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# Collection of good practices and lessons learned on target setting and reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health



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**World Health  
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REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

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# Foreword

Ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all is essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This objective, embodied in Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) of the Agenda, is linked to all the other SDGs. Without due attention to water and sanitation, many of the aspirations and targets of the 2030 Agenda will not be met.

The Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes is a powerful tool to promote and operationalize the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. With its strong integrated and intersectoral approach, its focus on prevention and the whole water cycle, and its attention to safety and equity aspects, the Protocol's provisions and principles fully align with SDG 6, as well as with the relevant targets under SDG 3 on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.

The Protocol, which is jointly serviced by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, requires its Parties to establish national and local targets, to implement measures to ensure they are met, and to regularly review and report on progress achieved. Such targets must be tailor-made reflecting the country's socioeconomic and environmental health conditions, as well as its needs and priorities in the water, sanitation and health sectors. This approach lies at the core of the Protocol's planning, performance and accountability framework, and will be instrumental for implementing the SDGs related to water, sanitation and health.

To date, a number of Parties to the Protocol have established targets, and several Parties and other States have set draft targets or are in the process of doing so. The experience of these countries shows that well-formulated targets trigger policy attention and action, which in turn leads to positive outcomes for water, sanitation and health. At the same time, setting targets can prove to be a complex exercise, which requires good planning, devoted resources and effective intersectoral cooperation.

The present publication is designed to assist efforts by Parties to the Protocol and other States to effectively shape their target-setting process. It gathers together experiences from countries that have already undergone the process, and presents a series of case studies showcasing good practices and lessons learned.

These case studies tell a powerful story. While intersectoral cooperation remains a common challenge throughout the region, irrespective of socio-economic conditions, setting targets under the Protocol has proven an effective means to improve such cooperation by promoting better sharing of information and a common understanding of the issues and priorities. In addition, the potential benefits derived in terms of joint leadership, coherence of policies, efficiency of action and commitment to the issues represent a remarkable return on the efforts invested. Finally, to enjoy the full breadth of advantages that the Protocol can bring to countries, specific resources must be devoted beyond existing sectoral allocations.

It is our hope that this collection of first-hand experiences and good practices will serve as a helpful tool for national authorities and other stakeholders engaged in the implementation of the Protocol, with a view to benefiting the lives of citizens and improving the quality of waters in our region.



**Christian Friis Bach**  
Executive Secretary  
United Nations Economic Commission for  
Europe



**Zsuzsanna Jakab**  
Regional Director  
World Health Organization Regional Office for  
Europe







# Preface

It gives me a great pleasure to present this *Collection of Good Practices and Lessons Learned on Target Setting and Reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health*, which is the result of an extensive participatory exercise to distil the practical experience accumulated by Parties to the Protocol and other States in setting targets and reporting.

Article 6 of the Protocol on Water and Health requires Parties to set targets to improve the water, sanitation and health situation in their respective countries, and the dates for achieving them. Article 7 of the Protocol requires Parties to collect and evaluate data and information on their progress towards the achievement of the targets and to submit summary reports to the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

The Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting, which I have the honour to chair, works to provide support to countries in setting and revising their targets and target dates, developing action plans and implementing measures towards the achievement of those targets. In addition, it promotes the exchange of experience and good practice among countries in the pan-European region. In 2010, in order to assist Parties address challenges linked to setting targets and reviewing and assessing progress, the Task Force published the *Guidelines on the Setting of Targets, Evaluation of Progress and Reporting*. Since then, the Guidelines have been used extensively by countries when setting national targets and evaluating progress and reporting. While applying the Guidelines, countries have accumulated ample experience including stories and key elements that contributed to the success of the process, as well as areas where things could have been done differently. Recognizing the usefulness of this collective experience and the benefits of learning from and replicating good practices, the Task Force decided to prepare the present publication.

The preparation of this publication relied on a broad consultative process involving a wide range of stakeholders and multiple review stages, resulting in the creation of a drafting group, extensive discussions at the level of the Task Force and the Working Group on Water and Health, and a dedicated workshop. Twenty-seven case studies were prepared and more than 60 experts participated in the process. The result is a hands-on, concrete tool that highlights challenges and lessons learned, solutions and success factors to help overcome them and methods for their replication.

I sincerely hope that this *Collection of Good Practices and Lessons Learned on Target Setting and Reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health* will provide practical guidance to countries in the process of setting, revising or implementing their targets, as well as reporting on the progress achieved in accordance with the Protocol.



**Pierre Studer**

Chair of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties  
to the Protocol on Water and Health  
Chair of the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting  
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# Contents

Foreword .....	iii
Preface .....	v
Acknowledgements .....	vii
<b>1 Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Relevance to global and regional processes.....</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals .....	3
2.2 The European Environment and Health Process and the Parma Declaration.....	3
2.3 European Union <i>acquis communautaire</i> .....	5
<b>3 Institutional arrangements .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4 Development of baseline analysis and prioritization of issues.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>5 Definition of draft targets.....</b>	<b>23</b>
5.1 Examples of targets in target areas required under article 6 of the Protocol .....	24
<b>6 Financial and economic matters related to the setting of targets .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>7 Public involvement in the process of setting targets.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>8 Official adoption of the targets set.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>9 Publication and promotion of targets .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>10 Developing programmes of measures and action plans to implement the targets set.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>11 Increasing political awareness, communication and promotion .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>12 Review and assessment of progress and reporting .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>13 Review and revision of targets .....</b>	<b>51</b>







**LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1. Logical framework for the process of setting targets .....	2
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**LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1. An overview of examples of targets and their relevance to the SDGs .....	25
Table 2. Examples of official adoption of targets.....	37

