

## Stakeholder Engagement for Effective Water Governance

### Technical Note for the OECD Survey

#### What is the objective of the Survey?

This Survey aims to collect data on stakeholder engagement trends, drivers and practices to assess the impact on decision-making processes related to water services and water resources management. The objective is to provide evidence-based assessment of the main **obstacles** to stakeholder engagement in water policy and projects, collect **best practices**, and formulate **policy recommendations**. Results will be published in an **OECD report** to be launched at the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum (Korea, April 2015). They will also feed into **OECD Principles** on Water Governance and **OECD Indicators** on Water Governance under preparation.

#### Where does the project come from?

The project was triggered during the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum (Marseille, 2012) which session on “stakeholder engagement” called for evidence-based policy guidance to scale up good practices and enhance replicability of **effective stakeholder engagement**, based on empirical data and international experience. The project is an undertaking of the working group n°1 “Stakeholder Engagement” of the [OECD Water Governance Initiative](#), a multi-stakeholder network of 100 delegates from public, private and non-for-profit sectors gathering twice a year in a Policy Forum to share experience in support of better governance in the water sector.

#### What is the targeted audience for the Survey?

The Survey targets approximately **200 major stakeholders from OECD and non-OECD countries** including governments (central, regional, local), service providers (public, private and mixed), inter-governmental organisations, financial actors, river basin organisations, businesses, agricultural actors, civil society, trade unions, academia, consumer associations, regulators, and advisors.

Roles and responsibilities vary when considering stakeholder engagement, as do judgments and perceptions. Therefore, the Survey makes the distinction between two possible roles of a given institution: “**target**” and “**promoter**” of stakeholder engagement, knowing that in many cases the institution plays **both** roles, sometimes at the same time.

- A “**target**” is hereinafter defined as someone contributing as a stakeholder to consultation, participation and decision-making in water policy and/or management; and
- A “**promoter**” is a stakeholder providing platforms and/or incentives for engaging other stakeholders in consultation, participation and decision-making in water policy and/or management.

It is critical to look at both views to understand how water-related decisions are taken, and how stakeholders contribute to them. The Survey requires respondents to share their experience as **targets**; as **promoters**, or/and as **both**. *All* questions may not be relevant to *all* types of stakeholders for *all* type of issues.

#### Structure of the Survey

The Survey is divided into 6 sections:

1. **Mapping** of stakeholders and their core motivation: this section aims to identify the main targets and promoters of stakeholder engagement and their core motivations;
2. **Drivers** for stakeholder engagement: this section aims to understand the factors and trends that have driven stakeholder engagement in water related decision-making in recent years;

3. **Objectives** and stages of stakeholder engagement: this section aims to understand the reasons why different groups of stakeholders are engaged in water related decision-making and when (at which stage of a project or reform);
4. **Mechanisms** for stakeholder engagement: this section aims to collect evidence on existing instruments for stakeholder engagement, as well as the potential need for other mechanisms to bridge identified gaps;
5. **Obstacles** and conditions for success for stakeholder engagement: this section aims to identify the most frequent obstacles to effective stakeholder engagement as well as the needed conditions for success;
6. **Results** and impact assessment: this section aims to assess the contribution of stakeholder engagement to the decision-making process, and identify and evaluate the monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits of stakeholder engagement.

## Glossary

For the purposes of the Survey, the following definitions are used:

**Basin level:** area bounded by the watersheds of a system of streams and rivers that flow towards the same outlet [Source: INBO, GWP (2009), *A Handbook for Integrated Water Resources Management in Basins*]

**Citizen committees:** consist of a group of representatives from a particular community or set of interests appointed to provide comments and advice on an issue.

**Consensus conference:** public meeting, which allows ordinary citizens to be involved in assessing an issue or proposal. The conference is a dialogue between experts and citizens.

**Effective:** degree to which the objectives of stakeholder engagement mechanisms/tools are achieved and the extent to which the targeted water governance challenges are addressed.

**Efficiency:** extent to which time, effort and/or cost invested in stakeholder engagement practices is well used for the intended objective. It can be expressed as percentage of what ideally could be expected from a stakeholder engagement mechanism/tool [Source: Based on UNDP, Water Governance Facility, SIWI, WIN (2013), *User's Guide on Assessing Water Governance*].

**Engagement:** two-way effort to get involved and/or involve stakeholders in activities and decision-making processes to ensure effective water governance. Engagement happens at different stages of an initiative (design/conception, development, implementation, evaluation, etc.) and can take various forms depending on the degree of involvement of stakeholders:

- **Information/Awareness:** minimal level of engagement characterised by information sharing, awareness campaigns, educational initiatives, training of water professionals, etc. [Source: Based on UNDP, Water Governance Facility, SIWI, WIN (2013), *User's Guide on Assessing Water Governance*];
- **Consultation:** process between stakeholders to initiate and sustain constructive, productive relationships consisting of gathering information or advice, and taking those views into consideration to amend plans, make decisions, set directions, get approval and share ideas [Source: Based on UNDP, Water Governance Facility, SIWI, WIN (2013), *User's Guide on Assessing Water Governance*];
- **Representation:** stakeholder perspectives are represented in the management of the project (strategic committee, advisory board, etc.) [Source: Based on UNDP, Water Governance Facility, SIWI, WIN (2013), *User's Guide on Assessing Water Governance*];

- **Partnerships/Co-operation:** formalised collaboration between institutions, organisations and citizen fora, to combine resources and competencies and share the risks and benefits [Source: Based on UNDP, Water Governance Facility, SIWI, WIN (2013), *User's Guide on Assessing Water Governance*];

**Expert panels:** engaged when highly specialised input and opinion is required for a project. Generally, a variety of experts are engaged based on various fields of expertise to debate and discuss various courses of action and make recommendations.

