

PRESS RELEASE

**Eawag and WSSCC Publish New Guidebook on Simple,
Affordable and Appropriate Sanitation in Developing Countries**

***2.5 Billion People Lack Toilets: 'Compendium of Sanitation Systems and Technologies'
Identifies Vast Array of Practical Solutions to Meet their Needs***

Macao/Zurich/Geneva, 4 November 2008 – Clean toilets save lives. But with billions of people lacking access to basic sanitation around the world, which toilet best meets each person's and family's need? A new guidebook produced by the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology (Eawag) and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) sheds light on the diverse sanitary systems and technologies which can help people across the developing world lead healthier and happier lives.

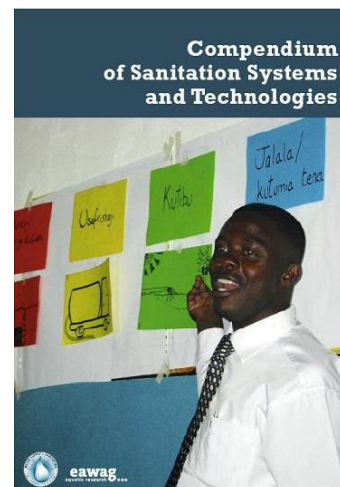
Launched today in conjunction with the World Toilet Summit & Expo in Macao, the ***Compendium of Sanitation Systems and Technologies*** is a unique, all-in-one planning and reference tool on the best, most appropriate and most sustainable sanitation systems and technologies. The publication may be downloaded free of charge at www.sandec.ch and www.wsscc.org.

Abundant information exists about many sanitation technologies, but it is scattered in dozens of books and journals and often not known by the engineers and decision-makers working in sanitation, who largely stick to what they know. The *Compendium* solves this problem by presenting a range of options in one document; it is useful as a starting point to make well informed decisions during the planning process. The *Compendium* also promotes a systems approach – as sanitation devices and technologies should always be considered as parts of an entire system.

While useful to engineers and planners, the *Compendium's* technology sheets also give non-experts an understanding of the main advantages and limitations of different technologies and the appropriateness of different system configurations. "It is our hope that this *Compendium* will allow all stakeholders to be involved in selecting improved sanitation technologies and to help promote people-centred solutions to real sanitation problems", says Roland Schertenleib, Eawag's Special Advisor for water and sanitation.

Household-Centred Environmental Sanitation

In 2005 Eawag and WSSCC published the *Household Centred Environmental Sanitation Guidelines (HCES)*, a new planning approach



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for implementing sustainable sanitation. The HCES approach was a radical departure from past central planning approaches because it placed the household and its neighbourhood or community at the core of the planning process. Implementation of this approach supports sustainable sanitation services to all, with a framework which balances the needs of people with those of the environment. Household sanitation and hygiene planning is necessary because, otherwise, one person or village, by polluting the local environment or water resources through open defecation, can affect the health of many other people or villages.

However, while the sanitation sector is increasingly aware of the need to design programmes that are both socially and environmentally appropriate and sustainable, promoters of the HCES and similar planning approaches still face a number of misconceptions such as the myth that basic and simple technology cannot be good technology. The *Compendium* has thus been developed to further support and promote the wider HCES planning approach.

"Investing in sanitation and hygiene is not only about saving human lives and dignity", says Jon Lane, Executive Director of WSSCC, "it is the foundation of investing for human development, especially in poor urban and peri-urban areas. However, one of the main bottlenecks is the limited knowledge and awareness about more appropriate systems and technologies that keep project costs affordable and acceptable, while providing the users with a fully acceptable level of service".

The *Compendium* bridges that knowledge and awareness gap and is divided into two parts: the system templates and the technology information sheets. The ideal user of the *Compendium* is one who is interested in learning more about alternative or novel technologies. The approaches and information presented, broaden the spectrum of innovative and appropriate technologies considered for sanitation planning.

"Sanitation is not rocket science", says Elizabeth Tilley of Eawag, one of the *Compendium's* authors. "Appropriate, low cost technologies exist, what does not exist is an easy way to access the information; the *Compendium* makes it easy to access the best and most appropriate knowledge about them. Now what is needed from the stakeholders involved at the planning level is the willingness to learn and the open-mindedness to listen to people's needs in order to turn sanitation problems into opportunities".

Note to editors:

Eawag, the Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology, is a competence centre for national and international water research based in Dübendorf, Switzerland. Eawag acts as an important link between fundamental research and practical action. Sandec is the Department of Water and Sanitation in Developing Countries at Eawag. The Sandec team, made up of scientists and engineers, is committed to developing new water and environmental sanitation concepts and technologies with partner organisations worldwide. www.sandec.ch

The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC), based in Geneva, Switzerland, is a global multi-stakeholder partnership organisation that works to improve the lives of poor people. WSSCC enhances collaboration among sector agencies and professionals around sanitation and water supply and contributes to the broader goals of poverty eradication, health and environmental improvement, gender equality and long-term social and economic development. WSSCC aims to be at the forefront of global knowledge, debate and influence in its field. www.wsscc.org

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