**LIST OF BOXES**

Box 1. The European Environment and Health Process as a tool for target setting: Slovenia.....	4
Box 2. Complementing EU Directives with targets under the Protocol to achieve water and health needs: Hungary .....	6
Box 3. Benefits of setting targets under the Protocol in an EU Member State: Slovakia.....	7
Box 4. Development of targets with realistic financing: Czech Republic .....	8
Box 5. Involving different stakeholders in target setting: Norway.....	10
Box 6. Establishment of a dedicated intersectoral body with a mandate for coordination: Hungary.....	11
Box 7. Use of existing organizational structures for a participatory target-setting process: Germany.....	12
Box 8. Merging coordination of water and sanitation policies under a single intersectoral structure: Albania .....	13
Box 9. Opportunities and challenges of broad stakeholder involvement: Ukraine.....	14
Box 10. Starting target setting with formal collaboration: Serbia .....	15
Box 11. Formal definition of roles and responsibilities secures the involvement of national stakeholders: Belarus.....	16
Box 12. Involvement of umbrella NGOs in the target-setting process: Republic of Moldova .....	17
Box 13. Baseline analysis benefitting from GLAAS: Serbia .....	20
Box 14. Baseline analysis and prioritization of targets: Belarus.....	20
Box 15. Obtaining cost estimates for target setting from professional organizations: Norway .....	29
Box 16. The important role of umbrella NGOs in securing broader public participation: Ukraine.....	31
Box 17. Using ongoing consultation processes on water and health issues to facilitate public involvement: Romania .....	33
Box 18. An experienced NGO takes the lead in facilitating the involvement of NGOs and civil society in public consultations: Armenia .....	34
Box 19. Facilitation of public consultation through Aarhus centres and Regional Development Agencies: Serbia .....	35
Box 20. Challenges of adopting targets in a Federal State: Switzerland .....	37
Box 21. The involvement of state stakeholders and NGOs in promoting the Protocol: Armenia .....	40
Box 22. From setting national targets to developing an action plan for implementation: Republic of Moldova.....	42
Box 23. Developing a dynamic action plan to implement the targets: Norway.....	43
Box 24. Role of NGOs in promoting the targets set: Republic of Moldova.....	45
Box 25. Benefits of the annual review of progress for ownership and financial support: Republic of Moldova.....	49
Box 26. Reporting as a tool to raise awareness about the Protocol: Switzerland .....	49
Box 27. Combining reporting under the Protocol and target revision processes: Hungary.....	51
Box 28. Minor revision of targets with a simpler adoption process: Czech Republic .....	52
Box 29. Challenges to the process of revising targets: Slovakia .....	53





## 1. Introduction

The Protocol on Water and Health is the world's first legal treaty established to protect human health and well-being through better water management and the prevention, control and reduction of water-related diseases. Jointly serviced by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, it provides a framework for countries to attain a satisfactory supply of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation for all, and to effectively protect water supply used as a source for drinking water.

At the core of the Protocol are obligations under articles 6 and 7 that require Parties to set targets and target dates to improve the water and health situation in their country within two years of becoming a Party, to collect and evaluate data and information on progress towards the achievement of these targets, and to regularly submit summary reports to the Meeting of the Parties.

The *Guidelines on the Setting of Targets, Evaluation of Progress and Reporting*<sup>1</sup> (referred to hereafter as the Target-Setting Guidelines) were published in 2010 with the aim of supporting Parties and other States to implement the above-mentioned articles. They proved to be a comprehensive tool and have been used extensively.

In the light of the extensive experience accumulated by Parties and other States over the past 10 years while working within the framework of the Protocol to set, implement and revise targets, the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting under the Protocol decided to collect and publish the good practices and lessons learned during the process.

The objective of the *Collection of Good Practices and Lessons Learned on Target Setting and Reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health* is to provide concrete advice to countries that have begun to or will embark on the process of setting, revising and implementing their targets, and thereafter report on their progress in accordance with the Protocol. The present document compiles success stories, challenges and diverse approaches applied by Parties and other States working within the framework of the Protocol. In particular, it aims to assist all those responsible for or involved in target setting and reporting processes in their countries, including governmental representatives from the environment, water, health and other sectors, service operators, local authorities, representatives of academia, research institutes and non-governmental organizations.

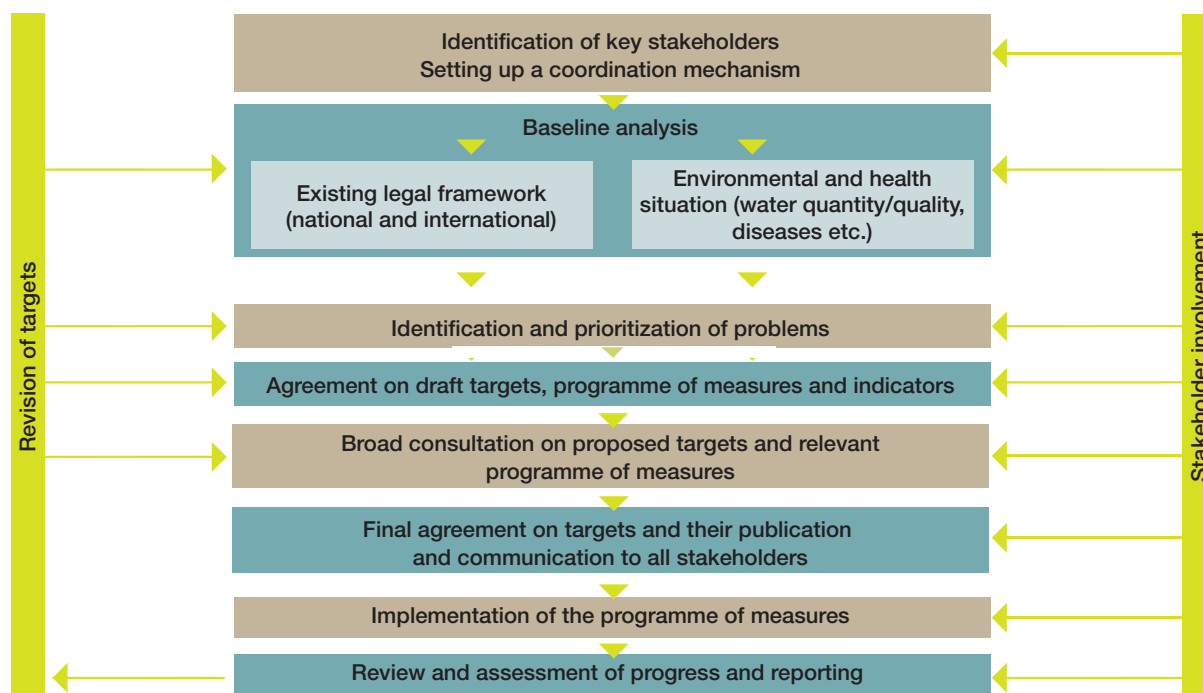
The document aims to complement the Target-Setting Guidelines by focusing on the ways in which they have been implemented in practice. It follows the logical framework laid out in the Guidelines for the process of setting targets and reporting (Figure 1) and covers each step of the process.

Each chapter addresses a particular step of the target-setting and reporting process and begins by quoting the relevant provisions of the Protocol and summarizing the recommendations from the Target-Setting Guidelines. Key success factors, challenges and lessons learned are illustrated with case studies contributed by Parties to the Protocol and other States that highlight good practices, as well as different approaches that may be of use to countries at different stages of setting, revising or implementing their targets.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations sales publication, No. Sales No. E. 10.II.E.12. Available from [www.unece.org/index.php?id=11644](http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=11644).



**Figure 1. Logical framework for the process of setting targets**



Source: *Guidelines on the Setting of Targets, Evaluation of Progress and Reporting*, UNECE, 2010.

