

World Water Week Daily
Thursday, September 9, 2010

Water Investments in Africa Inadequate

Funding Remains Unchanged at 40 Percent of Requirement

There is a USD 30-50 billion shortage a year for water investment needs and sustainable management in Africa, while what is available is not being fully taken advantage of, panellist of the *Mobilising Investments for Water in Africa* seminar said.

As a result, Africa's growth and development is held back, Director of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Ali Kies said.

The challenges to advancing water financing in Africa are low economic returns, long payback periods, and political, regulatory and market risks.

Ali said the way to increase investment is to make the value of and market for water more effective to investors, which can be done by raising its economic profile among national and donor decision makers and attracting repayable sources of finance.

Other panellists said investments must be prioritised at the highest national level and that if sustainability is not part of the financial consideration, donors will not be interested.



AMCOW President Hon. Buyelwa P. Sonjica chairs the Ministerial Session.

It is also imperative to make better use of the financial resources that are available. This can be done through refocusing objectives, optimising use of official develop-

ment assistance, improving cost recovery, improving transparency, facilitating mixed

AFRICA, PG 2

Healing Sick Water

Achievement of UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to child mortality, sustainable development and biodiversity – in addition to specific targets on water and sanitation access – are threatened by degrading water quality, and innovative solutions and investment are needed now to prevent a crisis later.

UN-Water organised the seminar *Sick Water Is Threatening the MDGs: A Stakeholder Dialogue to Address Capacity Development and Communication Needs* to launch a dialogue around the recently released report by UN-HABITAT and the United Nations Environment Agency (UNEP), "Sick Water? The Central Role of Wastewater Management in Sustainable Development."



David Osborn of UNEP asks panellists whether investments in sanitation make good economic sense.

UNEP's David Osborn told that a "revolution" was needed in wastewater management. This management should be ecosystem-based or, as he called it "Hilltops-2-Oceans (H2O).

A panel made up of four experts from UN agencies, the private sector and academia as well as four stakeholders representing women's groups, water operators, consumers and agriculture offered their perspectives on the economic arguments for investment in wastewater treatment; financing options; awareness raising and attitudes toward water reuse.

HEALING, PG 3

AFRICA FROM PG 1

funding programs and scaling up pilots of innovative technology and approaches, Ali said.

The OECD Environment Directorate panellist said that water ministers should work together with ministers of finance, economics, development and planning to demonstrate contributions of water to economic growth. Water should be seen as part of a country's portfolio of assets, he added.



However, very little is known about water and growth, especially on a macro level, according to panellists.

During the ministerial session of the seminar, Republic of Congo Minister of Water and Energy Hon. Bruno Jean Richard Itoua said that at one point MDGs were to be a reference only. But, now it has become clear that it is very important for all African nations to reach the water and sanitation MDGs.

Whereas, Dr. Ania Grobicki, Executive Secretary of Global Water Partnership said that in Africa, water is both a common passion and concern. "It is a medium that links us and sometimes divides us," she said.

There is also some concrete evidence that African governments are getting serious on water as financing has increased, she added.



Peter Forsman, Chair, Stockholm Water Foundation handed the 2010 Stockholm Industry Water Award (SIWA) to Ek Sonn Chan, Director General of the Phnom Penh Water Supply Authority.

Going Green is Cost Effective for Water Utilities

Panellists representing leading water utilities from around the world at the *Global Dialogue: Defining the Path Forward: A Utility Perspective* seminar agreed that addressing climate change and pressures to become sustainable could not only be good social behaviour but also cost-effective.

Assistant Director of Hong Kong's Water Supplies Department Bobby M T NG said the most important thing they can do for moving forward is conservation, which requires public education, especially of young people.

They are also looking to increase the use of saltwater for toilet flushing and street cleaning, adding a rainwater-harvesting programme, and possibly consider desalination in the future.

David R. Williams, Director of Wastewater, East Bay Municipal Utility District of Oakland, USA, said their system has a resource recovery programme, where the typical wastewater treatment plant is essentially turned into a waste treatment plant.

