



*EUROPEAN UNION*

Delegation of the European Commission  
To South Africa

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## Press Release

.../ for immediate release

### EC invites proposals for ACP-EU Water Facility

***In early 2004 the European Union launched a €500 million Water Facility for African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. Following the Johannesburg launch of the EU Water Initiative at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, this constitutes a concrete development to contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development in ACP countries. It is in line with the specific Millennium Development Goals and WSSD targets on water supply, sanitation and water resources management. Globally, a billion people lack access to safe drinking water and 2.4 billion do not have access to basic sanitation facilities. The targets relating to water and sanitation are: to halve the number of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015, and for all countries to have integrated water resource management and water efficiency plans by 2005.***

On 11 November 2004, the European Commission issued a first Call for Proposals, envisaging three types of programme or project. First, improvements in overall water management and governance, including the management of trans-boundary basins and the principles of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). Second, the planning and construction of water and sanitation systems and infrastructure that will serve the poor. And third, the promotion of civil society initiatives for integrated activities and smaller scale, community-based, operations in very poor urban and rural areas.

There is equal access for all actors, including ACP non-state actors, to apply for Water Facility funding. The key principle of the Facility is to be catalytic, to provide the missing link in financing sustainable activities and programmes in the water and sanitation sector. The Facility is not simply a new source of grant finance for water infrastructure. An underlying principle of the Water Facility is to provide grant-funded elements of projects to enhance the access of the poor to water and sanitation services. All proposals must indicate other sources of funds to supplement grant funding from the EC.

The European Commission is organising a two-stage approval and award process under the present Call. Stage 1 will determine the relevance of the proposal and the applicant's financial and operational capacity on the basis of a simple preliminary proposal. Short-listed proposals from Stage 1 will then be invited to submit a detailed application demonstrating the sustainability, methodology and economic and financial feasibility of the proposed programme or project. The selection process will be based on the demand-driven approach and on the principles of ownership by the beneficiaries, supporting Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper processes wherever these exist and ensuring full co-ordination with the activities of other donors and actors in the water sector at a country level.

The initiative is being promoted through the EC Delegations in the countries concerned. Closing date for submission of preliminary proposals is 31 January 2005.

Information on this Call for Proposals will be found at: [www.europa.eu.int/waterfacility](http://www.europa.eu.int/waterfacility).

For further information please contact Mr Charles Reeve at the EC Delegation 012-452-0000.