## 2. Relevance to global and regional processes

### 2.1 The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly, set ambitious objectives to be achieved within 15 years. Attaining these objectives will require significant efforts both at national and international level. While the SDGs represent global ambitions, countries are expected to set national goals and targets that correspond with and contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. In this respect, the Protocol on Water and Health has a key role to play in promoting and operationalizing the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in national and regional contexts. The Protocol's planning and accountability approach – through baseline analysis, target setting and reporting – offers a practical framework for Parties to translate the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda into specific national targets and actions.

Indeed, the Protocol's objectives, principles and provisions, in particular the target areas stipulated by article 6, are fully aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 6 "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all" and relevant targets under Goal 3 "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages". The Protocol also clearly supports the implementation of other Sustainable Development Goals pertinent to water, sanitation and health, specifically Goal 1 on ending poverty, Goal 2 on improving nutrition, Goal 4 on equitable quality education, Goal 11 on safe, resilient and sustainable cities, and Goal 13 on combating climate change and its impacts, among others.

Moreover, the Protocol's focus on integrated and intersectoral approaches and coherent policies, in particular with regard to setting targets, is also consistent with the 2030 Agenda.

The Protocol's legally binding nature is also an important asset for channelling and sustaining the long-term efforts needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

Finally, the Protocol's intergovernmental framework and the different activities that constitute its programme of work offer a pan-European platform for all relevant stakeholders to build evidence, strengthen political commitment, develop policy and technical guidance, build in-country capacities, and share experiences and good practices for attaining the 2030 Agenda targets on water, sanitation and health.

### 2.2 The European Environment and Health Process and the Parma Declaration

In the late 1980s, European countries initiated the first ever process to eliminate the most significant environmental threats to human health – the European Environment and Health Process (EHP). The third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (London, 16-18 June 1999) adopted the Protocol on Water and Health. Over a decade later, at the 5th conference (Parma, Italy, 10-12 March 2010), the 53 Member States of the WHO European Region adopted the Parma Declaration on Environment and Health, which set a series of regional priority goals to protect children and other vulnerable groups from health risks posed by poor environmental, working and living conditions, especially lack of water and sanitation.

In accordance with regional priority goal 1 on ensuring public health by improving access to safe water and sanitation, governments "will strive to provide each child with access to safe water and sanitation in homes, child care centres, kindergartens, schools, health care institutions and public recreational water settings by 2020, and to revitalize hygiene practices." The Declaration further specifies that governments "will take advantage of the approach and provisions of the Protocol on Water and Health as a rationale and progressive tool to develop integrated policies on water resource management and health, addressing the challenges to safe water services posed by climate change, with clear targets and objectives, working in partnership with all concerned sectors."

The EHP thereby refers to the Protocol as the primary regional instrument to address and operationalize the policy aspirations expressed by the Parma Declaration. The target-setting process under the Protocol specifically helps countries to establish targets that allow for progressive realization of the regional priority goal 1 in a given country context, taking into consideration national priorities, needs and available resources.

Furthermore, the Protocol's programmes of work strongly support the attainment of the regional priority goal 1. With their emphasis on water, sanitation and hygiene in schools and health care facilities, and equitable access to water and sanitation services, activities under the programme of work promote the setting of targets towards attaining the regional priority goal 1 by 2020 in conjunction with providing practical guidance, tools and technical assistance that underpin and support implementation of the targets.



## Box 1

**The European Environment and Health Process as a tool for target setting: Slovenia****Case summary**

Slovenia is a Member State of the European Union and has already implemented the requirements of the relevant EU Directives and national legislation requirements for tackling challenges regarding water management.

At the same time, Slovenia aims to contribute actively to the European Environment and Health Process. In 2011, the Government of Slovenia established an interministerial working group to implement the commitments of the Parma Declaration and adopted the Strategy for Children and Youth Environmental Health for 2012-2020. This Strategy served as a basis for elaborating the action plan for its implementation, which defines specific tasks of ministries and stakeholders up to 2020.

While Slovenia is not yet Party to the Protocol on Water and Health, accession and implementation of the Protocol is recognized as an important activity of the action plan, contributing to the development of integrated policies on water resources management and tackling water and health-related challenges by promoting intersectoral cooperation between the relevant ministries. Furthermore, the action plan includes a number of activities under its first priority goal: "Ensuring the health of the population by improving access to safe drinking water and adequate management of urban wastewater in Slovenia". These activities could simultaneously serve as targets under the Protocol on Water and Health.

**Why is it a good practice?**

The European Environment and Health Process was used as an instrument to initiate action with the aim of acceding to the Protocol on Water and Health. In addition, some of the water, sanitation and health-related activities and measures of the action plan designed to fulfil commitments under the Parma Declaration were considered relevant for the target-setting process in the context of the Protocol.

**Overcoming challenges**

There was a clear need to develop a common understanding of the importance and added value of accession to the Protocol and the roles of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning in its implementation.

An obstacle to accession to the Protocol was the lack of effective mechanisms for securing access to drinking water and sanitation for everyone, which may be due partly to the decentralized roles of municipalities responsible for the implementation of laws and regulations relating to water supply and sanitation.

The approach currently adopted by the government has been to promote more efficient implementation of existing legislation regarding access to drinking water and sanitation for everyone rather than revising or developing legislation, unless this becomes an obligation following accession to the Protocol.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, the Environment Agency and the National Institute of Public Health jointly coordinate work within the framework of the Protocol. This approach triggered continuous close cooperation with municipalities.
- The Ministry of Health has taken an active role in initiating and leading the accession process.
- Accession to the Protocol was recognized as a long-term objective of the government.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Use the European Environment and Health Process as a platform for setting targets in water, sanitation and health domains that can also be adopted under the Protocol, once the accession process is completed.
- Use the model of interdepartmental cooperation at a high level (including all relevant ministries, high-level representatives of local governments and non-governmental organizations) to discuss priority issues and challenges. This ultimately contributes to accelerating the fulfilment of the different obligations.

### 2.3 European Union *acquis communautaire*

The scope of EU Directives overlaps with the legal provisions of the Protocol on Water and Health. While many target areas stipulated under article 6 of the Protocol are in line with relevant EU Directives such as drinking water, bathing water, urban wastewater and the water framework directives, other important dimensions and potential target areas outlined under article 6 complement EU legislation (e.g. equity and affordability aspects, information to public, enclosed bathing waters, remediation of contaminated sites, etc.). Thus, Parties benefit from fulfilling their obligations under the Protocol in addition to implementing the EU Directives.