**Focus groups:** used for exploratory studies. The issues that emerge from the focus group may be developed into a questionnaire or other form of survey to verify the findings.

**Hotlines:** offers information on a project via the telephone and/or access to project team staff members who can answer questions or provide additional information and assistance.

**Local level:** mainly municipalities [Source: OECD (2011), *Water Governance in OECD Countries: a multi-level approach*, OECD Publishing, Paris].

**Meeting:** coming together of people for a specific purpose. The meeting can involve a large number of people, or a smaller (fewer than 10) number of people who focus on a specific problem or purpose. Meetings generally have a facilitator, who encourages two-way communication,

**Member-based organisations:** locally-based organizations made up of stakeholders (e.g. small farmers, women, youth, fishers or forest dwellers) who want to work towards a variety of common goals, such as managing common resources, lobbying their government (local and/ or nationally) on certain issues, or helping to satisfy local needs by providing goods or services. Their primary objective as an organization is to improve their livelihoods and those of their members. MBOs work to be self-sustainable, requiring members to contribute in some way, e.g. through paying an annual fee or providing services. MBOs are democratic in structure, and are subject to local laws and regulations.

**National or Central level:** central or federal government [Source: OECD (2011), *Water Governance in OECD Countries: a multi-level approach*, OECD Publishing, Paris].

**Non-governmental organisations:** thematic, usually expertise-based organisations that facilitate advocacy, empowerment and expertise and knowledge-sharing in a specific area, disperse or use funding to create enabling environments and they may have a mandate to act on behalf of CSOs. They have a legal status and mainly consist of paid professionals. NGOs are formally constituted, legally registered, free from commercial interests, non-profit organizations that provide services, information and expertise, sensitize public opinion, and conduct advocacy activities

**Public participation:** mechanism used by citizens to express themselves, to provide informed, timely and meaningful input and to influence decisions and processes in the political, economic and social sphere at various levels [Sources: Based on EPA Public Participation guide and Rowe G., Frewer L.J. (2005), *Typology of Public Engagement Mechanisms*, Science Technology Human Values 2005 30: 251]

**Questionnaires:** basic research tool used to collect information, and are usually developed and tested to ensure that they are easily understood and will collect the information required.

**Regional level:** state, region, province, canton, or autonomous community government [Source: OECD (2011), *Water Governance in OECD Countries: a multi-level approach*, OECD Publishing, Paris].

**Social movements:** include platforms, committees, mechanisms, federations and networks of advocacy-based and policy-oriented organizations, which promote claims or rights of specific constituencies (e.g. fishers, and fish workers, SME farmers, pastoralists and herders, forest dwellers, urban poor, indigenous peoples, women, youth). They share

similar goals, promote awareness and attempt to influence policy-makers in development, social and/or political issues. While their legal status and characteristics may vary, their common trait is to work to strengthen the capacities of the organizations under their coordination-umbrella to advocate for the common interests, concerns, views and goals of their constituencies and/ or communities. Member-based organizations are different from social movements in that they respond directly to their members. Social movements coordinate different organizations, which may include MBOs as well as NGOs.

**Stakeholder analysis:** process of discovering the broadest possible range of people who will be affected by, or are interested in, proposed changes or a community issue. It is a cyclic process of surveys, interviews, feedback and fine-tuning that allows for community consultation that includes many stakeholder groups whose opinions might otherwise be overlooked.

**Stakeholder:** any person or group who has an interest or stake in the topic, may be directly or indirectly affected by water policy, and/or have the ability to influence the outcome, either positively or negatively.

**Supranational level:** formal legal authority, decision-making power, soft law (guidelines, recommendations etc.) or conditional transfers from an institution (e.g. European Commission) or international body (World Trade Organisation, OECD, World Bank etc.) to member states. [Source: OECD (2011), *Water Governance in OECD Countries: a multi-level approach*, OECD Publishing, Paris].

**Surveys:** method used to collect information from a specific population. Surveys are used to gauge the level of public information about an issue and provide a 'snapshot' of attitudes and ideas at a particular time. They can be used to determine community attitudes or target a particular group.

**Water Governance** is about who does what, when and how. It encompasses rules and practices as well as political, institutional, and administrative processes through which stakeholders articulate their interests, their concerns are considered, decisions are taken and implemented, and decision-makers are held accountable in the development and management of water resources and delivery of water services [Source: OECD (2011), *Water Governance in OECD Countries: A multi-level approach*, OECD Publishing, Paris].

**Workshops:** structured forum where people are invited to work together in a group (or groups) on a common problem or task. The goals are to resolve issues and build consensus for action, rather than provide information and answer people's questions.