

FR-DE-CH intervention – 10th OWG

Comments regarding the co-chairs proposal dated March 19, 2014

Cluster 3: Focus area 6 “Water and sanitation” and Focus area 2 “Sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition”

- “Water and sanitation” and “sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition” are closely related, but, from our views, **both deserve a goal** as rising challenges. We also want to promote water and nutrition sensitive cross-sectorial policies throughout the list of targets (especially agriculture, health, sanitary, energy, education and social welfare) and strengthen political commitment to do so.

Focus area 6 “Water and sanitation”

- We fully support the approach taking into consideration the **whole water cycle** to ensure a **water-secure world** and for the realization of the human **right to safe drinking water and sanitation** and hygiene. Water is a limited, non-substitutable primary resource essential for social well-being, economic development and maintenance of ecosystem services.
- We would like to draw attention to the initiative signed by 62 Permanent Representatives from all regions which supports a Goal on Water and Sanitation. This letter shows a broad cross regional consensus for this goal and should provide momentum to move forward in this process
- The co-chairs synthesis of our discussions is an excellent and comprehensive basis for designing **targets**. We would suggest **six of them** :
 - First of all, one target is required to ensure **universal sustainable access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, while progressively reducing inequalities**. We must finish the job of the MDGs, while putting much more emphasis on **water quality** and sanitation. Disaggregated data are necessary to address significant disparities and inequalities in access, not only between women and men, but also between urban and rural areas. This target could track the share of the population without safely managed sanitation services and progressively reduce inequalities in service levels.
 - Other targets should, from our views, be dedicated to **water resources management and water efficiency**. Access to water, sanitation and hygiene, food and energy production, disaster risk reduction, economic development, and healthy ecosystems rely on the availability and sustainable management of water resources - surface as well as groundwater. **The demand on water resources and the competition among user groups will increase drastically**. By 2030, feeding a world population of 8 billion people will require 14% more water for irrigation, the demands on water for energy production will more than double and higher rates of urbanization will increase demand for water for domestic and industrial use with consequent higher production of wastewater. These challenges are exacerbated by the additional level of complexity considering that there are more than 260 major trans-boundary rivers and lakes. Their basins account for 40% of the global population and 60% of global freshwater. The same issue applies to the additional 300 trans-boundary groundwater basins. **Therefore we propose the following three targets** :
 - **manage water resources at the basin level in an integrated way, including in trans-boundary basins;**
 - **bring freshwater withdrawals in line with sustainably available water resources respecting ecosystems requirements;**
 - **increase water efficiency in agricultural and food production, industry and energy generation, also in support of equitable and sustainable growth.**

- **Wastewater management and water quality** are another challenge which deserves a target. Globally, about 80% of wastewater from human settlements and industrial sources are discharged into the environment without any treatment with detrimental effects on human health, economies and the ecosystems. Organic, chemical and thermal **pollution** from urban and industrial wastewater and agriculture is **projected to worsen** in most regions of the world, intensifying eutrophication and damaging ecosystems and oceans. The need to reduce water pollution and improve water quality was strongly underlined in the Rio+20 outcome document. We propose the following target: **“Improve and secure the status of surface and groundwater quality by preventing and reducing water pollution and the production of wastewater from household, industrial and agricultural sources and increasing treatment and safe reuse of wastewater”**

- Finally, we support a sixth target dedicated to **resilience to water-related disasters**. **Climate change** is anticipated to increase the spatial and temporal variability of water availability, as well as the frequency and magnitude of extreme events such as floods and droughts. This will threaten human well-being, economic activities and put further strain on ecosystems. **Water-related disasters are the most economically and socially destructive of all natural disasters**. Since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, floods, droughts and storms have affected 4.2 billion people (95% of all people affected by disasters). We suggest to tackle this growing challenge with this target **“Prevent and reduce the impacts of floods, droughts and other water-related disasters, especially those likely to arise from climate change; and increase knowledge about and understanding of communities at risk for water-related disasters”**.

- **Interlinkages:** Water and sanitation are closely linked to other sectorial issues (health, food, energy, environment, cities, education, economic development). Reducing the incidence of water and sanitation-related diseases is an important link to the health sector. Another key concern is increasing water efficiency in food production, reducing post-harvest losses and food waste as great consumers of not only water, but also energy. Enhancing land and water sustainability of energy production, esp. biomass, is also a priority. Indicators linked to water and sanitation should thus be included in other sectorial goals.

Focus area 2 “Sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition

- **Ending hunger, ensuring food and nutrition security** is still a **growing challenge for all countries**. Because MDG 1 focuses above all on access to food and additionally to nutrition, it does not adequately address the **comprehensive approach** defined at the 1996 World Food Summit on the **four dimensions of food security** (availability, access, utilization, stability). We support a **goal related to end hunger, ensure food security and good nutrition for all through sustainable agriculture** based on the human right to food¹ as well as the UN Secretary-General’s **“Zero hunger Challenge”**.

- The co-chairs list of issues is largely in line with this vision and quite comprehensive. More emphasis should be given to empower smallholder farmers and small food producers.

- We suggest **four targets** to structure them :
 - Ensure **sustainable food systems**, taking into account their environmental and health impacts, by making agriculture, including livestock, fisheries and aquaculture as well as forests, more sustainable, productive, safe, resource-efficient, diverse and climate-smart, and strengthen their resilience to disasters and other shocks ..This should also cover sustainable consumption.
 - **Halve post-harvest losses and food waste;**

- **Increasing rural income and jobs**, based on targets extending MDG1 **with a focus on empowerment of family farms and small scale food producers** (halving the number of rural people living below the poverty line with particular emphasis on rural women and youth; universal access to credit, land tenure, training, technical support services and risk management tools, investment in rural areas, research and sustainable agriculture policies) ;
 - **End malnutrition in all its form**, with special attention to stunting, by securing year-round access to sufficient safe, affordable, diverse and nutritious food;
- We also would like to insist on the key driver that **gender equality** and the empowerment of women represent for food security and good nutrition. If women had the same access to productive resources as men, agricultural yields and production of nutritious food would increase and the number of people suffering from all forms of malnutrition and hunger would dramatically decline. In this regard, it is essential to promote in other goals: improved access for women to lands and productive resources, and their control over those resources; the empowerment of small-scale women producers to enable them to overcome institutional, social and economic obstacles; the involvement of women in their diets and that of their young children; the participation of women in all levels of decision-making. Focusing on equal access and chances will also allow the interests of vulnerable populations to be upheld and enable actions to encourage the empowerment and economic integration of marginalized groups such as indigenous populations, who make up 5% of the world's population, but 15% of the world's poor.
- Sustainable agriculture, food security and adequate and good nutrition are closely linked to **other issues** (e.g cities, water, health, energy, oceans, biodiversity, protection of the natural resource base and education, sustainable consumption and production as well as economic growth). Access to energy and water are major challenges to achieving food security and nutrition. We must take particular account of the water-energy-food security nexus in the post-2015 development. For example, nutrition is determined by many factors, which go far beyond food security (women's level of education and income, childcare practices, access to quality healthcare, family planning, immunization rates, access to clean water and adequate health supplies). Indicators linked to food security and nutrition could thus be included in other sectorial goals.
- In this line we suggest to promote nutrition sensitive cross-sectorial policies (especially agriculture, health, sanitary, education and social welfare) and strengthen political commitment to do so.