The EU Directives are considered to be a “common minimum” for EU Member States. However, due to the diverse economic status of Member States, in practice, some – especially newly acceding countries – may need several years to meet the obligations of the *acquis communautaire*. These countries can also benefit from the Protocol as a tool for phasing implementation of the existing obligations, for example, through defining intermediate targets, target dates and indicators allowing for progressive realization. EU Member States that are already compliant with the EU Directives may benefit from implementing the Protocol on Water and Health and from setting targets under it, so as to identify and address national priorities outside or beyond the scope of EU legislation. Furthermore, the Protocol can aid the setting of other, more ambitious objectives than those of the EU Directives with a view to improving the overall situation of water resources and the health and well-being of citizens.

Similarly, the Protocol can be a useful tool for countries in the process of approximation to the EU. For example, the first step of the target-setting process – undertaking a baseline analysis of the situation with respect to water and health – is also a requirement in many target areas for the EU *acquis communautaire*, and provides opportunities to establish synergies.



## Box 2

**Complementing EU Directives with targets under the Protocol to achieve water and health needs: Hungary****Case summary**

In Hungary, the target-setting process under the Protocol overlapped with accession to the EU, hence targets in the corresponding areas were defined in line with EU obligations (e.g. the Drinking Water Directive and Urban Wastewater Directive). Intermediate targets and target dates were set to incrementally reach these obligations. For example, the target for drinking water compliance with chemical quality requirements was set for 80% of the population by 2010 and 96% by 2015. Other targets also preceded EU legislation: safe management of drinking water supplies was established as a target and national legal requirement well before it was introduced in the EU Drinking Water Directive. Targets were also set in priority areas that complemented EU obligations (e.g. advancing best practices in the management of enclosed bathing waters, assessing the situation of equitable access to water and sanitation services, and improving the dissemination of water and health-related information to the public).

**Why is it a good practice?**

The national target-setting process allows legal obligations to be tailored to country needs and resources. While the EU Directives set a standard to be met, the target-setting process permits the definition of steps to incrementally achieve the final goal. In addition, the process helps to strengthen national priorities within or beyond EU obligations. Targets also extend to areas not covered by the EU *acquis communautaire*.

**Overcoming challenges**

Financing is always a challenge when setting targets, especially in the case of infrastructure needs. EU accession funds facilitated extensive infrastructure development, such as the establishment or improvement of water and wastewater treatment plants and distribution/collection systems. In other areas, funding was less readily available. National funding programmes were used for some areas (e.g. through the National Public Health Action Plan), while in others less resource-intensive targets were prioritized addressing issues such as improving legislation, providing best practice guidance or undertaking a baseline analysis.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- Targets enable the definition of national priorities that complement or go beyond existing legal obligations.
- Intermediate targets and target dates allow for stepwise improvement towards international benchmarks (such as the EU Directives).
- Availability of funding should be taken into account when setting realistic and achievable targets. EU funding supports investments towards realizing targets in line with EU obligations.
- Prioritizing less resource-intensive targets (e.g. data acquisition, dissemination, etc.) can be achieved even if funds are less readily available.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Targets should be tailored to national priorities, even if their implementation ultimately leads to (or goes beyond) fulfilling international legal obligations.
- Since the EU Directives do not cover many areas and aspects required under the Protocol (e.g. enclosed bathing waters, distribution system performance, equity or affordability aspects), these areas should be considered during the target-setting process.
- Targets should be in line with financial realities and remain cost-efficient in target areas where sufficient resources are not available.

## Box 3

**Benefits of setting targets under the Protocol in an EU Member State: Slovakia****Case summary**

Slovakia is a Member State of the European Union and has implemented the requirements of the EU Directives along with national legislation on water.

Slovakia has also implemented a number of activities relevant to the main objectives of the Protocol through its fulfilment of national commitments embodied in several policy documents and tools (e.g. the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 21, the Parma Declaration, the National Environmental Health Action Plan, the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan and human rights to water and sanitation).

Slovakia ratified the Protocol in 2001 and set national targets under the Protocol in 2007. The target-setting process triggered the establishment of good lines of communication among stakeholders, including the Ministry of Environment and the Public Health Authority, which are responsible for the Protocol's implementation. The target-setting process also strengthened mutual understanding of needs and challenges in the water and health sectors.

In 2014, Slovakia completed the process of revision of set targets following broad consultations with relevant experts. While some of the national targets relate to the implementation of EU Directives, international conventions and bilateral agreements, other targets address particular areas such as water supply and sanitation, and the safety and quality of drinking water (e.g. with regard to pesticides, formation of disinfection by-products, determination of cyanobacteria and cyanotoxins, elimination of environmental loads, diagnosis of enteroviruses in bathing waters, and distribution of information about mineral water to public, etc.). The revised draft targets were disseminated via the Internet, the media, expert forums and conferences, and underwent broad consultation.

**Why is it a good practice?**

The target-setting process under the Protocol built on existing cooperation between relevant stakeholders established during implementation of the EU legislation and other international commitments, and contributed to the sharing of information among sectors and the strengthening of intersectoral cooperation. It also led to the creation of a multi-stakeholder national working group to implement the Protocol on Water and Health.

Stakeholders widely acknowledged that setting and fulfilling national targets under the Protocol would improve water quality and have a positive impact on the environment and health of Slovakian citizens. There was thus clear acceptance of the usefulness of targets under the Protocol.

**Overcoming challenges**

Common challenges included a lack of basic background information about obligations under the Protocol, as well as the extent to which existing commitments related to the Protocol. There was also insufficient understanding of the roles and responsibilities of individual institutions (e.g. tasks, competencies, particularities, challenges, etc.) related to the Protocol.

Lack of earmarked funds for the implementation of the Protocol and insufficient human resources were also recognized as obstacles to effective implementation of its provisions.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- Intersectoral cooperation promoted mutual understanding of needs and challenges.
- Quick exchange of information among stakeholders led to progress.
- Reporting to government on progress towards national targets improved understanding of the usefulness of the Protocol among policymakers and administrators, especially in the context of other international commitments.
- As an outcome of the process, the Protocol was recognized as a tool both for addressing existing and emerging issues not covered by the EU Directives.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Use the target-setting process under the Protocol to address emerging issues in the water, sanitation and health domain not covered by EU legislation.
- Establish an intersectoral working group for the target-setting process that involves those responsible for or engaged in implementing other international commitments.



## Box 4

**Development of targets with realistic financing: Czech Republic****Case summary**

The Czech Republic ratified the Protocol in 2001. In 2002, a task group for implementing the Protocol was established to produce the first draft of national targets. The task group included representatives of all three sectors sharing responsibility for water issues in the Czech Republic: the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Target setting was initiated in 2006 with a baseline analysis including an analysis of legislation gaps. The task group produced a detailed report describing the national situation in all areas addressed by the Protocol, including references to existing political, strategic and legal instruments. The report provided a starting point for drafting targets that would improve the situation with regard to water, sanitation and health. The team considered all target areas under article 6 of the Protocol with the exception of a few areas where the country situation was considered satisfactory.

