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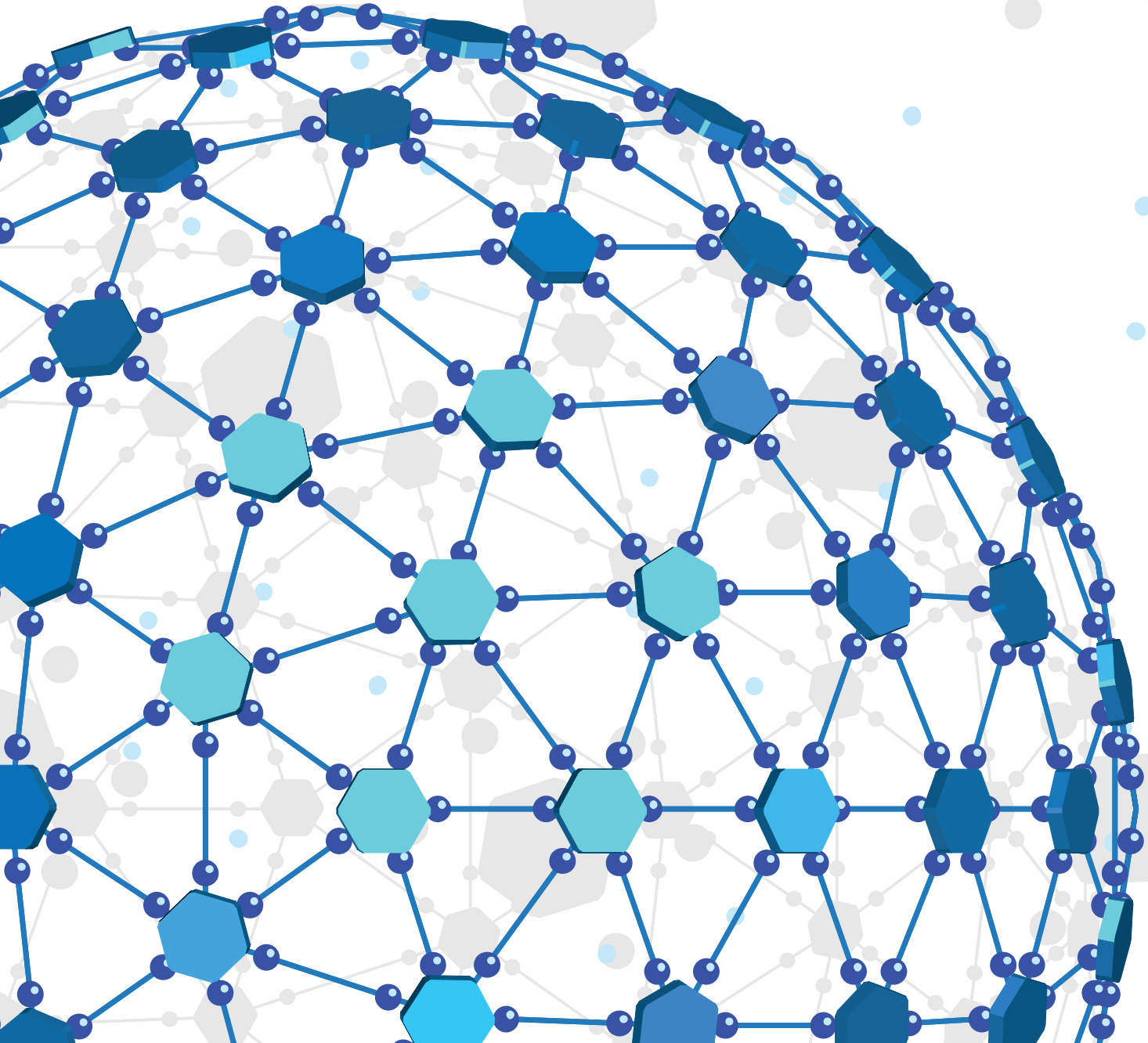
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

OECD Principles on Water Governance

Welcomed by Ministers at the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting on 4 June 2015

Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development



Why OECD Principles on Water Governance?

A gloomy outlook for water, which requires doing better with less

The global pressures on water and related sectors around the world call for action:

- Accessible and high quality freshwater is a limited and highly variable resource. OECD projections show that 40% of the world's population currently lives in water-stressed river basins, and that water demand will rise by 55% by 2050 (OECD, 2012a).
- Over-abstraction and contamination of aquifers worldwide will pose significant challenges to food security, the health of ecosystems and safe drinking water supply, and increase the risk of subsidence, among other consequences.
- In 2050, 240 million people are expected to remain without access to clean water, and 1.4 billion without access to basic sanitation.
- Water infrastructure in the OECD area is ageing, the technology is outdated and governance systems are often ill-equipped to handle rising demand, environmental challenges, continued urbanisation, climate variability and water disasters.
- Significant investment is required to renew and upgrade infrastructure, estimated at USD 6.7 trillion by 2050 for water supply and sanitation, while including a wider range of water-related infrastructure could triple that bill by 2030 (OECD, 2015c)

Water, a fragmented sector

The water sector holds intrinsic characteristics that make it highly sensitive to and dependent on multi-level governance.

