Public Participation in the Implementation of European Water Management Issues

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Where is France? : in European Union
where is the Seine Normandy basin?
Seine River in PARIS
European Water Framework Directive (WFD)

• **EU States (25) shall encourage** the active participation of all parties concerned in the implementation of this directive,

• **States shall ensure** that river bassin district management plans (production, revision, updating) *are published and submitted for the observations of the public.*
European Water Framework Directive (WFD)

- each of the 450 millions European citizens has the possibility to give his opinion about main water problems and prioritary actions to solve the problems,

France 2005 public consultation procedures

• **Government (Prefet)** is the Legal Authority,

• **Water Agency** is Manager and Operator,

• Targets, Schedule, and Frame of Consultation Document are precisely determined.
How do we involve wide public?

- Document *easily understandable*,
- Information of local and national **public medias** (TV, Newspapers...),
- **Partnership at the local level** (communes) where water problems are usually more concrete,
- **Encourage participation of small NGOs** and unorganized stakeholders (subsidies).
How do we consult them?

With a specific **survey**:
First results of 2005 consultation:

- Priority to stop water pollution by toxics substances (pesticides and heavy metals),
- Prepare management of crisis periods (drought and flood), with local public,
- Develop Information and education,
- More transparency about price of water,
- Enforce "polluter, pay" principle,
- Solidarity with south people.
Potential benefits of public participation

- Increasing public awareness on environmental issues,

- more transparent and creative decision making,

- constructive dialogue with various publics,

- Increasing public acceptance on water management cost.
Lessons Learned: many questions are not resolved...

- **What is the best way to inform** the public?
  - media national or local (TV, newspapers...),
  - internet,
  - direct mailing,
  - public debate,

- Is the **wide public really concerned** by all subjects of water management?
Conclusions

The two main challenges are:

• how integrate public opinion in a *River District Management Plan*?

• How *restitute* for the wide public results of the consultation?.
Thank you for your attention.

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