Financing actions to achieve potential targets proved a crucial issue during the target-setting process. As an EU Member State, the Czech Republic had already allocated funds or made national commitments to fulfil EU obligations. Where relevant, these funds were considered as a source of financing for national targets under the Protocol.

Following several rounds of comments by all concerned sectors and interested stakeholders, including regional authorities, the government officially approved the 35 targets in 2008 together with the roles and responsibilities of the relevant institutions.

**Why is it a good practice?**

All the main stakeholders were involved in the target-setting process, and a broad expert and political audience was given the opportunity to assess and comment on the draft targets.

All targets identify clear responsibilities and most are accompanied by clear timetables for completion.

**Overcoming challenges**

The Czech Government did not allocate any additional or earmarked funding for implementation of the targets under the Protocol. For this reason, the task group mainly proposed targets consistent with country commitments under the EU Directives and for which funding was already allocated. This was particularly relevant in the case of targets where major investments were necessary. Other targets not covered by EU legislation relied on internal funding from the involved organizations and/or ad hoc financing from the three ministries concerned.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- The establishment of a task group for setting targets and implementing the Protocol ensured good intersectoral cooperation.
- Clear distribution of responsibilities between the different ministries eased cooperation.
- Funding was secured for costly infrastructure-related targets from funds allocated for the implementation of EU Directives.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Continuous cooperation between members of the task group enables progress to be reviewed in the implementation of targets and the identification of emerging needs.
- Maintain regular contact through the preparation of a short annual report on the implementation of the Protocol (to be submitted to the government by the Ministry of Health).

### 3. Institutional arrangements

#### Protocol text

*Article 6, paragraph 5 (a)*

*In order to promote the achievement of the targets referred to in paragraph 2 of this article, the Parties shall each establish national or local arrangements for coordination between their competent authorities;*

#### Target-Setting Guidelines

The process of target setting should be led by the main competent authorities (depending on national setting, the Ministry of Health and/or Environment), in close cooperation with a broad range of concerned stakeholders responsible for the overall implementation of the Protocol, including at the highest governmental level.

In order to bring together all stakeholders concerned in the process of target setting and to create an appropriate coordination mechanism, depending on the country's institutional set-up, either use could be made of existing structures and networks or a specific, inter-ministerial committee/working group could be established.

#### Lessons learned and good practices

- The involvement of leading competent authorities and other stakeholders, including buy-in by key ministries and national and sub-national (regional/local) authorities dealing with environment, water, sanitation and health, is crucial to securing support during the target-setting and implementation process.
- The formalization of interministerial cooperation (e.g. through a cabinet decision, memorandum of understanding or a joint order/decision by the leading ministries) is recommended to ensure its continuity and effectiveness. A formal structure will help mobilize the involvement of other relevant ministries and authorities in the process (e.g. finance, education, rural development). Some countries have formalized interministerial collaboration on Protocol implementation when ratifying the Protocol. Formalizing cooperation by establishing dedicated working groups with clear mandates is useful when allocating necessary human and financial resources.
- The involvement of higher management in ministries and departments at the technical level (e.g. head of department), in addition to political leadership, plays a valuable role in coping with political changes and easing bottlenecks. The involvement of dedicated members with personal commitment and leadership (e.g. national focal points) in the intersectoral mechanisms is also highly productive.
- Formal, accountable and continued cooperation can also be ensured through the use of existing national coordination mechanisms and platforms, such as Steering Committees under the National Policy Dialogues,<sup>2</sup> National Water Councils and/or intersectoral task groups mandated with the development of National Environmental Health Action Plans (NEHAPs). The use of such structures often expedites the working process due to well-established cooperation, regular communication and long-standing relationships within the group. This also reduces the burden of Protocol implementation.
- Interministerial coordination for the definition of targets can take place at different levels including: a smaller drafting group consisting of staff from the principal ministries or agencies concerned and, in some cases, a NGO representative and/or external resource persons; a broader stakeholder consultation group representing relevant stakeholders at the operational level; and a group of high-level representatives of stakeholders empowered with decision-making authority.
- The involvement of non-governmental organizations representing the general public, as well as branch organizations (e.g. waterworks associations), can be highly productive in driving and promoting the process of setting and implementing targets, and in highlighting specific challenges less frequently addressed at national levels.
- The involvement and support of devoted ambassadors (e.g. a high-profile officer or a high-level decision maker) is also very effective in steering the target-setting process.

<sup>2</sup> National Policy Dialogues (NPDs), jointly facilitated by UNECE and OECD, are platforms that enable key national stakeholders to meet regularly to discuss and advance policy reforms related to water. UNECE is the strategic partner for work on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) including transboundary river basin management. Implementation of the European Union Water Initiative (EUWI) in the region of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia relies on NPDs. In most of the target countries, issues related to accession or implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health are discussed among national stakeholders within the NPD framework.



- Countries often do not allocate dedicated human and financial resources to the target-setting process. Where additional resources are made available for the exercise (e.g. via international funding), progress is swifter.
- Sharing experiences with other countries at national and international meetings under the Protocol contributes significantly to setting up effective institutional structures.

## Box 5

**Involving different stakeholders in target setting: Norway****Case summary**

In Norway, the Ministry of Health and Care Services – the lead responsible ministry for Protocol implementation – in consultation with the Ministry of Environment appointed the Norwegian Food Safety Authority to coordinate the drafting of targets in cooperation with relevant governmental bodies (e.g. the Norwegian Institute for Public Health and the Norwegian Environment Agency). Norwegian Water (Norsk Vann), the national association representing Norway's water industry, was also included in the process.

A Stakeholder Consultative Group was established at the ministerial level and led by the Ministry of Health and Care Services, with the involvement of representatives from the Ministry of Climate and Environment, Ministry of Local Government and Modernization, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The consultative group oversaw the work and progress of the drafting group, and provided a high-level consultative forum for the discussion of questions related to drinking water in general, as well as matters related to the Protocol on Water and Health.

The targets proposed by the drafting group were submitted to the consultative group for consultation and endorsement, and received official approval in 2014.

**Why is it a good practice?**

The organization of the target-setting process proved successful because it secured the involvement of all relevant ministries, thereby drawing on the experiences and knowledge of the directorates responsible for drinking water, wastewater and disease control. Accordingly, the officials with the greatest knowledge of the current status, needs and challenges in these sectors, as well as potential solutions, were responsible for drafting each target. The involvement of Norwegian Water ensured that needs and challenges at national and local levels were taken into account.

**Overcoming challenges**

The main challenge at the governmental level was a lack of understanding regarding the need to set national targets under the Protocol, due to the perception that all water and health matters were comprehensively covered by the EU Directives (which are usually followed by the country).

