted of introductory speeches, after which participants broke out into four parallel workshops and then reconvened for a brief feedback session. The second substantive session opened with keynote speeches, which were followed by four parallel panels and another feedback session. On Friday morning, 26 April 2002, participants received a modified thesis paper based on findings from the previous day. The paper was discussed throughout the second day primarily by a roundtable of policy makers and senior experts, with additional comments from the floor.

OPENING PLENARY

Following a brief introductory video on the nature of water entitled "The Mirror That Changes," Walter Fust, Director General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), provided a brief portrait of SDC. Illustrating how SDC fosters sustainable water management, Fust highlighted its focus on rural water supply and sanitation, integrated water resource management (IWRM), disaster prevention and relief, international networking, knowledge management and training. Fust delineated the following priorities for sustainable water management: recognizing water's key role; promoting stakeholder dialogue and involvement; and fostering new partnerships and alliances.

Bruno Porro, Chief Risk Officer of Swiss Re, described Swiss Re's interest in contributing to sustainable development and managing water-related risks, citing: bodily injury due to water pollution; loss of property value and ecological damage; interruption in business due to depleted or contaminated water; and occurrence of natural catastrophes. Porro further elaborated Swiss Re's contribution to sustainable development through fostering efficient use of natural resources, mitigating human impact, and early recognition and management of environmental and social risks and opportunities.

Peter Dürig, Marketing Director of the Center for Global Dialogue, then introduced the following presentations on "Facts and Perception." Andreas Berntell, Director of the Stockholm International Water Institute, offered insights on "What Science Knows," stating that apart from providing tables and figures to describe the world's water resources, scientists could also develop future scenarios and map out necessary actions. He predicted "future water stress" due to limits in water resources, population growth, increased demand and pollution, resulting in insufficient drinking water, lack of sanitation and negative health results. He also mapped out regions that rely heavily on irrigation, raising the question of how agricultural productivity could be increased and subsidies phased out. In conclusion, he noted that despite broad endorsement of IWRM, it is implemented in very few places, and he called on the WSSD to set concrete targets and tackle the need for drinking water and sanitation.

Vijay Vaitheeswaran, Environment and Energy Correspondent for the *Economist*, warned there were no magic solutions, stressing that "market forces, military might, mega-projects and money" could not solve the world's water problems. He stated that market forces "enshrined the global trend of deregulation" and their exclusive use would lead to over-centralization of supply, thereby ignoring conservation and community initiatives. Mega-projects, he argued, would also not solve the root problems of water scarcity, but instead incur immense human costs and ignore the social causes of the problem. He said a fundamental change in mentality was necessary.

STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ernst Brugger, President of Brugger and Partners Ltd., opened the first substantive session on Stakeholders' Views and Responsibilities. Participants heard six introductory statements on four topics: household expectations and experiences; non-governmental organizations' agenda; the challenges for water providers and commercial consumers; and the role of international and national organizations. The introductions were followed by four parallel stakeholder workshops on the same topics and a feedback session during which workshop participants reported on their deliberations to the whole group. The following section summarizes the opening statements and workshop discussions by topic.

Editor's Note: Due to resource limitations, coverage of the parallel workshops on the NGO's Agenda and the Role of National and International Organizations is based on summaries provided by workshop rapporteurs and feedback from workshop moderators during Plenary.

HOUSEHOLD EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES:

Jussara de Lima Carvalho, Programme Coordinator for the Environmental Sanitation Agency in Brazil, stated that although Brazil has 12 percent of the world's freshwater, the resource is unevenly distributed socially and geographically. Carvalho highlighted stakeholder participation and water pricing in Brazil's water management system.

Oral Ataniyazova, Director of Centre Perzent in Uzbekistan, elaborated on the consequences of the Aral Sea crisis, stressing disaster and conflict prevention. Ataniyazova further illustrated the impacts of pesticide contamination on human health in Karakalpakstan, particularly in babies and pregnant women.

