

Session Statement

A. INTRODUCTION

We, the Ministers, Delegations and stakeholders from various small island countries from the Pacific, Caribbean, Asian, Indian and Mediterranean regions, having met at the 3rd World Water Forum in Kyoto, Japan, to share knowledge, agree to this joint statement and action plan for sustainable water management.

B. KEY ISSUES

We recognise that:

- 1) Small island countries have uniquely fragile water resources due to their small size, competing land use, vulnerability to natural and anthropogenic hazards, including drought, cyclones and urban pollution;
- 2) Water services face constraints to sustaining water and wastewater management, due to the lack of resources and investment opportunities, and effectiveness of cost-recovery mechanisms; and
- 3) Water governance is highly complex due to the specific socio-political and cultural factors relating to traditional community, tribal and inter-island practices, rights and interests.

C. ACTIONS

We recommit ourselves to Agenda 21, the Barbados Programme of Action, and the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan of Implementation. Further, we reaffirm our commitment to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and the WSSD target to halve the proportion of people without access to safe and affordable drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015.

We endorse the Pacific-Caribbean Joint Programme for Action on Water and Climate and agree to recommend the inclusion of the following priorities in the Portfolio of Water Actions to be submitted at the 3rd World Water Forum:

- Pacific and Caribbean Hydrological Cycle Observation Systems
- Joint Programme for Action and the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management
- Water quality monitoring and capacity building programmes
- Water demand management programmes
- Programme for Water Governance

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

We support the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management and recommend it to other small island regions as a framework for sustainable water management.

We urge each country representative to actively promote the priorities outlined in this Session Statement with their country delegations attending (i) the Ministerial Conference in Kyoto, and (ii) the UN Global Conference on Small Island Developing States to be held in Mauritius in 2004 (i.e. Barbados +10 Review).

We agree that the WSSD Type II Initiatives on water, developed by the Pacific, Caribbean, and other regions provide a key mechanism for the implementation of the Joint Programme for Action and individual Regional Action Plans and urge donors and partners to support these initiatives.