They receive all kinds of waste including trucked septage, food, wine, industrial, animal, municipal, agriculture, and fats, oils and greases. Through anaerobic and biodiesel processes, the plant turns waste into energy.

This allows the plant to be completely energy self-sufficient, and they even have expectations to export energy back to the electrical grid in the near future, making the process a "definite cost-effective endeavour."



Assistant Director of Hong Kong's Water Supplies Department Bobby M T NG shares his utility's experience with going green.

Constructive Engagement Key to Water Negotiation

IUCN's newest publication "Negotiate" a toolkit for helping water managers better reach agreements, was launched at a side event of the same name.

The publication and its presenters advocated constructive engagement as key in a multi-stakeholder process surrounding water management issues.

Water problems are unlike other goods and services that people fight over, because water is much more complex, vital for life and always on the move, said Dipak Gyawali, Research Director of Nepal's Water Conservation Foundation. Appreciation of these complexities opens up dialogue, he added.

Irene Chikira, Community Development Officer of Pangani Basin, presented her findings on the applicability of the tools outlined in the IUCN publication, which have shown some preliminary results.

HEALING FROM PG 1

In one of the seminar's lighter moments, Osborn described a news item about a German wastewater treatment plant that plays Mozart in an effort to speed up microbial breakdown. "That's innovation!" he said.

Leader's Dialogue Takes on Asia-Pacific Water Security

Transboundary water issues, local water leadership, greater transparency and information-sharing, the green economy, water pricing, water quality and wastewater reuse were among the topics a panel of experts thought Asian water ministers should address during ministerial meetings.



The panel discusses the role of leadership and new policy initiatives in the Asia-Pacific region.

Discussions during the panel *Leader's Dialogue: New Policy Initiatives in Water Security in the Asia-Pacific Region* centred on the role of leadership and new policy initiatives in controlling pollution and achieving universal water and sanitation access.

Chair Margaret Catley-Carlson, patron of the Global Water Partnership (GWP), asked the panellists to identify the key issues Asian water ministers should take up as part of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum's (APWF) Ministers for Water Security Initiative.

She also asked them to define the Asian leadership needed to tackle water and sanitation issues in the region, although ultimately she concluded that the session was not quite able to accomplish this.

During the panel discussion, Thailand's Natural Resources and Environment Minister, H.E. Mr. Suwit Khunkitti, announced that his country last week had passed very strict new laws on pollution control.

Industry Gets Serious About Water Use Reporting

A panel of leading industry representatives discussed the importance of corporate water use and water footprint reporting at the *On the Road to Corporate Water Reporting: Founders Business Seminar 2010*.

Although businesses are aware of the strategic role of reporting, and that sustainability is critical for future success, there is no consensus on water metrics. The panel as a whole agreed that current reporting techniques are inadequate. This is partly because water is used in different ways by many different sectors. Also, companies must be responsive to their industry, to their customers and to themselves, which is not always the same thing.



Prof. Tony Allan discusses with industry panelists the best way to report water use.

INDUSTRY PG 4

What is business' role in addressing water issues?



"I think the power and electricity production business should apply or at least think about new water management systems and technology in order to reduce water use during electricity generation also during the complete life cycle of the main components composing of the power plant."

Giuseppe Musico – Alstom Power



"I think business should invest in water resource management where conservation will be done. It could also invest in actions that could improve water quality."

Irene Chikira – IUCN/Pangani Basin



"Business is basically non-existent in water and sanitation programs in developing countries. It is being done primarily by government. Therefore, we need to create a market with incentives for private industry where WASH activities are scaled-up and commercialised."

Rabin Bastola – Environment & Public Health Organisation/RCNN



"Since I work for Japan's sanitation organisation, I think business should make contributions to sanitation and wastewater treatment. Water must be treated before going back into the environment. Japan is in a good position to make contributions to countries where good quality of water does not exist."

Mayumi Koseki – Global Center for Urban Sanitation Japan



"Business has to play a big role because the resources to address this challenge are very limited. The private sector is not properly addressing the issues. The solution must be the way of the people because it ultimately has to be the peoples programme. This is best done with public-private partnerships."