Riccardo Petrella, President of the Global Water Contract of the Group of Lisbon, underscored access to safe and affordable water and "access to life," further stressing that water should not be privatized. Suggesting outcomes for the WSSD, Petrella highlighted: recognition of water as a common good; rejection of its commodification; greater participation of local communities in all aspects of decision-making; and democratization of water policies.

Workshop Discussion: This workshop was moderated by Armon Hartmann, Senior Water Advisor for SDC. Jussara de Lima Carvalho elaborated on Brazil's ten-year experience in participatory processes, reporting that it was based on a watershed approach and engaged mayors, civil society and government. Oral Ataniyazova underlined water conflict prevention. She listed the lack of a coordinating body at the international and regional level, the presence of global economic policies that drive pesticide use and production of specific crops, and the loss of traditional knowledge as roots of the water problem.

Participants defined domestic stakeholder expectations as requiring a constant and reliable water supply. Throughout the discussion, participants stressed conservation in agricultural production and cities, and preservation through rainwater harvesting. Others noted strong coalitions against saving water. Problems highlighted were the supply-driven nature of water management and lack of holistic understanding of the water cycle. Participants discussed ways to actively engage stakeholders, with one emphasizing criteria for guidelines and indicators holding decision-makers responsible for ensuring participation.

Moderator Hartmann summed-up the workshop by noting five main points raised: need to move from supply- to demand-driven management; water and sanitation; importance of participation, ownership, education, gender balance and traditional knowledge; innovation in water conservation, preservation and retention; and financing.

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NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS' AGENDA: In describing the principles of the NGO agenda, Fritz Brugger, Deputy Director of Helvetas, highlighted: a river basin focus; restricted pricing, where pricing only affects consumption above the "lifeline;" and the value of water, stressing that access to water is a human right. Brugger described preconditions for sustainability and detailed seven steps towards effective public-private partnerships (PPPs) as: transparency and democratic control; increased access, especially to the poor; better water quality and supply reliability; social and ecological sustainability; efficiency; strong and independent regulation board; and risk-balancing. As inputs to the WSSD process, Brugger stressed freshwater access as an agenda focus, and suggested an international convention on freshwater.

Workshop Discussion: This workshop was moderated by Fritz Gutbrodt, Head of Swiss Re's Centre for Global Dialogue. Participants heard a further elaboration on Fritz Brugger's introduction on NGO viewpoints and responsibilities as stakeholders.

It was noted that not all relevant stakeholders were present at the workshop. Discussions focused mainly on NGO viewpoints, delineating NGO tasks, emphasizing a holistic approach for PPPs and building awareness of the different parameters for urban and rural areas.

THE CHALLENGES FOR WATER PROVIDERS AND COMMERCIAL CONSUMERS: Jim Lamb, Head of Environment of Severn Trent, stressed the importance of the Millennium Declaration goals, and called for the involvement of the private sector. As top priorities he listed integrated river basin management, improving agricultural water use efficiency, and dealing with the sources of pollution. He proposed developing a system of good water governance and the creation of an independent regulatory framework to be enshrined in national water policies.

Erich-Helmut Buxbaum, General Manager of Unilever Austria, distinguished between businesses that supply water and those that consume water. He described his company's efforts to reduce water use in production and to work with communities in the neighborhood, as well as with suppliers and farmers, to reduce water and chemical use. He also emphasized the importance of awareness-raising and involvement in local and regional water issues.

Workshop Discussion: Al Fry, Programme Manager of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, moderated this workshop. Jim Lamb highlighted points from his introductory statement, following which participants discussed the ability of the poor to pay market prices, given that in many cases they already pay more than 3-4 percent of their income for water. Participants from developing countries recommended focusing on charging heavy users and reducing unpaid use or leakage. Some questioned the political will to do so, and referred to leaked water as a political good. Some warned that companies would only skim off paying users, emphasizing that these companies could not be regulated, especially in developing countries. Others advocated demand-side management through pricing mechanisms or regulation. Some argued for pollution prevention rules at all levels, while others called for a service model with financial incentives for sustainable management. It was suggested that official development assistance (ODA) be used to transition to more efficient systems, develop regulation and facilitate stakeholder participation.

THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS: Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of UNEP, noted the decline in percentage of GDP dedicated to development cooperation since Rio, calling the International Conference on Financing for Development an important step in the right direction. He then highlighted the

connection between environment and development and affirmed that water and sanitation would be central topics at the WSSD. Töpfer stressed the role of indigenous knowledge in promoting responsible water management, adding that water has a spiritual value in all world religions. He also emphasized the role of private industry in water management. He said many industries, including agriculture and tourism, are water intensive and should be made sustainable and beneficial for local populations through instruments similar to the Bonn Guidelines on Access and Benefit Sharing approved by the Sixth Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Noting that mountains were the water towers of the world, he called for the protection of mountain ecosystems. In closing, he supported global and regional regulatory instruments for water.

Workshop Discussion: Ernst Brugger moderated this workshop. Participants explored ways to ensure and implement good water governance through specific laws and fair and equitable enforcement mechanisms, while attempting to balance interests and empower rural areas. They conceptualized water governance at all levels of government, with the most concrete actions taking place on the ground, according to national policies and laws and international guidelines and principles. Participants rejected the idea of a global water convention saying it would be difficult to negotiate.

POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND BEST PRACTICES FROM PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PERSPECTIVES

The second substantive session met on Thursday afternoon to focus on Policy Frameworks and Best Practices from Public and Private Perspectives. Participants heard three keynote speeches and then attended four parallel panels to analyze policy frameworks and best practices of different countries and regions. Following the panel discussions, participants reconvened in Plenary for a feedback session on the panels and Ernst Brugger requested that participants put forth their priorities for action, provide a concrete example of positive action, and identify which questions or key points were missed in the discussions.

Editor's Note: Due to resource limitations, coverage of the workshop panels on Canada and Switzerland is based on summaries provided by panel rapporteurs and feedback from panel moderators during Plenary.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS: Gourisankar Ghosh, Executive Director, Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, described the Council's "super goal" as being poverty eradication and sustainable human development. He underlined the need to put sanitation and hygiene on the development and political agenda, convene stakeholders and institute people-centered policies. He outlined the requirements for water policy frameworks and noted the basic requirements for water utilities to succeed: political stability, legal provisions especially for urban areas, proper exit policy, risk protection and transparency.

Khalid Mohtadullah, Executive Secretary, Global Water Partnership (GWP), described the GWP's role in facilitating IWRM. He stressed the role of PPPs and underscored good governance, accountability, enabling environments, management instruments and clear institutional roles as critical policy frameworks for IWRM.

Victor Dukhovny, Director of the Interstate Coordination Water Commission of Central Asia, reported on how the five neighboring countries of the Aral Sea Basin have engaged in independent water management following the Soviet regime. He described how the Commission coordinates state-level activities, cooperates with different sectors, NGOs, science and international donors, and fosters consensus between governments and donors.

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Following these presentations, participants stressed the need for capacity building to ensure good governance and shared experiences in IWRM. Some questioned if equal distribution could exist, to which Dukhovny outlined his Commission's attempts to guarantee equal water supply to each stakeholder group and achieve equity in water and cost allocation.

WORKSHOP PANELS:

Canada: Moderated by Al Fry, the panel heard an introduction by Peter Huck, Professor at the University of Waterloo, who described two case studies on waterborne disease outbreaks in Canada. It was noted that the abundance of good, safe water had led to complacency. Participants emphasized the need for: changes in pricing policies, improvements in the regulatory environment, increased funding levels, and risk management. Participants further underscored strict guidelines for monitoring, a change in management culture, and the need to increase knowledge levels.