Furthermore, there was a common understanding that water and water supply is an issue to be dealt with by municipalities rather than ministries at national level.

The problems in the sector were also generally perceived as insignificant.

Increasing awareness of water and health issues among politicians was key to overcoming the above challenges. The need to take action was mentioned in all relevant budget documents, white papers on public health and proposals for new legislation. Consequently, the Protocol was presented as a good tool to address these issues. The Parliament and successive governments came to acknowledge this point over the following years.

An independent report produced by the Association of Consulting Engineers of Norway and the National Waterworks Association also helped to justify the need for setting targets, identifying water and sanitation as areas where standards were falling and consequently in need of action.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- The involvement of representatives of broad stakeholder groups in the working group highlighted different perceptions challenging the target-setting process and enabled them to be dealt with in a strategic manner.
- The involvement of professional/branch organizations facilitated the target-setting process by providing recognized arguments and justifications.
- The continuous involvement of experts reinforced the stability of the target-setting process.

- Ensuring common understanding of needs and challenges in the area of water and health at all administrative levels proved crucial, although it took more than two years (i.e. the period foreseen by the Protocol provisions for setting targets).
- Ensuring acceptance of the need to set targets required considerable effort and time, as the Protocol remains less known and visible among politicians compared to EU Directives.

#### **How to replicate this practice**

- Create a platform or use an existing platform where the relevant authorities can meet and discuss their priorities, needs and challenges.
- Consider involving different levels of administration. It is vital that the need for addressing challenges is recognized at all levels, including at local level where provision of water and sanitation services usually occurs.
- Acknowledge that the target-setting process may take longer than expected and plan accordingly. Take the necessary time to achieve consensus and ensure commitment.

#### **Box 6**

#### **Establishment of a dedicated intersectoral body with a mandate for coordination: Hungary**

##### **Case summary**

Hungary was among the first countries to ratify the Protocol on Water and Health. In its declaration of ratification, the government appointed the Ministries of Health and Environment to facilitate implementation at the national level. An intersectoral body, the Special Committee on Water and Health, was established under the Public Health Interministerial Committee (a multi-stakeholder consultative committee) and mandated to coordinate implementation of the Protocol at the operational level.

The Special Committee comprised representatives from various governmental bodies and institutions responsible for environment, water management, health, water utility regulation, public health and epidemiology. It also involved representatives of NGOs, mostly from professional associations of water utilities, enclosed bathing water operators and environmental protection organizations.

##### **Why is it a good practice?**

Target setting under the Protocol covers many areas of expertise and responsibilities some of which fall outside the scope of the main responsible institutions. A dedicated intersectoral body with a mandate for coordination is therefore key for a successful target-setting process. It assesses the draft targets suggested by stakeholders in their respective work areas and decides on their inclusion and prioritization.

##### **Overcoming challenges**

The target-setting process in Hungary started very early, well before the publication of the Target-Setting Guidelines. Accordingly, the process proved challenging as it was completed without the guidance and expertise of other countries. Although the target-setting process itself was not hindered, the lack of guidance resulted in broadly defined, non-measurable indicators in some target areas. During the revision process, the rationale behind the indicators was reviewed and the targets were ultimately redefined with measurable indicators.

Five years after the ratification of the Protocol, a major governmental re-organization resulted in the abolition of the lead committee, the Public Health Interministerial Committee, thus terminating the formalized mandate of the Special Committee on Water and Health. However, the members of the Special Committee have continued to interact informally.

Once it became clear that further progress under the Protocol was highly dependent on the personal dedication of the experts involved, initiatives were taken to trigger a formal re-establishment of the Special Committee. An official mandate now facilitates the involvement of government officials and permits the allocation of budget funds to the activities of the Special Committee. In the absence of a dedicated budget line, these activities are dependent on funding provided by the participating institutions.

##### **Success factors and lessons learned**

- A formalized intersectoral body with a mandate for coordination was essential for successful implementation of the Protocol.
- Strong personal commitment on the part of the members of the intersectoral body was key.



- The intersectoral body responsible for setting targets should also be involved in regular reporting on their achievement, as this enables the identification of needs for revising targets.
- In Hungary, the Special Committee on Water and Health also served as a platform for exchanging information on other water and health-related issues outside the direct scope of the Protocol, which was seen as an added value of the target-setting process.

#### **How to replicate this practice**

- Establish a formalized intersectoral body for coordinating target setting, implementation and reporting. Such a body should involve a wide range of expertise including water management, water utilities, public health, epidemiology, environmental protection, agriculture, education and so on. The participation of NGOs enables critical feedback to be provided to government-based bodies.
- The intersectoral body responsible for target setting should have an allocated budget for its activities.
- The panel of experts in the intersectoral body should coordinate both reporting and target setting. This extends the scale of expertise and enables the panel to summarize potential targets, discuss their relevance and jointly set priorities. An intersectoral coordinating body also enables consistent and reliable reporting.

#### **Box 7**

#### **Use of existing organizational structures for a participatory target-setting process: Germany**

##### **Case summary**

In Germany, an ad-hoc drafting group was established at the national level to set targets under the Protocol. It included representatives of the Federal Ministry of Health, Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, the German Environment Agency and the Robert Koch Institute, as well as national focal points for the Protocol on Water and Health. The drafting group developed a baseline analysis for the target-setting areas stipulated under article 6 of the Protocol and developed draft targets for areas where action was deemed appropriate.

Germany is a Federal Republic with 16 Federal States. Coordinating the target-setting process with the Federal States was necessary to achieve consensus for the targets and their implementation. This was managed by using existing mechanisms such as the joint working groups on water, drinking water, wastewater and bathing water, which included representatives of the Federal States and the Federal authorities at the national level, and coordination with the German Technical and Scientific Association for Gas and Water. Feedback from the respective working groups was incorporated and the targets were finalized and communicated to the Secretariat in 2011.

##### **Why is it a good practice?**

The target-setting process secured the involvement of all relevant ministries and national institutions, as well as relevant bodies at the Federal State level. Good use was made of existing well-established structures at the national level.

##### **Overcoming challenges**

The Protocol on Water and Health was a new international tool and represented a different approach for the Federal States. Accordingly, they required some convincing of the Protocol's added value. This may have been a result of involving mainly national level Federal authorities in the Protocol processes, rather than the Federal States themselves. The national-level Federal authorities made the Federal States aware of the process through email updates and during regular meetings on the status of implementation of the targets, as well as further actions under the Protocol, such as activities concerning small-scale water supplies and sanitation systems.