- Water connects across sectors, places and people, as well as geographic and temporal scales. In most cases, hydrological boundaries and administrative perimeters do not coincide.
- Freshwater management (surface and groundwater) is both a global and local concern, and involves a plethora of public, private and non-profit stakeholders in the decision-making, policy and project cycles.
- Water is a highly capital-intensive and monopolistic sector, with important market failures where co-ordination is essential.
- Water policy is inherently complex and strongly linked to domains that are critical for development, including health, environment, agriculture, energy, spatial planning, regional development and poverty alleviation.
- To varying degrees, countries have allocated increasingly complex and resource-intensive responsibilities to sub-national governments, resulting in interdependencies across levels of government that require co-ordination to mitigate fragmentation.

Coping with future water challenges raises not only the question of "what to do?" but also "who does what?", "why?", "at which level of government?" and "how?". Policy responses will only be viable if they are coherent, if stakeholders are properly engaged, if well-designed regulatory frameworks are in place, if there is adequate and accessible information, and if there is sufficient capacity, integrity and transparency.

To fit for the future, institutions need to adapt to changing circumstances, and political will and policy continuity are key in the transition towards more inclusive and sustainable practices

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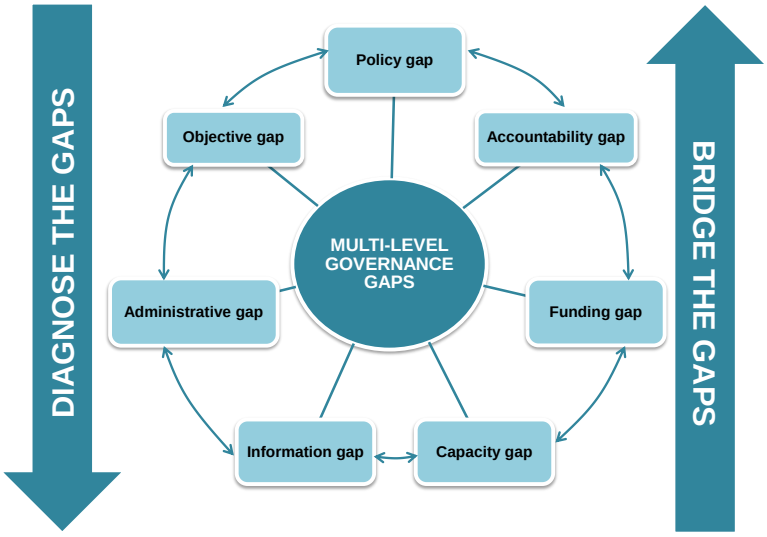
Water crises are often primarily "governance" crises

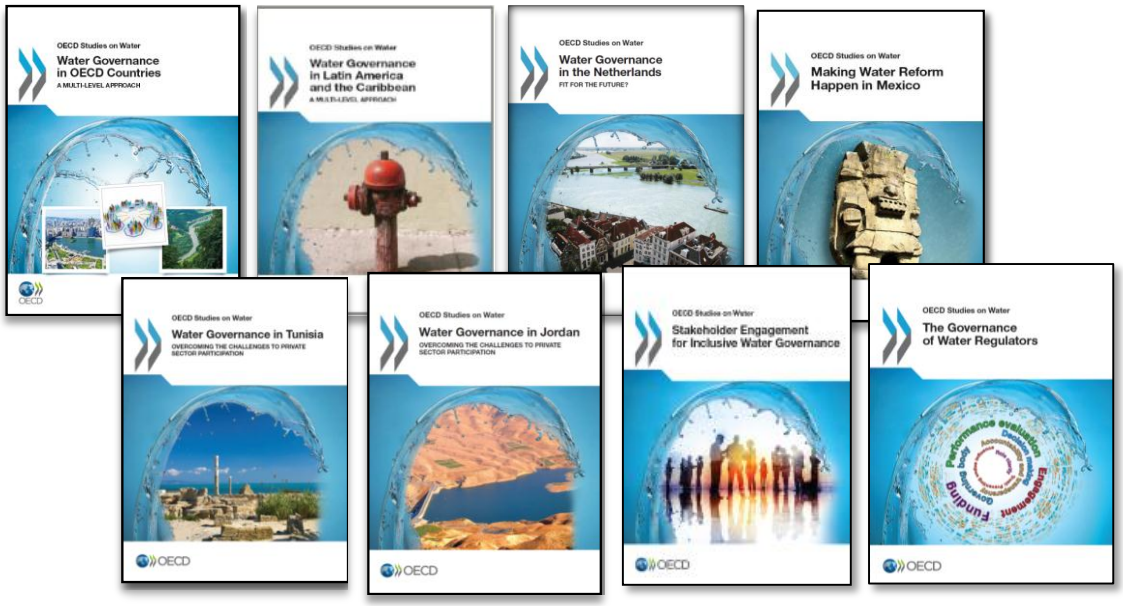
Since 2010, the OECD has provided evidence on the main governance gaps hindering water policy design and implementation, and suggested a set of policy responses and good practices for overcoming them. The "OECD Multi-level Governance Framework: Mind the Gaps, Bridge the Gaps" was developed as an analytical framework and tool for policymakers to identify and bridge governance challenges that affect, to a greater or lesser extent, all countries, regardless of their institutional setting, water availability or degree of decentralisation.