China: This panel was moderated by Hanspeter Liniger, Coordinator of the World Overview of Conservation Technologies and Approaches. Zhang Lubiao, Deputy Director-General of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, described the water situation in China, illustrating that, *inter alia*, less than 50 percent of the population had access to clean drinking water, water institutions were fragmented, water rights were not clearly defined, and private sector involvement was still developing. Zhang listed water pollution, flooding in the south and northeast and scarcity in the northern and western regions as the main challenges, and elaborated on current practices in water-saving technologies, pricing, governance and awareness-raising. Top priorities were described as: identifying the government's role; defining markets; governance; developing the private sector; and pricing, noting that it was a tool and not a solution.

Panel Commentator Alexander Zehnder, Director of the Swiss Federal Institute for Environmental Science and Technology, illustrated water resources throughout China's nine major watersheds and described the South-North water transfer scheme.

Participants noted that small plots of farmland resulted in lower productivity and high costs for implementing technologies. Discussion centered on food security and how water scarcity was not a problem if a country could afford to import food. Participants underlined irrigation efficiency, water preservation and retention, and the need to stop wastage and tackle demand in the north. Discussion also focused on the problem of governance where there were many fragmented agencies. Most participants agreed on the need for a means to document good practices, with several mentioning existing efforts.

Middle East: Moderated by Armon Hartmann, SDC, this regional panel heard three presentations, followed by discussion. Saul Arlosoroff, Chairman of the Mekoroth-National Water Corporation, centered his comments on water management in Israel, Palestine and Jordan, an area with critical water scarcity. He reported how stringent legal, institutional and economic measures have kept water use stable since the 1960s, yet outputs from industry and agriculture have continuously increased. He noted that within the region, only Israel and Palestine had yet to determine water allocation in a peace-agreement. Arlosoroff stated that although privatization was impossible in a situation of scarcity, private companies were still engaged in construction and maintenance, further noting that demand management had made water access more a question of affordability than scarcity.

Commentator Henry Vaux, University of California, spoke about the report of the Committee for Joint Water Management involving experts from Jordan, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the US, which was

based on a regional perspective and took into account the needs of present and future generations. He proposed flexible, integrated water plans that allocate sufficient quantities of water to maintain ecosystems and biological diversity. Commentator Richard Conti, Head of Unit, Water and Habitat Branch of the International Committee of the Red Cross, reported on emergency work and their monitoring of international humanitarian law prohibiting the restriction of access to water and bombing of water facilities in conflict situations.

Panel participants indicated that water scarcity was not the root cause of the conflict, but unless resolved it could aggravate it. On the other hand, joint water management was seen as a possible basis for future dialogue. In closing, Arlosoroff stressed that conservation was the largest source of water, adding that it needed political will, support and money.

Switzerland: This panel was moderated by Daniel Wiener, CEO of ECOS. Beat Nobs, Head of International Affairs, Swiss Agency for the Environment, described Switzerland as the water-richest country on the continent, with a history of water works dating back to Roman times. He stated that discussions on privatization were held in Lausanne at the end of the 19th century and that private water companies were subsequently bought back by the cantons. He explained that water is a public good and the citizen is the "owner of the water supplier in his community." Pollution, revitalization of water courses, and wastewater management were identified as challenges to water management.

Panel participants recognized that sustainable water management requires a strong and implementable legal framework and investment in water quality control and wastewater treatment. They also discussed ways to ensure flood control and monitor the level of contaminants in the rivers.

CLOSING SESSION: DAY ONE

Thomas Streiff, Head of Swiss Re's Sustainability Management Group, described how the findings from the first day's events would be incorporated into a modified thesis paper, to be made available the following morning. Streiff highlighted statements made throughout the day and added his perspective on the need for rules of good governance and PPP. In conclusion, Streiff introduced the International RE-Source Award for Sustainable Water Management and the International Water Management Course, two initiatives launched that day.

