



Project: Sustainable Hydro Assessments and Groundwater Recharge Projects

Project acronym: SHARP

Lead partner: WATERPOOL Competence Network GmbH

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APPENDIX: Long version of good practices to be adapted report

GPA 6	How to engage with key stakeholders
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Involved Project Partners:

International Resources and Recycling Institute (IRRI)

WATERPOOL Competence Network GmbH (WP)

Region of Western Macedonia (RWM)

Region of North Aegean (RNA)

Regional Agency for Rural Development of Friuli Venezia Giulia (ERSA)

Local Councils' Association (LCA)

Institute of Meteorology and Water Management (IMGW)

Saxon State Office for the Environment, Agriculture and Geology (LfULG)

Holding Graz GmbH – Services (HG)

N. LYTH & A. CLARKE

with participation of all project partners

1. Concise description of the adapted good practice

1.1 Introduction

The most important characteristics of engaging with key stakeholders is good communication skills and clear information. This adapted good practice is relevant to International Resources and Recycling Institute, as its expertise lies in strong project management, dissemination of project results, and project communications. International Resources and Recycling Institute is partner in many strategic level European Projects, and has extensive experience of engaging with a variety of stakeholders at different levels. Learning how to successfully engage with key stakeholders will equip project partners with the skills to forge links and develop relationships

with key regional, national and transnational stakeholders, allowing the SHARP project to have a tangible effect on groundwater management in their region.

2. Description of adaption process

Engaging with policy, planning and development on groundwater is vital to the success of the SHARP project. In order for the project to have any tangible effect on groundwater management, partners must engage with key stakeholders at a variety of levels.

The SHARP project has identified three main groups which partners should strive to engage, and work with in their respective regions:

1. Policy-makers (national/regional)
2. Transnational/European policy makers
3. Urban development and spatial planners

The SHARP partnership already contains knowledge on local and regional decision-makers and policy relating to groundwater management. Through its work in European programmes, PP7 International Resources & Recycling Institute (IRRI) has built up knowledge and experience in connecting with stakeholders via its efforts in Scotland. IRRI will assist partners in engaging with key stakeholders as far as possible.

When connecting with the above mentioned stakeholders, partners should highlight groundwater as a significant topic of concern and as an area which requires further development. In opening a dialog with stakeholders partners are involving themselves in the decision making process, which will hopefully produce a positive effect on the process. Engagement will allow partners to forge links and develop relationships with regional, national and transnational bodies. Links with regional stakeholders may also prove constructive in groundwater developments after the SHARP project end date.

The overall purpose of engagement with these key stakeholders is to have an influence on future policy and development, so that the results of the SHARP project can be seen to have an effect on the course of future policy and planning regulation throughout the EU.

In order to engage with policymakers on groundwater related issues, IRRI propose that all partners take the following **7 steps**:

1. Check the regulatory planning and policy frameworks relating to SHARP in your region and report briefly on the existing situation including barriers and issues.
2. Identify the key decision-makers in forming planning and policy frameworks in the region.
3. Make contact with the relevant personnel and introduce the SHARP partnership.
4. Explore decision-maker and planner's views on current planning and policy frameworks and the anticipated changes in the near future.
5. Understand mechanisms for change and how change happens.
6. Explain how national Government decisions relate to transnational programmes such as SHARP, and how the initiatives considered in SHARP should be reflected in any changes in national policy. National Governments invest taxpayer's money in both. In other words, national decision-making and

transnational ideas must be coordinated. Otherwise the tax-payers money is wasted because the value of the taxpayer's investment in EU programmes is ignored.

7. Ask to be included in all future policy discussions concerning change in planning and policy regulations.

Whilst engagement with key stakeholders is important, it may not always be easy, and there are common obstacles that partners may encounter when approaching stakeholders. There are ways around these obstacles however, and it's important to be persistent in these situations.

Partners may find that stakeholders are difficult to get in contact with or unavailable.

These are busy people, consequently it is important to make contact as soon as possible. Persevere and attempt to be flexible in finding a time to meet. Meeting face to face is the best option, however if this is not possible contact via telephone or Skype may be a practical alternative.

Partners may find that stakeholders are unaware or uninterested in issues relating to groundwater.

This is your opportunity to inform and hopefully inspire people in a position of power into action. Try to be positive and engaging. Inviting stakeholders to regional events you are hosting is a good way of introducing them to the project.

Partners may find that stakeholders do not understand groundwater issues.

It is unlikely that the stakeholders you make contact with will be water experts. As a result they may have little or no understanding of issues relating to groundwater. Use clear, concise language which involves the stakeholder in the process, and where possible, use real life examples or diagrams to help clarify what you are trying to say.

Partners may find that little comes of their conversation with stakeholders.

Follow up on any actions set out during your meetings. Provide the stakeholder with further information on what you have discussed, this will provide a more detailed understanding of the issues and will also act as a prompt.

Remember, groundwater policy and planning exists and requires regulation and implementation. If it is not actively on the policy agenda in your region, it should be. Water is the single most important issue among the modern world's resource challenges. There **MUST** be people in your region concerned with policy and planning regarding groundwater.