Multi-level Governance Framework: Mind the Gaps, Bridge the Gaps



Source: OECD (2011), *Water Governance in OECD: A Multi-Level Approach*, OECD Publishing, Paris

This analytical framework was used to review water governance arrangements in 17 OECD countries (2011) and 13 Latin American countries (2012) as well as to carry out in-depth national multi-stakeholder policy dialogues in support of water reforms in Mexico (2013), Netherlands (2014), Jordan (2014), Tunisia (2014) and Brazil (2015). Thematic knowledge and policy guidance were also developed on stakeholder engagement, urban water management as well as the governance of water regulators (2015).



OECD evidence shows that there is not a one-size-fits-all solution to water challenges worldwide, but rather a large diversity of situations within and across countries. Governance responses should therefore be adapted to territorial specificities, and recognising that governance is highly context-dependent and important to fit water policies to places.

But the governance landscape for freshwater management has changed in the last 25 years. Information flows more easily and potentially sheds greater light on deficiencies, failures and poor practices. Decentralisation resulted in opportunities to customise policies to local realities, but also raised capacity and co-ordination challenges in the delivery of public services.

There is now an enhanced recognition that bottom-up and inclusive decision-making is key to effective water policies. In addition, a number of legal frameworks have triggered major evolutions in water policy; however their implementation has faced governance bottlenecks, as is the case of the EU Water Framework Directive which has spearheaded many recommendations hereinafter proposed, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations General Assembly Resolution of 28 July 2010 entitled "The Human Right to Water and Sanitation".

Last but not least, the application of the concept of "Integrated Water Resources Management" has brought uneven results within and across countries, and requires operationalisation frameworks that consider the short, medium and long term in a consistent and sustainable way. In the light of such implementation challenges, the Principles seek to assist governments at all levels to strengthen water governance to fit for current and future water challenges.

OECD Principles on Water Governance: what for?

The need for robust public policies to fit for the future

Coping with current and future challenges requires robust public policies, targeting measurable objectives in pre-determined time-schedules at the appropriate scale, relying on a clear assignment of duties across responsible authorities and subject to regular monitoring and evaluation.

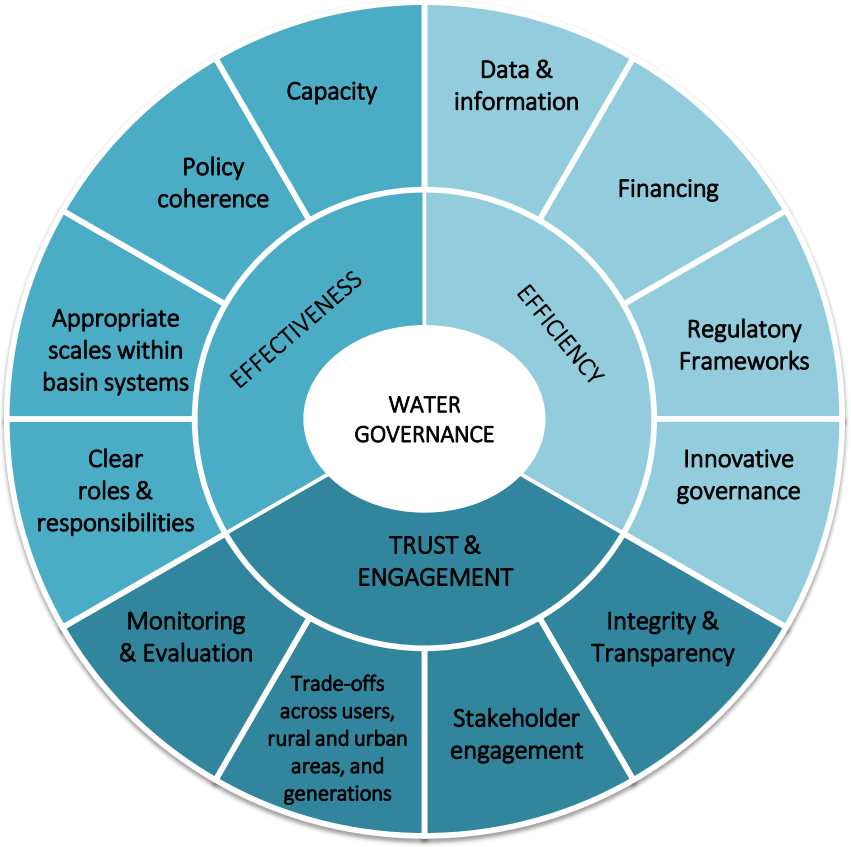
Water governance can greatly contribute to the design and implementation of such policies, in a shared responsibility across levels of government, civil society, business and the broader range of stakeholders who have an important role to play alongside policy-makers to reap the economic, social and environmental benefits of good water governance.

The OECD Principles on Water Governance argue that water governance systems should be designed according to the challenges they are required to address. This problem-solving approach means that "forms" of water governance should follow "functions" of water governance. Structuring, institutionalising, and/or formalising institutions should not detract from the objective of delivering sufficient water of good quality while maintaining or improving the ecological integrity of water bodies.