PRIORITIES OF DECISION MAKERS AND SENIOR EXPERTS

On Friday morning, 26 April 2002, participants received a modified thesis paper, incorporating the findings of the previous day. Following introductory remarks, participants heard comments on the thesis paper from several speakers. Moderated by Minu Hemmati and Jasmin Enayati, Stakeholder Forum For Our Common Future, and Ernst Brugger, Brugger and Partners Ltd., a roundtable of decision makers and senior experts furthered dialogue on the thesis paper throughout the day. Stakeholder Dialogue organizers will incorporate participants' perspectives and inputs into a final version of the paper, which is expected to be available Tuesday, 30 April 2002, on the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation website located at <http://www.deza.admin.ch>.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: Walter Fust introduced the modified thesis paper and requested that participants focus on identifying action-oriented means of achieving sustainable water management. Moderator Hemmati introduced the purpose and procedures of the dialogue, defined its desired outcome and explained how the Swiss government and Swiss Re will use the outcome.

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COMMENTS ON THESIS PAPER: Jussara de Lima Carvahlo, Environmental Sanitation Agency, Brazil, emphasized local initiatives and exchange of ideas and experiences. Rashid Alimov, Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the UN, underscored best practices of efficient technologies, PPPs and awareness-raising. Claude Martin, Director-General of WWF, underlined integrated perspectives and stronger frameworks and stressed the need for: building on existing principles, conventions and conferences; clear guidelines for financing infrastructural projects; and links to be made to climate change. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of IUCN, noted the lack of tools to help policymakers and the public understand the cycle of water, and stressed that governments, NGOs and the private sector need to work on the ground.

Following these comments, Moderator Brugger summarized the responses to the questions he had posed the previous day, noting that participants had disagreed on the use and type of pricing mechanisms and had recommended ways to influence the agenda of the WSSD and future trade negotiations.

ROUNDTABLE OF DECISION-MAKERS AND SENIOR EXPERTS: Discussions began with roundtable participants identifying priority issues. Ensuing deliberations were guided by the themes of the thesis paper, focusing on: Guiding Principles for Sustainable Water Use; Best Practices in Water Management; and Framework Conditions for Sustainable Water Management. Moderator Brugger provided brief summaries following discussions on each section.

Identification of Priority Issues: Many discussants remarked that the thesis paper was too general in nature and lacked a time line, and recommended building on the conclusions of the International Conference on Freshwater held in Bonn. Some stated that there would only be enough water for everyone if it were traded and that not all countries could afford this. Several made a distinction between water resource management and service delivery. Others saw no contradiction between sustainable water management and economic development.

Several participants requested greater emphasis on water conservation, with some seeing demand management and involvement of donors as possible means and suggesting that donors link funding to decreased water wastage. Others proposed incentives for all users. Some suggested using ODA efficiently, especially to assist local experts, noting that technical assistance was an important tool for creating local expertise. Participants stressed that water conservation and preservation had to start at the community level and involve local companies in addition to big corporations, which were said to act differently in developed and developing countries.

Many stressed the human right to water, enshrining the obligation to service the poor with water and sanitation, with one proposing a UN Convention on Water to ensure "hydro-solidarity" between states and societies. Several participants mentioned the dependence of rural, local and indigenous communities on water. Female discussants pointed out their under-representation and called for gender balance in participation, decision-making and water management.

Many participants raised the importance of stakeholder participation, but stressed that politicians had to be pressured to increase their involvement in developing and implementing national and global water policies. Participants asked why politicians did not give water policies the highest priority, if water was considered a common good. Joseph Deiss, Swiss Federal Councilor of Foreign Affairs, responded that in Switzerland's case, one of the reasons might be that water was always dealt with locally and not seen as a global issue, but stressed the duty to raise the consciousness of all politicians to ensure sustainable water

management and promote public participation in decision-making. Deiss further mentioned that Switzerland's two main concerns for the WSSD are mountain ecosystems and sustainable water management.

