

The CARAGA Water Governance Declaration

We the participants gathered for the "Caraga Water Governance Forum" held in Butuan City on November 23-24, 2010, representing the Caraga local government units (LGUs), national government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academe, private sector, civil society and concerned individuals, issue the following statement and call for action:

We the Water Service Providers, commit to:

- Efficient Management of water supply facilities and system and ensure access to safe and potable water through advocacy on Refo program and Bantay Kalikasan initiatives, IEC on water resource management and Conduct of consultation and public hearings.

We the Local Government Units, commit to:

- Exercise political will on the issuance, amendment, enactment and enforcement of local laws/ordinances and orders;
- Prohibit logging and mining operation in the watershed areas;
- Organize and strengthen and capacitate BAWASA and Create Watsan Unit that will oversee BAWASA operation;
- Regularly conduct of M&E of water programs;
- Provide regular budget for water supply and sanitation program; and
- Regulate use/extraction of underground water source.

As water users, we commit to:

- Promptly pay water bills;
- Properly use and conserve water; and
- Take part and active involvement in the project development and implementation, advocacies/campaign on environmental protection and community endeavor for water concerns.

We all commit to:

- Conduct trainings on waste management and proper use of water source; and
- Formulate and implement comprehensive development plans at the region down to the local level and align activities that support better water access in the region.

In support, WE CALL:

On the National Leadership to make the DILG the focal agency for water and sanitation;

On the DILG

- to make MENRO a mandatory position in the LGU;
- to intensify capacity building programs for BAWASAs and WATSAN units in CARAGA; and
- to issue a policy statement requiring all LGUs to allocate a minimum of 4% from the 20% development fund for water and sanitation programs through the help of the DBM;

On the NWRB to establish satellite offices at the regional level;

On the DepEd, the DOH, the TESDA and the CARAGA academic community and religious sector

- to intensify research and IEC advocacy on WATSAN at the LGU level and to take steps in integrating "water values" subjects/courses in school and university curriculum.

On the DOH and the NEDA regional offices

- to establish "water database" in CARAGA and act as information repository on the implementation and monitoring of projects on water and sanitation and the evaluation of water potability in the region.

On the NEDA

- to lead the conduct of activities such as "donors forum" that create more investment opportunities on WATSAN for LGUs in CARAGA;

On the DENR

- to harmonize plans in the delineation of watershed areas; and
- to step up its campaign to improve and protect watersheds in CARAGA through prohibition of logging and mining operations.

ON the GFIs, the DOF and other line agencies

- to simplify requirements for LGUs wishing to access funds/grants for WATSAN programs, the District Representatives, Senators and the President to allot funds from their CDF specifically for WATSAN programs.

Furthermore, the participants in this forum undertake to conduct of regular monitoring and evaluation on all water and water-related programs and projects as well as of the provisions of this declaration, to regularly report on its progress in our area; and, to continuously share good practices and learnings to other water stakeholders in the region.

These we DECLARE, and shall hold true.

(Signatures follow)

