



CONFERENCE RESOLUTION

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SANITATION AND ECOLOGICAL SAFETY IN KYRGYZSTAN

Challenges and New Opportunities of Increase in Sanitation Safety in Rural Areas

We, the participants of this international conference, are representatives of state and international organizations, civil society and business sector of Central Asia and Europe. Supporting the United Nations' initiative of proclaiming 2008 the Year of Sanitation, we exchanged ideas on solutions of the safe water, population health and sustainable sanitation problems. We also discussed the possible actions in promoting the ideas that could mobilize the society and enable the policy-making to progress to improved sanitary conditions.

We, the conference participants,

- express our concern about the rural population's insufficient access to clean drinking water and sanitation, which results in high levels of contagious and parasitic diseases.
- note that the current projects on sanitation and water safety in Kyrgyzstan are disintegrated; the information exchange is poor; the projects lack consistency, coordination and cooperation.
- state that Kyrgyzstan's ecological safety – comprising safe water, human health and sustainable sanitation – is an important strategic aspect of the country's sustainable development; it is directly connected to the quality of life of both present and future generations.
- highlight that the current programs, as well as the legislative and financial practices, do not succeed in protecting well human health, water resources and environment, while the present waste-water treatment technologies are, as a rule, ineffective and expensive.
- affirm that an adequate state policy must ensure all people's access to a decent standard of living, safe water and good sanitary conditions, as well as sustainable sanitation and clean water in all schools.

Unanimously, we agree that sustainable sanitation is based on the following principles¹:

- human dignity, quality of life, and ecological safety on the level of both households and society should be at the heart of any approach to solve problems of sanitation;
- gender equality should be observed in any decision making as well as participation of all involved parties should be guaranteed;
- human waste, such as feces and urine, should be considered as resources in the circle of nutrients;
- specific technological solutions of sanitation problems (latrines, waste water collection and treatment) should be designed to the minimum practicable size (e.g. household, neighborhood)

1 The sustainable sanitation principles are based on the Bellagio principles (WSSCC and Sandec, 2000) formulated at the meeting of the sanitation and hygiene specialists in Bellagio, Italy, on February 1-4, 2000. It was held under the aegis of the Federal Institute of Natural Sciences and Technologies, Switzerland (EAWAG/SANDEC).

- ecological sanitation technologies² as an alternative solution to the treatment of biological/organic waste and its utilization should be applied according to the international practices of mandatory sanitization and safe reuse of nutrients.

We, representatives of diverse social groups, intend to help improve ecological safety, sanitation and drinking water conditions in Kyrgyzstan.

To achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the international conference participants call on the government of the Kyrgyz Republic to include the WHO recommendations on safe reuse of human waste and water in agriculture into the state legislation.

The sanitary facilities should ensure sanitization and storage of solid organic substances, as well as prevention of these substances' penetrating into the environment. Pit latrines and unsealed septic tanks cannot prevent this penetration.

To preserve common transboundary water resources, we appeal to the governments of Kyrgyzstan and other countries of Central Asia to

- join the International Protocol on Water and Health.
- develop innovative technologies in sustainable sanitation and water safety, applying positive experiences of other countries.
- preserve natural ecosystems, thereby improving recreational zones and attracting bigger investments.
- create and implement sustainable sanitation ideas into educational programs.
- build international cooperation and engage international organizations and foundations in solving problems of water supply and sustainable sanitation.
- establish a Coordination Council on Water and Sanitation to include all stakeholders from governmental organizations and civil society.

We apply to Kyrgyzstan's business sector to build a broad market of sustainable sanitation technologies, making it broadly available and affordable.

The participants appeal to the Global Sanitation Fund and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council to turn their attention to the problems of Kyrgyzstan and other countries of Central Asia.

We call upon the International Donor Organizations to support sustainable sanitation programs.

The conference participants and public organizations share the conference ideas and commit to

- promote ideas and implement projects on public hygiene and sustainable sanitation in their countries.
- engage experts to monitor and assess the impact of implemented projects.
- conduct educational and informational campaigns on ecological safety, health problems and sustainable sanitation among diverse groups of people.

² sustainable, or Ecological, sanitation technologies in this document are defined as technologies preventing the penetration of untreated human waste into the environment, sanitizing human waste and safely reusing the nutrients human waste contains.

- cooperate with business sector to promote ecological sanitation technologies.
- support fully the governments in promoting and implementing international conventions at the national level.
- participate actively in the development of sustainable sanitation methodology and techniques.

We appeal to the civil society, educational institutions and governments of Central Asia to educate the population and conduct a broad information campaign on the direct interrelation of water, health, sanitation and ecological safety in the region.

Bishkek, November 11-12, 2008