Guiding Principles for Sustainable Water Use: Participants identified the following issues that were not addressed in this section of the thesis paper: sanitation; wastewater management; community involvement, especially at the catchment level; aquifers as an entity; the ecosystem approach; transboundary water issues; acknowledgement that flood and drought protection also have ecological consequences; and a recognition of water as a human right and as both a social and economic good. Some asked for clarification of the term "equal access" and differentiation between water management, water resource management and service provision. There was general consensus that there was no need to reinvent the wheel, instead existing principles and outcomes of other water conferences should be built upon.

Best Practices in Water Management: Discussions on best practices were initiated with questions from the floor on how best practices were defined and by whom, and how access to the knowledge base essential for decision-making and knowledge transfer could be provided.

Discussants debated the completeness of the information base, but agreed that the lack of action did not result from lack of information. Some participants proposed benchmarking as a way to improve and measure efficiency, suggesting that indicators also take into account gender considerations in policy development and implementation. Some proposed conducting studies on existing initiatives, assess the reasons for their failure and successes, and use these findings as measures for determining best practices. Several participants commented that best practices differed regionally and therefore could not be determined globally, and that the focus should instead be on principles, such as participation of local and indigenous communities, transparency and gender balance. The majority of participants stated that best practices should be assessed by the people and communities affected, adding that capacity and information were needed to perform such assessments. Some criticized international donors and governments for dictating practices through funding criteria.

The dialogue showed that good governance depended on political will, with participants linking governance to national sovereignty. Most participants wanted governments and societies to define regulatory frameworks for the private sector's involvement, with some arguing similar regulation should also be imposed on the public sector to ensure efficiency.

Participants noted that both developing and developed countries were faced with the problems of inefficient use and pollution. It was also acknowledged that with socioeconomic stability comes an increase in efficiency of water management practices, which in turn results in poverty alleviation.

Framework Conditions for Sustainable Water Management: Participants stated that public debate was necessary before determining framework conditions. Criteria for good governance included transparency, participation and accountability. Several questioned the need for an international convention on freshwater. Partnerships and governance were seen as being too narrowly understood, and suggestions were made to link private sector and government objectives through forming partnerships to achieve development goals. Participants noted that the thesis paper lacked reference to the ecosystem approach, with one underscoring the need to bridge the understanding of what ecosystem management means to different stakeholders. "Political courage" in addition to political will was seen as necessary for a good framework, and participants also stressed: value over cost; corporate social respon-

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sibility; local government involvement; and the consideration of downstream coastal ecosystems. The need to build capacity for engaging in frameworks such as regulatory mechanisms, and for using appropriate technologies, was also emphasized.

PRESS BRIEFING BY SWISS FEDERAL COUNCILOR OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

On 26 April 2002, participants heard a lunchtime press briefing by Joseph Deiss, Swiss Federal Councilor of Foreign Affairs. He declared that protection and sustainable management of freshwater resources are among Switzerland's priority issues for the WSSD. Recognizing the existing problems of supply and quality, and noting that freshwater is a major concern for many states and NGOs, Deiss stressed that the issue deserves to be "placed high on the WSSD agenda." Switzerland's principle objective, he said, is to set up an international platform to bring together existing initiatives, advance the global dialogue on solutions, and encourage and promote systematic communication with all stakeholders on the water issue. Deiss further elaborated on the challenges and preconditions for effective public-private partnerships, and highlighted the partnership between the Swiss Federal government and Swiss Re in coordinating this Stakeholder Dialogue.

Following the statement by Foreign Minister Deiss, Bruno Porro, Swiss Re, described why Swiss Re tackles the water issue and how it can contribute to improving global water management practices.

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Bruno Porro, Swiss Re, wrapped up the Stakeholder Dialogue by noting the many "Ps" that were mentioned throughout the conference, namely: politics, people, price, policy, partnerships, performance and power. He said that people were both consumers and polluters, emphasized gender participation and stated that people should be central in the water issue. Porro stressed the need to: develop clear water resource management policies; price water; find a fusion of public and private models of partnerships; and define indicators and benchmarks for performance.