### Success factors and lessons learned

- The target-setting process took advantage of already established and well-functioning working groups and lines of communication. By integrating the Protocol coordination groups into existing cooperative structures linking the Federal authorities (national level) with Federal States (sub-national level), implementation of the Protocol was not perceived as an additional burden.
- Knowledge about the Protocol and acceptance of the target-setting process increased as a result of involving the Federal States and other relevant stakeholders at an early stage in the target-setting process.

### How to replicate this practice

- In the context of a Federal State or similar administrative structure, existing cooperation frameworks between national and sub-national levels should be used if these are already in place.
- If these structures do not yet exist, they could be established for the purpose of implementing the Protocol. They may also be used beyond this purpose for other cooperative activities.
- Both national and sub-national levels must be involved.

#### Box 8

### Merging coordination of water and sanitation policies under a single intersectoral structure: Albania

#### Case summary

A consultation process involving the Compliance Committee of the Protocol on Water and Health recommended the establishment of a mechanism to promote intersectoral coordination among responsible authorities, as an important factor in ensuring successful implementation of the Protocol. As this advice was in line with recent actions taken by the Albanian Government in the water sector, the establishment of the mechanism became a policy priority. Shortly thereafter, the Prime Minister issued two orders establishing a group on integrated management of water policy and the sub-thematic group “Water for people”.

The subgroup “Water for people” was responsible for facilitating the process of formulation and implementation of government policies and strategic objectives aimed at improving the quality of water supply, sanitation and urban waste water treatment, as well as ensuring fulfilment of standards and protection of the aquatic environment and public health. The subgroup was led by the Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure and consisted of the Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, the Rural Development and Water Administration, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Development, Tourism, Trade and Entrepreneurship and the Ministry of European Integration. The Chair of the subgroup was a high-level official and its members were mid-level officials.

At the request of the Chair, meetings of the subgroup were open to representatives of other institutions of central and local government, business, civil society and academia, and took place at least twice a month.

#### Why is it a good practice?

The formalization of institutional arrangements was considered good practice as it facilitated effective intersectoral coordination, in particular by involving a high-level management structure responsible for preparation, implementation, monitoring and integrated regulation of policies in the water sector.

This group also facilitated coordinated action with regard to Protocol implementation and provided a forum for the regular exchange of information.

#### Overcoming challenges

The baseline analysis undertaken by the thematic group “Water for people” identified several challenges including lack of capacity to comply with the current regulatory framework approximated to EU legislation. In addition, overlap of responsibilities between different institutions responsible for water management required clarification of these responsibilities. Other challenges included low capacity at local level, lack of an integrated monitoring system to provide a baseline and limited financial capacity.

The above challenges are now being addressed by a joint action plan prepared by the subgroup “Water for people” under the coordination of the group on Integrated Management of Water Policy.



**Success factors and lessons learned**

- Establishment and implementation of the institutional arrangement ran smoothly thanks to the high priority the Albanian Government accorded to the water sector.
- The process of approximation to the EU *acquis communautaire* provided synergies with the target-setting process.
- Political will triggered the formalization of interministerial cooperation and resulted in the involvement of all responsible ministries, including at high level.
- Engagement with other central and local government institutions, as well as private actors and civil society, proved to be useful.
- The baseline analysis of the water and health situation carried out during the target-setting process highlighted challenges.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Formalize cooperation between responsible ministries and other stakeholders in the water sector. The involvement of all relevant stakeholders ensures a strong response and accountability during implementation.
- Where an appropriate mechanism already exists, make use of it instead of creating a new mechanism specifically for the target-setting process.
- Establish coordination mechanisms at local level and take into consideration:
  - the delegation of competencies from central to local government on water and sanitation;
  - the juridical status of water supply and sewerage utilities and their accountability to the local government;
  - opportunities for bringing services closer to communities.
- Such mechanisms could serve to realistically develop and efficiently implement local plans on water and sanitation.

**Box 9****Opportunities and challenges of broad stakeholder involvement: Ukraine****Case summary**

Ukraine has been a Party to the Protocol on Water and Health since 2003. According to the order of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "On implementation of the Action Plan for implementation of the Law on Ratification of Protocol" the Ministry of Environmental Protection is appointed as the central executive body responsible for controlling implementation of the Action Plan, and serves as the focal point for communicating with the joint secretariat.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection established a project steering committee on Protocol implementation consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Environmental Protection (Chair), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Communal Services, the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministries, the State Water Committee and the State group on policy analyses and development on water management issues.

A project working group was also established comprising the above authorities and supplemented with members from the State Fishery Committee, the State Geological Service, Ecological Inspection, NGOs, professional associations and academia.

In light of the complexity of the target-setting process, Ukraine requested assistance from the Project Facilitation Mechanism<sup>3</sup> and signed an agreement with the Government of Norway. The Ministry of Environmental Protection nominated national consultants to the project, while the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed Norwegian consultants. The consultants constituted the drafting group for setting targets.

<sup>3</sup> This mechanism was established under the Protocol to support Parties and other States from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in their efforts to implement the Protocol. The mechanism fulfilled its mandate and was discontinued in 2013.

The project steering committee also included a team of observers with representatives from the Project Facilitation Mechanism and the Norwegian government.

#### **Why is it a good practice?**

A large number of stakeholders were involved in the target-setting process through a three-tiered structure comprising the drafting group, stakeholder group and a higher-level project steering committee. Successful teamwork contributed to achieving good results within a short time frame.

#### **Overcoming challenges**

Limited financial and human capacity within the lead ministry was compensated for by financial and human support provided by the international donor.

Political and administrative changes in the middle of the target-setting process provoked changes in the composition of the stakeholder group and the steering committee, which caused a substantial delay in the process. The working group remained operational, however, which enabled successful completion of the process.

The participation of stakeholders other than those in the stakeholder group proved challenging. However, the involvement of an umbrella NGO (MAMA 86) contributed to improving targets through extensive public consultations.

#### **Success factors and lessons learned**

- Consultations among stakeholders during the target-setting process not only contributed to constructive target design, but also facilitated the formal adoption of targets and their implementation.
- External financial and human resources provided by an international donor helped the Ministry of Environmental Protection overcome lack of human capacity.
- Involvement of an umbrella NGO facilitated the reception of feedback from the general public.

#### **How to replicate this practice**

- The drafting and stakeholder group(s) should represent all relevant stakeholders including NGOs.
- Sharing experiences and financial assistance from other countries contributes to faster and more efficient progress.

#### **Box 10**

#### **Starting target setting with formal collaboration: Serbia**

##### **Case summary**

The Republic of Serbia became a Party to the Protocol in 2013. The target-setting process commenced shortly thereafter with an interministerial agreement signed between the ministries responsible for health, environmental protection and water management. The agreement resulted in the establishment of a national working group led by the Ministry of Health. By following the step-by-step approach recommended in the Target-Setting Guidelines, Serbia was able to set targets within two years of becoming a Party, as required under article 6 of the Protocol.

