

**DAPITAN DECLARATION
ZAMBOANGA PENINSULA LOCAL WATER GOVERNANCE DECLARATION
December 10, 2010**

We, the delegates of the Local Water Governance Forum comprising the Local Government Units (LGUs), Non-Government Organizations (NGO's), Religious Sectors, National Government Agencies (NGA's), Academe, Water Consumers, Water Service Providers and Civil Society Organizations of Zamboanga Peninsula, recognizing the worldwide problem on the scarcity of water supply and sanitation where 1.2 billion poor individuals lack access to clean water while 2.4 billion lack access to adequate sanitation and in pursuance to the commitment achieved by the Bonn Conference among world leaders to reduce by half the number of people without access to safe drinking water by the year 2015, do hereby acknowledge the following:

WHEREAS, LGUs have always been confronted with the perennial problems brought about by waterborne diseases attributed to unsafe drinking water and unsanitary surroundings of whom the usual victims are the poor especially women and children;

WHEREAS, some of the above stated stakeholders have inadequate funds and technical capacity to provide potable water and sanitation to poor families;

WHEREAS, despite actions initiated and efforts exerted by local chief executives and other stakeholders involved in the provision of potable water, poor access to safe water in the Zamboanga Peninsula continues to persist due to lack of funds, lack of technical knowhow, mismanagement of local water supply system, political will and continued non-adoption of the Integrated Water Resources Management approach to water resource management;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to address the ever-growing threat of deteriorating and polluted water sources due to the alarming destruction of the environment caused by rampant illegal logging, small and big scale mining, denuded watersheds and absence of sustainable environmental and reforestation programs particularly on waste water and solid waste management;

WHEREAS, at the local level, the establishment of, existence and sustainability of small water service providers continue to be threatened by patronage politics, weak institutional policy and financial support from national and local government; loss of revenue through illegal connection, meter tampering, unfair imposition of water tariff and late or non-payment of water service fees; and lack of strong and dedicated rural water supply association;

WHEREAS, at the national level, the laws and statutes on water remain outdated and unresponsive to the changes in the water sector; consequently, there is a continued absence of a supreme governing body that would set policy direction, coordinate efforts, and oversee the overall planning and development in this sector;

In view of the foregoing issues/problems and concerns, delegates to the Zamboanga Peninsula Local Water Governance Forum led by the Local Chief Executives hereby commit to:

- provide capability/capacity building, training on asset management, project development, planning, implementation, operation, maintenance, and management to small water service providers in particular the Barangay Water and Sanitation Team (BAWASA);
- the yearly allocation of 2-5 % of the development fund for the construction, maintenance and rehabilitation of local water supply systems;
- strictly enforce national laws on the environment including protection of watersheds;
- continuously source-out external funds for construction and rehabilitation of potable water supply;

- create a local governing body to check whether the water supply meets the standards of clean and safe drinking water;
- collaborate with allied local and national line agencies to plant more trees every year;
- initiate a signature campaign and pass a resolution urging congress to repeal the Mining Act of 1995;
- formulate and implement Municipal Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) Plan and establish WATSAN team/council at the municipal level;
- formulate enabling ordinances for efficient water resource management.

In addition, Water Service Providers who are the primary vehicle to deliver clean and safe drinking water to the grassroots level, commit to:

- continue to dialogue and explore partnerships with LCEs and other Local Government Officials and local water Districts on how to further ensure and expand the delivery of safe and drinking water to the poor in the countryside;
- strictly implement management and operational policies starting with the adoption of the localized water customer service code being developed by NWRB; and
- improve the level and quality of water supply service.

Pursuant to the mandate of the Department of Education, State Universities and Colleges, CHED-Supervised Institutions which is to deliver professional and technical "know how", these agencies commit to conduct massive Information Education Campaign to increase awareness on water and environmental concerns which are aligned to the programs and projects of LGUs and other allied agencies.

In view of the aforementioned commitments, we hereby call on:

- NEDA/DBM/DILG/DOF to review existing counter-parting scheme on water projects;
- DENR/DA to establish plant nursery at the municipal and barangay level;
- DepEd/NGO's/CHED, SUC's/CSO/LCU to revisit the existing memoranda and other circulars on environmental protection and if needed, improve the implementation of these by line agencies;
- The Congress to repeal Mining Act of 1995;
- NEDA/DOH-LWUA/NWRB/DILG to strengthen institutional, financial, and management capacity of LGU's and WSP's to manage water supply system;
- The House of Representatives to approve pending bills creating the supreme governing body on water;
- DBM/DOF/GFI's and donor agencies to increase funding support on water programs and projects by LGU's and WSP's; and
- DILG/NEDA to adopt effective monitoring system on LGU-implemented water supply system project.

Now therefore, premises considered, we, the participants of the Local Water Governance Forum of Zamboanga Peninsula do hereby strongly declare, pledge, and commit to pursue and fulfill the solutions and recommendations aforementioned in consonance to the goals and objectives of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals to reduce by half the number of families with no sustainable access to clean and safe drinking water by the year 2015.

RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that this document shall be known as the Dapitan Declaration and that all the participants from all sectors represented will form an organization that will reach out to other stakeholders in the community in gaining support to this declaration.

In support of the above premises, we hereby affix our signatures to signify our genuine intent to achieve the afore-stated endeavors this 10th day of December at Dapitan City, Zamboanga Del Norte.