The OECD Principles on Water Governance intend to contribute to tangible and outcome-oriented public policies, based on three mutually reinforcing and complementary dimensions of water governance:

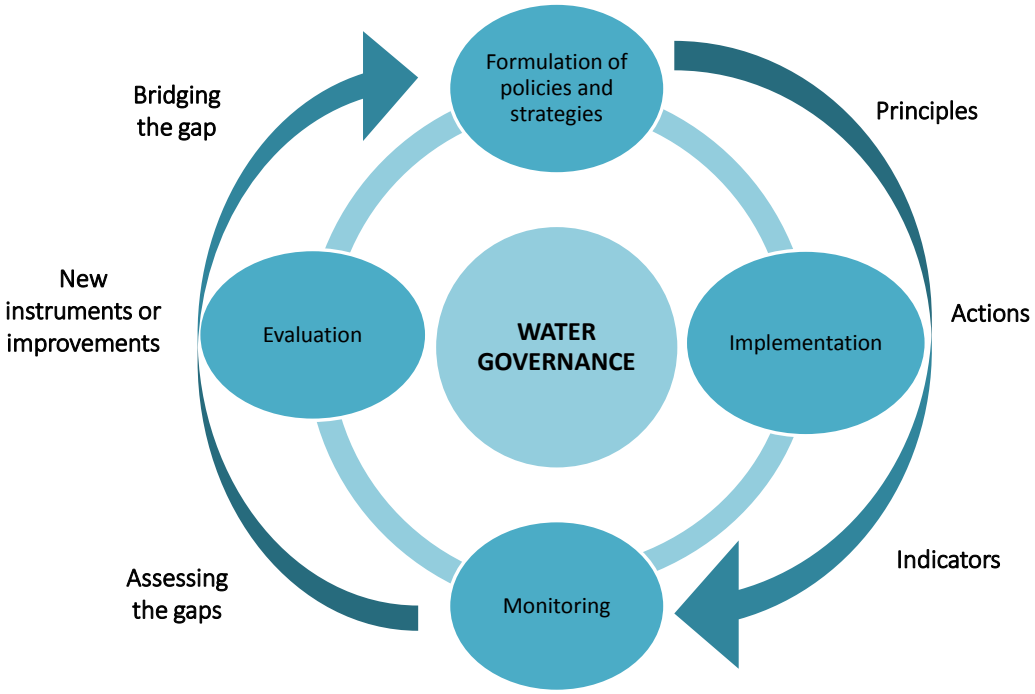
- ***Effectiveness*** relates to the contribution of governance to define clear sustainable water policy goals and targets at all levels of government, to implement those policy goals, and to meet expected targets.
- ***Efficiency*** relates to the contribution of governance to maximise the benefits of sustainable water management and welfare at the least cost to society.
- ***Trust and Engagement*** relate to the contribution of governance to building public confidence and ensuring inclusiveness of stakeholders through democratic legitimacy and fairness for society at large.

Overview of OECD Principles on Water Governance



The OECD Principles on Water Governance are expected to contribute to improving the "Water Governance Cycle" from policy design to implementation.

The Water Governance Cycle



Source: Forthcoming, OECD Working Paper, 2015, Water Governance Indicators

Governance, a condition for successful design and implementation of water policies

The OECD Principles on Water Governance are developed on the premise that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to water challenges worldwide, but a menu of options building on the diversity of legal, administrative and organisational systems within and across countries. They recognise that governance is highly contextual, that water policies need to be tailored to different water resources and places, and that governance responses have to adapt to changing circumstances.

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The Principles are rooted in broader principles of good governance: legitimacy, transparency, accountability, human rights, rule of law and inclusiveness. As such, they consider water governance as a *means* to an *end* rather than an end in itself, i.e. the range of political, institutional and administrative rules, practices and processes (formal and informal) through which decisions are taken and implemented, stakeholders can articulate their interests and have their concerns considered, and decision-makers are held accountable for water management.

The Principles aim to enhance water governance systems that help manage "too much", "too little" and "too polluted" water in a sustainable, integrated and inclusive way, at an acceptable cost, and in a reasonable time-frame. They consider that governance is *good* if it can help to solve key water challenges, using a combination of bottom-up and top-down processes while fostering constructive state-society relations. It is *bad* if it generates undue transaction costs and does not respond to place-based needs.

The Principles consider that water governance systems (more or less formal, complex, and costly) should be designed according to the challenges they are required to address. This problem-solving approach means that "forms" of water governance should follow "functions" of water governance. Structuring, institutionalising, and/or formalising institutions should not detract from the ultimate objective of delivering sufficient water of good quality, while maintaining or improving the ecological integrity of water bodies.

How were the OECD Principles on Water Governance developed?

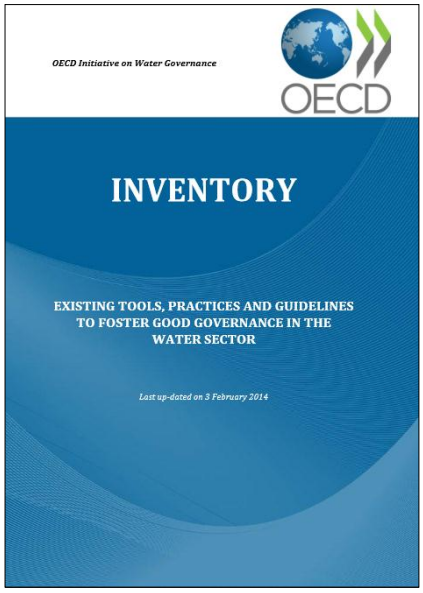
The OECD led the thematic group on "Good Governance" up to the 6th World Water Forum (Marseille, March 2012). A community of practice of 300+ stakeholders was set-up as part of the preparatory process of the Forum to organise nine thematic sessions. Discussions on governance in Marseille concluded with the need for robust policy guidelines to provide a common frame of reference for governments at all levels, in support of better governance of water policy.

