
UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



Ministry of Water and Irrigation

**Remarks by Prof. Mark J. Mwandosya, Minister for Water and Irrigation,
United Republic of Tanzania at the
Press Conference for the launch of the Resource Panel Report on
Assessing the Environmental Impact of Consumption and Production
Wednesday, 2 June 2010, 13:00-14:00**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Firstly, I would like to **thank the United Nations Environment Programme and the European Commission** for giving me the chance to say a few words at this press conference. Secondly, on behalf of the United Republic of Tanzania, I would like to express my **thanks and congratulations to UNEP's International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management** for producing a timely and authoritative report assessing the environmental impact of consumption and production of products and materials.

I find this an excellent opportunity to highlight the **importance of science for policy makers to make decisions or resource efficiency** based on best available knowledge. This is what UNEP's resource panel is all about and the United Republic of Tanzania has been proud to support it since its launch in 2007. I cherish the opportunity to have been one of the founding members of the Steering Committee of the International and Panel for Sustainable Resource Management.

This report by the Resource Panel appeals to me for many reasons. It identifies the **economic activities that most drive environmental impacts**, like biodiversity loss and climate change. This way, policy makers like me have a compass to know where we might focus our attention.

We might **think impact like biodiversity loss are caused by action** that are far away. After all, if you live in a city, can you be responsible for biodiversity loss? But this report shows that **impacts are caused by actions that happen in everyone's everyday lives**. Even our consumption here today in Brussels is driving biodiversity loss and climate change through diet choices and energy use in the buildings and transport.

Developing countries like Tanzania possess and produce a large portion of the world's resources. **Without the supply of resources in developing countries, consumption levels in developed countries wouldn't be possible.**

As Minister for Water and Irrigation in Tanzania, I noted that the report highlights agriculture as one of the key production activities in need of improvement. **The agricultural sector provides strong economic and social benefits to the Tanzania economy.** In fact, it provides over 25% of the GDP, accounts for 85% of exports and employs 80% of the workforce in Tanzania. However, agriculture also depends heavily on land, water, fertilizers and other resource inputs that put pressure on the environment. This report states that global household consumption of agricultural goods has an average water footprint of over **one million liters of water per person per year.**

In order to maintain our resource base, **we will be looking at ways to improve the economic and resource efficiency** of our agricultural sector.

Later this afternoon, I will speak in a conference session on the idea of **sustainability criteria for biomass.** Should we develop a global set of science-based criteria for the production of biomass? I don't know the answer yet, but if we do, criteria should be science based and developing countries should play a major role in shaping them.

I think the Resource Panel can help us further by **providing further scientific assessment reports to inform the responses to environmental challenges.** I hope that decision makers around the world will take note of the findings and work on solutions.

I thank you and now defer back to the chair of the press conference.