

Homes & Property

Group tasks government on water, sanitation

Akinpelu Dada

A water and sanitation advocacy group has urged newly inaugurated governments to initiate programmes that will increase the efficiency of service delivery in the sector.

The Water and Sanitation Media Network, in a statement jointly signed by its interim coordinators, Regina Eche-Fali, Babatope Babalobi, and Omoniyi Omojugbagbe, and made available to our correspondent on Friday, noted that contestants for the various political offices during electioneering campaigns promised to improve access to water and sanitation services.

The group, therefore, urged the winners to prioritise the development of the water sector in order to fulfil their promises.

The spokespersons said, "It is regrettable that succeeding tiers of government have paid lip service to the development of the water and sanitation services in the country, whereas, this sector holds the key to the achievement of almost all the other Millennium Development

Goals.

"A situation whereby none of the 36 states has developed a water policy as a road map to the development of the water and sanitation services can no longer be tolerated. We, therefore, urge the newly elected state governors to redress this anomaly as soon as they assume duties."

The network urged the **US may shift** climate policy

A speech by President George W. Bush on Thursday, could signal a shift in US climate policy, White House officials told the UN climate change chief, Yvo de Boer.

The United States has until now rejected greenhouse gas emissions targets and timetables. Earlier this month, it rejected starting talks in Indonesia in December on a new global climate deal to extend the Kyoto Protocol after 2012.

On Thursday, Bush said the US would work with other nations on a post-Kyoto framework.

"White House staff said that this could result in a policy shift," de Boer told Reuters.

states to conduct an assessment of their water and sanitation resources in order to determine infrastructural and investment gaps that needed to be bridged, and initiate water sector reform policies that would ensure the setting up of separate agencies to oversee asset ownership, regulatory and service ownership functions of water delivery.

"I asked White House representatives does this mean you're in favour of launching negotiations in Bali (this December) and they said in a way discussions had already started.

"It's imperative in Bali we launch negotiations on a post-2012 climate policy."

Bush outlined plans for meetings this year extending into next year, without specific reference to the UN talks in Bali.

De Boer's support depended on those talks remaining within the UN multilateral process, he said.

"I think it's incredibly valuable provided they feed into the (UN climate change) convention."

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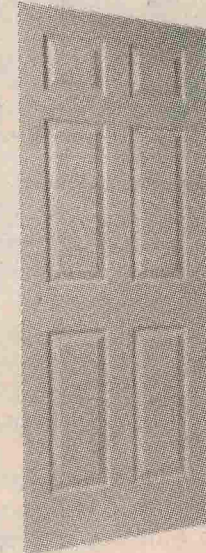
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