As a follow-up, the OECD Water Governance Initiative[1] (WGI) was created on 27-28 March 2013 as a multi-stakeholder platform of 100+ delegates from public, private and non-profit sectors that would gather every six months in a Policy Forum. Since then, the WGI has invested significant efforts in ensuring continuity and collective action to scale up governance responses to water challenges.

[1] http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/water-governance-initiative.htm

6th World Water Forum Governance Targets and Coordinators (March 2012)

SUEZ environnement / OECD	**Target 1** By 2015, 50% of countries will have adopted consultation, participation and co-ordination mechanism allowing stakeholders at local, regional, national and international levels to effectively contribute to decision-making in a coherent, holistic and integrated way. By 2021, 100% will have done so. Click to download the Target 1 Synthesis Report
astee	**Target 2** By 2015, 50% countries will have strengthened regulatory frameworks and adopted performance indicators (service delivery) to monitor and evaluate water policies; and all countries will have put in place capacity-building processes at national and local level to foster good governance in service delivery. By 2018, all countries will have done so. Click to download the Target 2 Synthesis Report
Office International de l'Eau / International Network of Basin Organizations	**Target 3** By 2021, increase by 30% the number of river basin management plans (analysis of initial status and main issues). Click to download the Target 3 Synthesis Report
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization / International Hydrological Programme	**Target 4** By 2015, increase the number of countries with water security diagnoses and governance tools, based on existing (local, national, international) regulatory and legislative frameworks and IWRM mechanisms. Click to download the Target 4 Synthesis Report
WIN Water Integrity Network – Fighting corruption in water worldwide / Transparency International – the global coalition against corruption	**Target 5** By 2018, 30 countries will have committed to promote integrity in the water sector, diagnose/map existing or potential corruption risks, and ensure that anti-corruption policies are well implemented and effective. Click to download the Target 5 Synthesis Report
SIWI	**Target 6** By 2018, 30 countries will be implementing: transparent water budget processes, including information about water infrastructure investment planning and implementation (financial, technical, and socioeconomic impacts); and methods and tools for improving transparency and accountability within the water sector. Click to download the Target 6 Synthesis Report



A preliminary step to developing the Principles consisted in preparing an inventory of tools, guidelines and principles on water governance to take stock of what already exists.[2]

This document comprises 108 governance tools among which 55 are specific to the water sector. They range from voluntary and binding international instruments, to a broad range of initiatives and programmes, guidelines, handbooks and practical tools. The inventory is structured around the issues of stakeholder engagement; performance and governance of water supply and sanitation; basin governance; and integrity and transparency.

This stock taking exercise shed light on the value added of developing OECD Principles that would provide a systemic framework to identify and address water governance gaps, building on international best practices.

[2] http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/Inventory.pdf.

The Principles on Water Governance have been developed and discussed through a bottom-up and multi-stakeholder process within the WGI, under the umbrella and guidance of the OECD Regional Development Policy Committee and in close cooperation with the OECD Regulatory Policy Committee and its network of Economic Regulators. In addition, extensive consultation was carried out across a range of OECD committees and subsidiary bodies including the Environment Policy Committee and its Working Party on Biodiversity, Water and Ecosystems, the Public Governance Committee and its Working Party of Senior Public Integrity Officials, the Development Assistance Committee, the Committee on Investment and the Committee on Agriculture.

The Principles were discussed at the 33rd meeting of the Regional Development Policy Committee on 29-30 April 2015 and approved by the Committee through written procedure on 11 May 2015. The OECD Council welcomed the Principles on 13 May 2015 and agreed to transmit them to Ministers, who gave their backing to the Principles at the meeting of the Council at Ministerial level on 4 June 2015.

OECD Principles on Water Governance

The OECD Principles on Water Governance provide a framework to understand whether water governance systems are performing optimally and help to adjust them where necessary. They can catalyse efforts for making good practices more visible, learning from international experience, and setting reform processes into motion at all levels of government to facilitate change where and when needed. They can also help avoid traps and pitfalls, learning from international experience.

The Principles are based on the following considerations:

- Meeting current and future water challenges requires robust public policies, targeting measurable objectives in pre-determined time-schedules at the appropriate scale, relying on a clear assignment of duties across responsible authorities and subject to regular monitoring and evaluation.
- Effective, efficient and inclusive water governance contribute to the design and implementation of such policies, in a shared responsibility across levels of government and in co-operation with the relevant stakeholders to meet current and future water challenges.
- There cannot be a single, uniform policy response to the water challenges worldwide given the diversity of situations within and across countries in terms of legal and institutional frameworks, cultural practices, as well as climatic, geographic and economic conditions at the origin of diverse water challenges and policy responses.
- It is therefore appropriate for interested Members and non-Members to use these Principles to design and implement their national policies in light of country-specific circumstances.
- Water governance is an important component of the overall framework of water policies; broader principles of good governance apply to the water sector, and water governance outcomes can also be contingent on progress in other domains of the water policy framework.
- These Principles are relevant for all levels of government and could be disseminated widely within interested Members and non-Members.
- The OECD can assist interested Members and non-Members in reaching these standards and identifying best practices. In its future work, the Regional Development Policy Committee will make the necessary proposals for the follow-up on the Principles.
- These Principles will be taken into consideration during future OECD work on water.