Devendra Kumar – Indian Council of Agri. Research



"For us, its all about partnerships. There is a role for everyone including the private sector. We provide platforms, including the newly launched H2.0, an online platform that gathers available information for use by stakeholders, and there is definitely a role for business there."

Jeanette Elsworth – UN-HABITAT Kenya

h2.0 Platform Facilitates Water Monitoring

An innovative web-based monitoring platform will make it easier to figure out where to direct funds for water and sanitation in low-income urban areas in Kenya, or how to find disparities in improved water sources coverage in Malawi.

The h2.0 monitoring services platform, developed by UN-HABITAT and Google, comprises three websites, one offering content management services, one offering a map viewer and the third featuring Google fusion tables that can store large amounts of data. The content management site went live on Wednesday – it is the only one currently live.

The platform is being used by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and Kenya's Water Services Trust Fund (WSTF), WaterAid UK, and the University of Twente, Faculty of Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC) in the Netherlands.

INDUSTRY FROM PG 3

The panellists made several suggestions for moving forward on water use reporting. One said to think in incremental steps. Another said that working together within one's industry, like Coca-Cola and Pepsi do, would help delineate the process.

Other suggestions: since measurement is difficult, think about the different stakeholders and put the information into context, making the information useful for the audience. And definitely do not wait for methodology to be perfect before engaging; focus on what's most important and start simple and be meaningful.

Multi-Media Changing the Face of WASH

Advancements in communication and information-sharing made a lasting impression on participants at the *Striking WASH Communication* side event.

Several organisations have taken new approaches in media, marketing, public relations and advocacy to improve WASH services and inspire decision makers.

Dr. Michael Klingler of the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) presented their new mascot, Rauian, for a water education campaign in Yemen. Before Rauian, GTZ had a hard time getting information across to Yemenis, but now it has become so popular people all across the nation know the character and his message.

Mark Charmer with Akvo said that when he entered the water public relations world everything was in some shade of blue and used imagery that made you "feel bad." Akvo created inspirationally-themed posters that often depict local heroes, which have also had large success in reaching audiences.



Mark Charmer, Akvo, unveils innovative water poster approach

Breaking Down Barriers to Wastewater Reuse



Nagwa Elnishwy presents risks and opportunities of water reuse in the Nile Basin.

Would you drink water that you knew had previously been sewage? That is one of the issues a panel of experts considered at the seminar *Improved Water Use Efficiency Through Recycling and Reuse*.

The seminar looked at barriers to wastewater reuse, ways to integrate wastewater reuse and recycling into sustainable development and climate change adaptation programmes and whether there are adequate, affordable and appropriate technologies available for treatment.

Population growth and urbanisation put a strain on water availability and quality, particularly in many developing countries, while wastewater treatment rates are as low as 1 per cent in Africa and 2 per cent in Pakistan.

Prof. Duncan Mara of the University of Leeds questioned whether, in areas where people have been resistant to wastewater reuse in agriculture and aquaculture, it might come down to a choice between eating food treated with wastewater, or not eating.

Dr. Akiça Bahri of the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) called for a change in thinking about wastewater. She said it should be seen as a resource, citing its use in arid countries in the Middle East – Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates – for agricultural and horticultural irrigation.

Poster Sessions Highlight Water Issues and Projects



Posters presented during World Water Week are an important part of the programme.

The posters follow the same themes as individual workshops, and the authors are available to discuss their work during two Poster Sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday. The Best Poster Award will be presented during the Closing Plenary Session on Friday.

Zahidul Mamun of Dhaka, Bangladesh-based NGO Concern Universal, is displaying a Poster on his group's project, "Disaster-Friendly Water and Sanitation."

His Poster provides information on the toll floods take on this South Asian country. (One example: Treating water-borne diseases that spread as a result of floods cost the government USD 666 million dollars per year.)

Mamun said Concern Universal's "common sense" approach to water and sanitation during disasters could benefit other countries as well – such as Pakistan, which is struggling with the effects of catastrophic floods.

The Poster Workshop Exhibition is located on the main level, adjacent to conference session rooms K1-K17.



Zahidul Mamun at Concern Universal's Poster on Disaster-Friendly Water and Sanitation in Bangladesh.