

Bellagio statement:

**Clean, healthy and productive living:
A new approach to environmental sanitation***

In the world today, 1.2 billion people are without access to safe drinking water, 3 billion are without proper sanitation, and 50% of solid wastes remain uncollected. Meeting at Bellagio from 1-4 February 2000, an expert group brought together by the Environmental Sanitation Working Group of the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council agreed that current waste management policies and practices are abusive to human well-being, economically unaffordable and environmentally unsustainable. They therefore called for a radical overhaul of conventional policies and practices world-wide, and of the assumptions on which they are based, in order to accelerate progress towards the objective of **universal access to safe environmental sanitation, within a framework of water and environmental security and respect for the economic value of wastes.**

The principles governing the new approach are as follows:

- 1. Human dignity, quality of life and environmental security should be at the centre of the new approach, which should be responsive and accountable to needs and demands in the local setting.**
 - solutions should be tailored to the full spectrum of social, economic, health and environmental concerns
 - the household and community environment should be protected
 - the economic opportunities of waste recovery and use should be harnessed
- 2. In line with good governance principles, decision-making should involve participation of all stakeholders, especially the consumers and providers of services.**
 - decision-making at all levels should be based on informed choices
 - incentives for provision and consumption of services and facilities should be consistent with the overall goal and objective
 - rights of consumers and providers should be balanced by responsibilities to the wider human community and environment
- 3. Waste should be considered a resource, and its management should be holistic and form part of integrated water resources, nutrient flows and waste management processes.**
 - inputs should be reduced so as to promote efficiency and water and environmental security
 - exports of waste should be minimised to promote efficiency and reduce the spread of pollution
 - wastewater should be recycled and added to the water budget
- 4. The domain in which environmental sanitation problems are resolved should be kept to the minimum practicable size (household, community, town, district, catchment, city) and wastes diluted as little as possible.**
 - waste should be managed as close as possible to its source
 - water should be minimally used to transport waste
 - additional technologies for waste sanitisation and reuse should be developed

* The WSSCC has defined ES as: "Interventions to reduce peoples' exposure to disease by providing a clean environment in which to live, with measures to break the cycle of disease. This usually includes hygienic management of human and animal excreta, refuse, wastewater, stormwater, the control of disease vectors, and the provision of washing facilities for personal and domestic hygiene. ES involves both behaviours and facilities which work together to form a hygienic environment."