The Principles apply to the overarching water policy cycle and should be implemented in a systemic and inclusive manner.

As such, they do not make distinctions across:

- water management *functions* (e.g. drinking water supply, sanitation, flood protection, water quality, water quantity, rainwater, and storm-water);
- water *uses* (e.g. domestic, industry, agriculture, energy and environment), and
- *ownership* of water management, resources and assets (e.g. public, private, mixed).

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Enhancing the *effectiveness* of water governance

Principle 1. Clearly allocate and distinguish *roles and responsibilities* for water policymaking, policy implementation, operational management and regulation, and foster co-ordination across these responsible authorities.

To that effect, legal and institutional frameworks should:

a) Specify the allocation of roles and responsibilities, across all levels of government and water-related institutions in regard to water

- Policy-making, especially priority setting and strategic planning;
- Policy implementation especially financing and budgeting, data and information, stakeholder engagement, capacity development and evaluation;
- Operational management, especially service delivery, infrastructure operation and investment; and
- Regulation and enforcement, especially tariff setting, standards, licensing, monitoring and supervision, control and audit, and conflict management;

b) Help identify and address gaps, overlaps and conflicts of interest through effective co-ordination at and across all levels of government.

Principle 2. Manage water at the *appropriate scale(s)* within integrated basin governance systems to reflect local conditions, and foster co-ordination between the different scales.

To that effect, water management practices and tools should:

a) Respond to long-term environmental, economic and social objectives with a view to making the best use of water resources, through risk prevention and integrated water resources management;

b) Encourage a sound hydrological cycle management from capture and distribution of freshwater to the release of wastewater and return flows;

c) Promote adaptive and mitigation strategies, action programs and measures based on clear and coherent mandates, through effective basin management plans that are consistent with national policies and local conditions;

d) Promote multi-level co-operation among users, stakeholders and levels of government for the management of water resources; and,

e) Enhance riparian co-operation on the use of transboundary freshwater water resources.

Principle 3. Encourage policy coherence through effective *cross-sectoral co-ordination*, especially between policies for water and the environment, health, energy, agriculture, industry, spatial planning and land use through:

a) Encouraging co-ordination mechanisms to facilitate coherent policies across ministries, public agencies and levels of government, including cross-sectoral plans;

b) Fostering co-ordinated management of use, protection and clean-up of water resources, taking into account policies that affect water availability, quality and demand (e.g. agriculture, forestry, mining, energy, fisheries, transportation, recreation, and navigation) as well as risk prevention;

c) Identifying, assessing and addressing the barriers to policy coherence from practices, policies and regulations within and beyond the water sector, using monitoring, reporting and reviews; and

d) Providing incentives and regulations to mitigate conflicts among sectoral strategies, bringing these strategies into line with water management needs and finding solutions that fit with local governance and norms.

Principle 4. Adapt the level of *capacity* of responsible authorities to the complexity of water challenges to be met, and to the set of competencies required to carry out their duties, through:

a) Identifying and addressing capacity gaps to implement integrated water resources management, notably for planning, rule-making, project management, finance, budgeting, data collection and monitoring, risk management and evaluation;

b) Matching the level of technical, financial and institutional capacity in water governance systems to the nature of problems and needs;

c) Encouraging adaptive and evolving assignment of competences upon demonstration of capacity, where appropriate;

d) Promoting hiring of public officials and water professionals that uses merit-based, transparent processes and are independent from political cycles; and

e) Promoting education and training of water professionals to strengthen the capacity of water institutions as well as stakeholders at large and to foster co-operation and knowledge-sharing

Enhancing the *efficiency* of water governance

Principle 5. Produce, update, and share timely, consistent, comparable and policy-relevant water and water-related *data and information*, and use it to guide, assess and improve water policy, through:

a) Defining requirements for cost-effective and sustainable production and methods for sharing high quality water and water-related data and information, e.g. on the status of water resources, water financing, environmental needs, socio-economic features and institutional mapping

b) Fostering effective co-ordination and experience sharing among organisations and agencies producing water-related data between data producers and users, and across levels of government;

c) Promoting engagement with stakeholders in the design and implementation of water information systems, and providing guidance on how such information should be shared to foster transparency, trust and comparability (e.g. data banks, reports, maps, diagrams, observatories);

d) Encouraging the design of harmonised and consistent information systems at the basin scale, including in the case of transboundary water, to foster mutual confidence, reciprocity and comparability within the framework of agreements between riparian countries; and

e) Reviewing data collection, use, sharing and dissemination to identify overlaps and synergies and track unnecessary data overload.

Principle 6. Ensure that governance arrangements help mobilise water finance and allocate *financial resources* in an efficient, transparent and timely manner, through:

a) Promoting governance arrangements that help water institutions across levels of government raise the necessary revenues to meet their mandates, building through for example principles such as the polluter-pays and user-pays principles, as well as payment for environmental services;

b) Carrying out sector reviews and strategic financial planning to assess short, medium and long term investment and operational needs and take measures to help ensure availability and sustainability of such finance;

c) Adopting sound and transparent practices for budgeting and accounting that provide a clear picture of water activities and any associated contingent liabilities including infrastructure investment, and aligning multi-annual strategic plans to annual budgets and medium-term priorities of governments;

d) Adopting mechanisms that foster the efficient and transparent allocation of water-related public funds (e.g. through social contracts, scorecards, and audits); and

e) Minimising unnecessary administrative burdens related to public expenditure while preserving fiduciary and fiscal safeguards.

