

May 7, 2014

By the Council of Canadians' Blue Planet Project, the Women's Major Group, the Mining Working Group, Temple of Understanding and WECF International

Endorsed by: The Indigenous People's Working Group, the NGO working Group, FIVAS, Food and Water Watch, the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Ingenieria Sin Fronteras Catalunya, KruHa Indonesia, the National Alliance of People's Movements, Public Services International and the Transnational Institute.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit the views of our groups and organizations on water and sanitation within the SDG agenda.

We are calling for the human right to water and sanitation to be explicitly named within the document. We have submitted a letter with this request signed by 87 organizations and are pleased that 17 member states echoed this call during the session on water and sanitation.

We welcome the stand-alone goal on water, but also see the human right to water and sanitation as crosscutting and applicable to other areas.

Secondly, given the precarious state of the world's freshwater supplies, we call for the precautionary principle to be recognized throughout the document.

#### **With respect to private sector participation:**

We are concerned about the promotion of private sector participation. Private water and sanitation services requiring exaggerated capital returns to shareholders have proven to be more expensive for communities and have failed to guarantee access to the poor.

#### **Input on Focus area 6:**

*New additions highlighted in red*

- **Target a:** By ~~2030~~ 2020 ensure the human right to water and sanitation by providing universal access to sufficient safe and affordable drinking potable water, sanitation and hygiene, that is acceptable to all users including in households, schools, health

facilities, workplaces and refugee camps, progressively eliminating inequalities in access including inequality based on gender, age and disability.

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- **Target c:** Replace with: improve protection of watersheds through a hierarchy of water use that prioritizes human needs, small-scale food production, ecosystem needs and cultural use before uses for industrial agriculture, energy and industry in accordance with the precautionary principle.

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- *Explanation: The problem begins with water allocation decisions and cannot be addressed solely through increased efficiency of existing water use. A hierarchy of use allows for priorities to be established before water is allocated to large-scale commercial water users whose water needs must come after those of the public and the environment .*

- **Target d:** implement integrated people-centered democratic and participatory water resource management, including participatory and appropriate trans-boundary co-operation.

*Explanation: If not developed through a participatory human-rights-based approach, IWRM has the potential to reduce policy-making to multi-stakeholder processes that lower the accountability of governments and relinquish decision-making to local water user entities where communities must compete for entitlements with corporate users. This often marginalizes indigenous communities and non-commercial users including landless communities and subsistence farmers, the majority of whom are women.*

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- **Target e:** Eliminate the words “to provide water-related services”
- **Target f:** We are pleased to see target f and insist on maintaining language calling for the elimination of pollution and dumping of toxic materials in water bodies
- **Target g:** finance and promote indigenous, traditional and

appropriate water conservation strategies including harvesting and storage practices technologies, and double the rainwater harvested by 2030.

**In terms of means of implementation we call for:**

- Sufficient public financing for universal access to public water and sanitation services
  - The protection of water and sanitation services from liberalization through loan conditionalities, trade agreements and investment treaties
  - The recognition of indigenous and community rights to empower frontline communities in the protection of watersheds
  - International and regional cooperation in knowledge and technology transfer through public, public partnerships
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