

EN2B: Develop systematic approaches for routinely sharing water resources information with the public

REGULATORY FUNCTION: ENVIRONMENT		EN2B
<p>OBJECTIVE EN2</p> <p>Environmental compliance of water and wastewater service operators, industries and agriculture is monitored through collected information on the status of water resources, its use and protection</p>	<p>ACTION CARD EN2B</p> <h1 style="margin: 0;">DEVELOP SYSTEMATIC APPROACHES FOR ROUTINELY SHARING WATER RESOURCES INFORMATION WITH THE PUBLIC</h1>	
<p>COST: Medium FREQUENCY: One time</p> <p>TARGET GROUPS: Regulators, service operators, Industrial and agricultural consumers, environmental authorities, civil society organizations</p>		
<p>DESCRIPTION</p> <p>Regulators support environmental authorities when they are required to provide relevant water and sanitation information related to environmental protection. Such information is usually collected through registers that record the issuing, management, and monitoring of licence use and abuse. Regulators must make this publicly available and accessible at all times, often compiled through regular reports and shared digitally on web portals.</p>		
<p>EXPECTED OUTCOMES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water resources information is available and accessible to the public. • Monitoring information is properly interpreted by regulators. • Consumers are kept informed about environmental changes related to water resources. 		
<p>EXAMPLE 1: ZAMBIA</p> <p>In Zambia, the Environment Management Act of 2011 established that the Minister shall, within two years of the commencement of the Act and every five years thereafter, publish a State of the Environment Report. The report shall provide information on the quality of the environment, including the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the quality of the environment and the results of environmental quality monitoring. • Describe any significant adverse effects that have been caused, are being caused or are likely to be caused in the foreseeable future, and where possible, identify the causes and trends. • Describe the monitoring, enforcement and other measures which have been, and are being, taken to address the causes of the adverse effects and to improve environmental quality. • With respect to international agreements and negotiations relating to the environment in Zambia, the regional or the global environment, report on all agreements to which Zambia is a party, and on their domestic implementation, and report on negotiations in which Zambia has participated since the previous State of the Environment Report. <p>The section on water includes commentaries on water availability, surface water potential, groundwater potential, total water resources potential, change in ecosystem processes, wetlands, water accessibility, and water quality.</p> <p>EXAMPLE 2: EUROPEAN UNION</p> <p>In the EU, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) established a framework for the assessment, management, protection, and improvement of the quality of water resources across the EU. As an example, the European Commission produced a report on the state of Europe's water in 2018, with these key messages.</p>		

- Of the different water bodies recognised by the Water Framework Directive (WFD) across Europe, groundwaters generally have the best status. Good chemical status has been achieved for 74% of the groundwater area, while 89% of the area achieved good quantitative status.
- Around 40% of surface waters (rivers, lakes, and transitional and coastal waters) are in good ecological status or potential, and only 38% are in good chemical status.
- In most Member States, a few priority substances account for poor chemical status, the most common being mercury. If mercury and other ubiquitous priority substances were omitted, only 3% of surface water bodies would fail to achieve good chemical status. Improvements for individual substances show that Member States are making progress in tackling the sources of contamination.
- Overall, the second River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) show limited change in status, as most water bodies have the same status in both cycles. The proportion of water bodies with unknown status has decreased and confidence in status assessment has grown. Improvements are usually visible at the level of individual quality elements or pollutants but often do not translate into improved status overall.
- The main significant pressures on surface water bodies are hydro morphological pressures (40%), diffuse sources (38%), particularly from agriculture, and atmospheric deposition (38%), particularly of mercury, followed by point sources (18%) and water abstraction (7%).
- Member States have made marked efforts to improve water quality or reduce pressure on hydro morphology. Some of the measures have had an immediate effect; others will result in improvements in the longer term.

LINKS

Zambia: <http://www.zema.org.zm/index.php/download-category/state-of-environment-reports/>

EU: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/water/european-waters/water-quality-and-water-assessment/water-assessments>

INTERNAL CAPACITIES NEEDED AND THE ROLE OF PARTNERS

Developing systematic approaches to sharing information on the status of water resources, requires capacity for analysis, synthesis, and presentation in suitable formats, such as reports and web-based databases. Development partners and civil society environmental groups might support this process through facilitating technical advice and capacity development for regulators' staff.