Principle 7. Ensure that sound water management *regulatory frameworks* are effectively implemented and enforced in pursuit of the public interest, through:

a) Ensuring a comprehensive, coherent and predictable legal and institutional framework that set rules, standards and guidelines for achieving water policy outcomes, and encourage integrated long-term planning;

b) Ensuring that key regulatory functions are discharged across public agencies, dedicated institutions and levels of government and that regulatory authorities are endowed with necessary resources;

c) Ensuring that rules, institutions and processes are well-co-ordinated, transparent, non-discriminatory, participative and easy to understand and enforce;

d) Encouraging the use of regulatory tools (evaluation and consultation mechanisms) to foster the quality of regulatory processes and make the results accessible to the public, where appropriate;

e) Setting clear, transparent and proportionate enforcement rules, procedures, incentives and tools (including rewards and penalties) to promote compliance and achieve regulatory objectives in a cost-effective way; and

f) Ensuring that effective remedies can be claimed through non-discriminatory access to justice, considering the range of options as appropriate.

Principle 8. Promote the adoption and implementation of *innovative water governance practices* across responsible authorities, levels of government and relevant stakeholders, through:

a) Encouraging experimentation and pilot-testing on water governance, drawing lessons from success and failures, and scaling up replicable practices;

b) Promoting social learning to facilitate dialogue and consensus-building, for example through networking platforms, social media, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and user-friendly interface (e.g. digital maps, big data, smart data and open data) and other means;

c) Promoting innovative ways to co-operate, to pool resources and capacity, to build synergies across sectors and search for efficiency gains, notably through metropolitan governance, inter-municipal collaboration, urban-rural partnerships, and performance-based contracts; and

d) Promoting a strong science-policy interface to contribute to better water governance and bridge the divide between scientific findings and water governance practices.

Enhancing *trust and engagement* in water governance

Principle 9. Mainstream *integrity and transparency* practices across water policies, water institutions and water governance frameworks for greater accountability and trust in decision-making, through:

a) Promoting legal and institutional frameworks that hold decision-makers and stakeholders accountable, such as the right to information and independent authorities to investigate water related issues and law enforcement ;

b) Encouraging norms, codes of conduct or charters on integrity and transparency in national or local contexts and monitoring their implementation;

c) Establishing clear accountability and control mechanisms for transparent water policy making and implementation ;

d) Diagnosing and mapping on a regular basis existing or potential drivers of corruption and risks in all water-related institutions at different levels, including for public procurement; and

e) Adopting multi-stakeholder approaches, dedicated tools and action plans to identify and address water integrity and transparency gaps (e.g. integrity scans/pacts, risk analysis, social witnesses)

Principle 10. *Promote stakeholder engagement* for informed and outcome-oriented contributions to water policy design and implementation, through:

a) Mapping public, private and non-profit actors who have a stake in the outcome or who are likely to be affected by water-related decisions, as well as their responsibilities, core motivations and interactions;

b) Paying special attention to under-represented categories (youth, the poor, women, indigenous people, domestic users) newcomers (property developers, institutional investors) and other water-related stakeholders and institutions;

c) Defining the line of decision-making and the expected use of stakeholders' inputs, and mitigating power imbalances and risks of consultation capture from over-represented or overly vocal categories, as well as between expert and non-expert voices;

d) Encouraging capacity development of relevant stakeholders as well as accurate, timely and reliable information, as appropriate;

e) Assessing the process and outcomes of stakeholder engagement to learn, adjust and improve accordingly, including the evaluation of costs and benefits of engagement processes;

f) Promoting legal and institutional frameworks, organisational structures and responsible authorities that are conducive to stakeholder engagement, taking account of local circumstances, needs and capacities; and

g) Customising the type and level of stakeholder engagement to the needs and keeping the process flexible to adapt to changing circumstances.

Principle 11. Encourage water governance frameworks that help manage *trade-offs* across water users, rural and urban areas, and generations, through:

a) Promoting non-discriminatory participation in decision-making across people, especially vulnerable groups and people living in remote areas;

b) Empowering local authorities and users to identify and address barriers to access quality water services and resources and promoting rural-urban co-operation including through greater partnership between water institutions and spatial planners;

c) Promoting public debate on the risks and costs associated with too much, too little or too polluted water to raise awareness, build consensus on who pays for what, and contribute to better affordability and sustainability now and in the future; and

d) Encouraging evidence-based assessment of the distributional consequences of water-related policies on citizens, water users and places to guide decision-making.

Principle 12. Promote regular *monitoring and evaluation* of water policy and governance where appropriate, share the results with the public and make adjustments when needed, through:

a) Promoting dedicated institutions for monitoring and evaluation that are endowed with sufficient capacity, appropriate degree of independence and resources as well as the necessary instruments;

b) Developing reliable monitoring and reporting mechanisms to effectively guide decision-making;

c) Assessing to what extent water policy fulfils the intended outcomes and water governance frameworks are fit for purpose; and

d) Encouraging timely and transparent sharing of the evaluation results and adapting strategies as new information become available.

The Daegu Multi-stakeholder Declaration on the Principles

The Daegu Multi-stakeholder Declaration on the OECD Principles on Water Governance is a tangible outcome of the multi-stakeholder approach underpinning the development of the Principles. It was handed to the OECD's Secretary General Angel Gurría at the 7th World Water Forum on 13 April 2015.

