



Africa Water

A newsletter of UN-Water/Africa in support of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW)

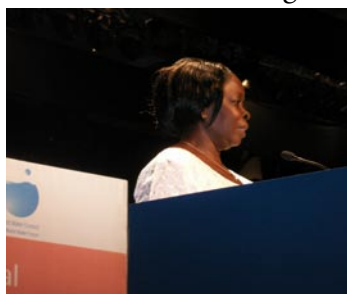
Africa Day: three regional reports launched at 4th World Water Forum

African ministers, supported by the constituent members of UN-Water Africa, yesterday at the World Water Forum launched three key regional documents which assess the state of water and water resources management in Africa.

The reports are the **African Water Development Report (AWDR)** - prepared by ECA on behalf of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and UN-Water/Africa; **Water Resources Development in Africa** (prepared by African Development Bank, on behalf of AMCOW and UN-Water/Africa) and the **Mexico Ministerial Declaration on Water** issued by AMCOW.

AWDR is a comprehensive synthesis of 25 national and two subregional reports. Its objectives are to provide a lasting and durable mechanism to monitor progress made in implementing the African Water Vision 2025 and to provide African decision makers with an authoritative basis for managing Africa's water resources.

The Water Resources Development found that Africa has developed only three percent of its technically feasible hydropower potential while only six percent of its cultivated land is irrigated.



AMCOW's Chair, Maria Mutagamba

In total, says the report, only 3.8% of water resources are developed for water supply, irrigation and hydropower use.

The **Mexico Ministerial Declaration** is a seven-point call to action which deals with risk management, finance, integrated water resources management and water for growth and food security.

The Declaration called for the promotion of cooperation on the development of effective early warning system for the prevention and mitigation of water-related



Josue Dione, launching AWDR

disasters and called on development partners to support Africa's efforts in this regard.

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The time for talking is over, says Tibaijuka

“The time for talking is over, we need quick impact initiatives,” said Ms. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT to delegates who attended the Africa Day celebration yesterday at the World Water Forum in Mexico City, adding, “In the next 3 years, we must measure success, for instance, by how many taps are running.”

She decried the lack of attention to the water crisis in developing countries and the gross neglect of urbanization saying, “good governance, sound policies and political will are needed to prioritize water and sanitation”.

Citing the case of the largest slum in Africa, she said “Kibera, a slum in Kenya has 750,000 slum dwellers living on 250 hectares of land, and who rely on private water vendors to supply them with



UN-Habitat's Anna Tibaijuka

water”. “It is humiliating for hundreds to queue up for public toilets amidst the lack of sanitation, privacy and dignity for the women and girls who struggle to survive in these conditions. The current water supply and sanitation has to be viewed as a crisis of good governance”.

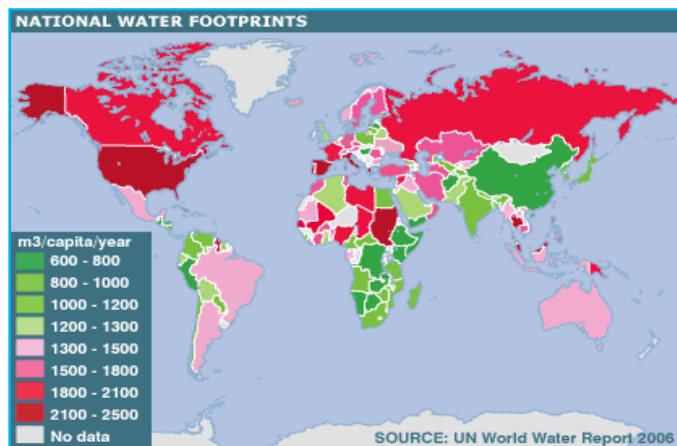
She noted that average funding to water and sanitation

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Three reports launched at 4th WWF

The ministers acknowledged Africa's vulnerability to the global climate changes caused by green house emissions in the developed world and said early warning systems would help reduce the impact of these disasters on economic development, food security and poverty eradication.

The launch was attended, among others, by Mrs. Maria



Mutagamba, President of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and Minister of Water Resources in Uganda; Mr. Francis Bougaire, Vice President of the AMCOW-TAC; Mr. Loïc Fauchon, President of the World Water Council; Mrs. Anna Tibaijuka, Executive Director of UN-Habitat and Mr. Kordje Bedoumra, Director of the African Water Facility, administered by the African Development Bank.

If Africa is to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target of halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and sanitation by 2015, there must be an

enormous amount of investment in water supply and sanitation. In this regard, the ministers endorsed the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative as the framework for sustainable and improved access to water supply and sanitation to the rural population in Africa.

They called on African riparian states to develop a "cooperative framework and appropriate sub regional protocols" for the shared management and use of trans-boundary water resources because such cooperation "contributes to sustainable water management and mutual benefits."

To achieve a "self-sustaining auto-induced growth", the ministers called for increased investment on water infrastructure and urged

development partners to enhance their financial and technical support to Africa in order to achieve food and energy security as well as access to safe water supply and sanitation for all. The ministers expressed pleasure on the successful establishment of the African Water Facility as a mechanism to support Africa's water resources development efforts and called on development partners to fulfill their financial pledges in support of the Facility.

However, the ministers said they would also explore "new financing mechanisms, including effective public-private partnerships, while ensuring the necessary African ownership, public control and legal frameworks to protect the public interests, particularly those of the poor and vulnerable."

Today, the three reports will be discussed in a stakeholders session.

It's time for action, says Tibaijuka

by bilateral and financing agencies declined significantly between 1999-2003 and urged for the need to embark on prioritizing investments in water and sanitation.

Following the ceremony, Ms. Tibaijuka announced that UN-HABITAT had signed a \$500 million Memorandum of Understanding with the African Development Bank to speed-up Africa's chances of reducing by half, the proportion of people without access to safe water and sanitation by 2015.

The fund will be used as grants and loans to Africa's secondary towns, which are usually excluded in the provision of water by governments, she said.

She said about US\$200 million would be used as grants and over \$250 million as loans for water projects in Africa.

Tibaijuka said Africa's water and sanitation future was bright as plans were on ground to ensure that water taps begin to run.

DateKeeper

Today: Stakeholder session to discuss the African Water Development Report, the Regional Document on Water Resources Development in Africa and the Ministerial Declaration.

March 22: Ministerial Session.

Africa Water is an information service of UN-Water/Africa and African Development Bank in support of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW).

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