Walter Fust, SDC, stressed knowledge transfer and differentiating management of knowledge from management for knowledge. Fust highlighted the need to make best practices accessible and stressed that partnerships needed to have impact and added-value. In conclusion, Fust underscored addressing water issues in national agendas and raising public awareness. The Stakeholder Dialogue closed on Friday afternoon shortly after 4:30 pm.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

FOURTH SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

FOR THE WSSD: This meeting will take place from 27 May-7 June 2002 in Bali, Indonesia. It will include Ministerial and Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Segments, and is expected to result in elements for a concise political document to be submitted to the WSSD. For more information contact: Andrey Vasilyev, DESA, New York; tel: +1-212-963-5949; e-mail: vasilyev@un.org; Major groups contact: Zehra Aydin-Sipos; tel: +1-212-963-8811; e-mail: aydin@un.org; Internet: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES IN SMALL TOWNS AND MULTI-VILLAGE SCHEMES: This conference will convene from 11-15

June 2002 at the UN Conference Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The event is organized by the Water and Sanitation Programme in partnership with the World Bank. For more information contact: Belete Muluneh; tel: +251-1-627700; fax: +251-1-627717; e-mail: bmuluneh@worldbank.org; Internet: http://www.wsp.org/english/afr/addis/addis_desc.pdf

MEETING ON MANAGING SHARED WATERS - TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TRANSBOUNDARY COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

This meeting will convene from 24-28 June 2002 in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. For more information contact: Managing Shared Waters; tel: +1-416-926-1907; fax: +1-416-926-1601; e-mail: managing.shared.waters@pollutionprobe.org; Internet: <http://www.pollutionprobe.org/managing.shared.waters/>

STOCKHOLM WATER SYMPOSIUM: This event will take place from 12-15 August 2002 in Stockholm, Sweden. For more information contact: tel: +46-8-522-139-61; fax: +08-56-31-10-16; e-mail: siwi@siwi.org; Internet: <http://www.siwi.org/sws2002>

IMPLEMENTATION CONFERENCE - STAKEHOLDER ACTION FOR OUR COMMON FUTURE: This meeting will be held from 20-23 August 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Facilitated by the Stakeholder Forum For Our Common Future, the conference aims to develop concrete action plans focusing on: freshwater; renewable energy; food security; public health & HIV/AIDS; and tools for corporate/stakeholder citizenship. For more information contact: Minu Hemmati; tel: +44-20-7839-7171; fax: +44-20-7930-5893; e-mail: minush@aol.com; Internet: <http://www.earthsummit2002.org/ic>

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The World Summit on Sustainable Development will take place in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August- 4 September 2002. For more information contact: Andrey Vasilyev, DESA; tel: +1-212-963-5949; e-mail: vasilyev@un.org; Major groups contact: Zehra Aydin-Sipos; tel: +1-212-963-8811; e-mail: aydin@un.org; Internet: <http://www.johannesburgsummit.org/>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MOVING "FROM CONFLICT TO COOPERATION IN INTERNATIONAL WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT - CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES": This conference will take place from 20-22 November 2002 at the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education in Delft, the Netherlands. Organized by UNESCO and Green Cross International as part of the World Water Assessment Programme, this conference will reflect on the WSSD, introduce the results from their joint programme on moving "From Potential Conflict to Co-operation Potential: Water for Peace" and discuss these issues with stakeholders. For more information contact: Alexander Otte, Division of Water Sciences, UNESCO, Paris; tel: +33-1-4568-4180; fax: +33-1-4568-5811; e-mail: pccp@unesco.org; Internet: <http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/pccp/events.shtml>

THIRD WORLD WATER FORUM: The Third World Water Forum is scheduled to take place from 16-23 March 2003 in Kyoto, Japan. A Ministerial Conference will be held during the Forum, where Ministers will work towards framing and adopting a political declaration concerning global water problems. For more information contact: Forum Secretariat, Tokyo; tel: +81-3-5212-1645; fax: +81-3-5212-1649; e-mail: office@water-forum3.com; Internet: <http://www.worldwaterforum.org>