During the session, a high level panel chaired by Peter Glas (Chairman, OECD Water Governance Initiative) was composed of Jeong Yeon-man (Vice-Minister of Environment, Korea), Jean-Louis Chaussade (CEO, Suez Environnement), Francisco Nunes-Correia (President, Portuguese Water Partnership), Célia Blauel (President, Aqua Publica Europea), and Joppe Cramwinckel (Water Director, World Business Council on Sustainable Development). Panellists welcomed the OECD Principles as a stepping stone and valuable framework that can serve as a compass for decision makers and practitioners towards effective, efficient and inclusive water governance.

Daegu's Multi-stakeholder Declaration on the OECD Principles on Water Governance

We, organisations from the public, private and non-profit sectors, major groups and individuals, actively engaged in the OECD Water Governance Initiative (WGI), an innovative multi-stakeholder network of 120+ delegates gathering twice a year in a Policy Forum, strongly believe that water crises are often governance crises and :

1. **Fully support the OECD Principles on Water Governance** as a solid framework to help national and subnational governments design and implement better water policies for better lives, in cooperation with the broad range of stakeholders within and outside the water sector;
2. **Applaud the bottom-up, multi-stakeholder and inclusive process** behind the preparation of the Principles since the creation of the Water Governance Initiative on 27 March 2013, as a follow-up to the OECD commitment made at the 6th World Water Forum (Marseille, 2012);
3. **Call upon governments from OECD countries to approve the Principles** at the 33rd meeting of the Regional Development Policy Committee, 29 April 2015 and to give them a strong and high-level political impetus at the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting, 3-4 June 2015;
4. **Look forward to the integration of the Principles into an OECD Recommendation** to give them a legal nature and strong moral force, and to provide a consensual baseline to identify and scale up best practices and trigger changes in governance and policy;
5. **Invite developing and emerging countries to endorse the Principles** and to adhere to the subsequent Recommendation;
6. **Pledge that all stakeholders use the Principles to guide their activities and practices** in order to strengthen the effectiveness, efficiency, trust and engagement in water governance;
7. **Commit to disseminate the Principles widely** within our organisations, to our members, networks, partners and the public at large;
8. **Invite the OECD to develop water governance indicators**, with the same bottom-up and inclusive process, to monitor progress in the implementation of the Principles, especially in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals;
9. **Expect the Water Governance Initiative to continue playing an important role** in gathering international experience to facilitate benchmarking and peer-learning on each of the Principles;
10. **Thank the OECD for its commitment and leadership** and stand ready to contribute to future collective efforts in support of good governance in the water sector.

Consult the Declaration online at: http://www.oecd.org/gov/regional-policy/world-water-forum-7.htm

The Declaration gathers 65 signatures from organisations of the public, private and non-profit sectors, major stakeholder groups and individuals, actively engaged in the OECD Water Governance Initiative, who committed to mainstream them into their activities and practices and to work further with the OECD to support the implementation of the Principles.

List of signatories

Jean-François Donzier
Permanent Technical Secretary, INBO
General Director, IOWater

Håkan Tropp
Managing Director of the Knowledge Services,
Stockholm International Water Institute

Pierre-Alain Roche
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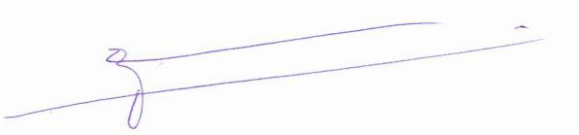

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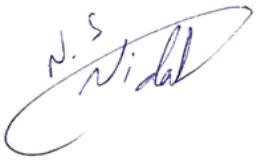

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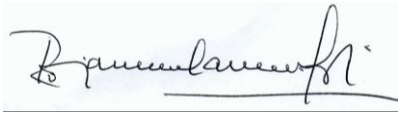

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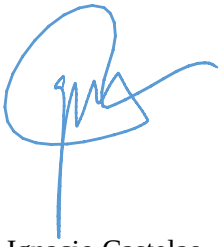

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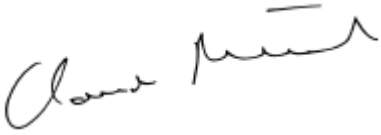

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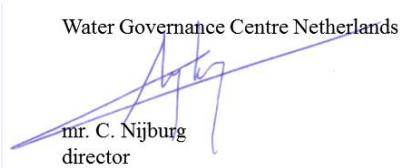

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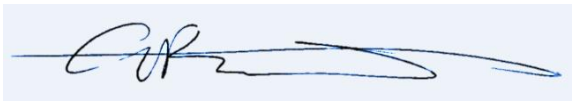

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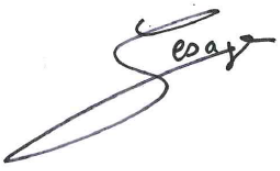

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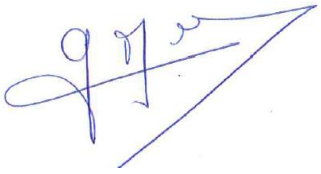
Principal Water Resources Specialist, Asian Development Bank



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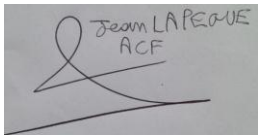

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Further reading

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