##### **Why is it a good practice?**

Serbia followed the steps of the target-setting process as recommended in the Target-Setting Guidelines, starting with the establishment of good and efficient coordination mechanisms and intersectoral collaboration. The Guidelines thus proved invaluable, enabling the Member State complete the target-setting process efficiently and within a relatively short time frame.

##### **Overcoming challenges**

The lack of awareness and involvement of higher management in concerned ministries was addressed through a national workshop, supported by UNECE and WHO/Europe. This workshop gathered together high-level officials from both responsible ministries and clarified their respective roles in the implementation

process. As a result, the ministries were willing to accept their duties and tasks and promote the process at local levels to ensure cooperation with local agencies, institutions and NGOs. Regular meetings of the national working group enabled timely identification of challenges in order to avoid or minimize their potential impact.

#### **Success factors and lessons learned**

- An efficient coordination mechanism for target setting and carrying out the baseline analysis was established soon after ratification of the Protocol, and led by the Ministry of Health.
- Good and effective intersectoral cooperation between different institutions at the national level ensured efficient joint action.
- Regular meetings of the national working group resulted in the assignment of clear and concrete tasks to each member of the team with clearly specified time frames.
- The national working group members were highly dedicated to their work.
- Effective time management resulted in the setting of national targets and target dates within two years of Serbia becoming a Party to the Protocol.

#### **How to replicate this practice**

- Establish an intersectoral working group to secure efficient collection of data for the baseline analysis by coordinating responsible institutions and experts.
- Share experiences and lessons learned on the target-setting process and implementation of the Protocol at national and international workshops, as these can serve as guidance and stimuli for other countries with similar institutional set-ups.
- Advocate the use of good practices and lessons learned from national experiences, as these can be of great support to (neighbouring) countries with similar conditions and challenges.

#### **Box 11**

#### **Formal definition of roles and responsibilities secures the involvement of national stakeholders: Belarus**

##### **Case summary**

In Belarus, a Presidential Decree appointed the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environmental Protection as the ministries responsible for implementation of the Protocol.

An interministerial council for implementation of the Protocol was appointed by a decree of the Ministry of Health. The Deputy Minister of Health chaired the council while the Deputy Minister of Environment was nominated Vice-Chair. The council consisted of representatives of the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Emergency and the National Academy of Sciences, while other experts were invited to consult on specific issues.

##### **Lessons learned**

- The formal appointment by the Head of State of responsible ministries with clear mandates allowed timely completion of the target-setting process with the involvement of all relevant authorities.
- Appointment of an interministerial committee co-chaired by the deputy ministers for health and environment secured a well-coordinated operational group involving all relevant ministries and other stakeholders.



## Box 12

**Involvement of umbrella NGOs in the target-setting process: Republic of Moldova****Case summary**

In the Republic of Moldova, a Steering Committee was established to coordinate the implementation of target setting under the Protocol, supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and UNECE. The Steering Committee included representatives of the main ministries and agencies, and national and international experts, as well as national NGO representatives with voting rights. Civil society was involved in all stages of the target-setting process.

**Why is it a good practice?**

A specialized local umbrella NGO, Eco-Tiras, was involved in project implementation, both logistically and substantively, with a view to identifying national and local NGOs specialized in water and health issues and to ensure broader public participation. The target-setting process and draft targets were made available to the general public through workshops, conferences, national and local media and the Internet. Draft documents in different languages were disseminated to interested stakeholders via e-mail or during meetings.

**Overcoming challenges**

Documents developed during the target-setting process can be highly technical in nature. Accordingly, the NGO carried out substantial preparatory work to inform the public about their content and the specifics of the process in an easily understandable manner.

In addition, reviewing proposals submitted by the public in order to identify those relevant for the project proved very time-consuming.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- The coordination platform for target setting included different ministries and agencies but also engaged with NGOs, which made the process more effective.
- The involvement of NGOs in the target-setting process helped to establish two-way communication between decision makers and civil society, as NGOs usually have structures in place to promote public involvement at different levels.
- The drafting group for setting targets usually has a limited number of members and cannot accommodate many NGOs. Involving an umbrella NGO proved useful as it represented a broader group of NGOs able to involve a larger segment of the public.
- Sharing the draft targets and allowing sufficient time for feedback made it possible to obtain suggestions and comments from the public and other interested parties.
- Following an NGO initiative, a dedicated information resource centre was established to make information on Protocol implementation and water and health issues in general easily accessible to the public.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Involve civil society from the very beginning of the target-setting process.
- Involve the public on a non-discriminatory basis.
- Raise awareness and facilitate public involvement in the process.



## 4. Development of baseline analysis and prioritization of issues

### Target-Setting Guidelines

A baseline analysis should be carried out for each specific target area of paragraph 2(a) to (n) under the Protocol's article 6. Based on existing sources of information to be compiled for the purposes of the Protocol, a baseline analysis should be made that encompasses a systematic and thorough review and assessment of the legislation, policy documents, relevant activities, projects and research, data and information that describe prevailing conditions and provide expert judgments and linkages between connected areas.

Analysis of data on the water, sanitation and health situation should help to identify specific problematic areas that require focus and attention. A preliminary assessment of key issues and problems should be made for each specific target area, based on the results of the baseline analysis.

### Lessons learned and good practices

- It is recommended to commence development of the baseline analysis as soon as possible following ratification, to allow targets to be set and published within two years of becoming a Party. It may also be useful to commence the baseline analysis in parallel with the accession process.
- The relevant experts should define the scope of the baseline analysis at the outset, so as to ensure an emphasis on key water, sanitation and health issues. A good understanding of the issues and formulation of a preliminary vision for possible future targets will help direct the baseline analysis. For example, agreement on clear criteria for prioritization will help to better handle and systematize information gathered in the baseline analysis.
- Data for baseline reports may originate from a variety of sources including: statistical data (e.g. results of Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) or Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)), results of national GLAAS<sup>4</sup> surveys, the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) or other reports to WHO and the EU. It is important to ensure the quality of data included in the baseline report.
- In some cases, highly aggregated data (e.g. national averages) can camouflage specific problems, including those linked to local issues. It is therefore important to examine disaggregated data and/or rely on expert knowledge from sub-national and local levels, so as to better understand prevailing differences at the country level (e.g. rural vs. urban areas, households vs. institutions, etc.).
- Absence of consolidated data and evidence in an area should not prevent the setting of targets. Gathering basic evidence on an issue, for instance through a targeted rapid assessment, can become an integral part of the baseline analysis. Expert judgment can also provide initial direction. In addition, filling specific data gaps and/or strengthening national monitoring capacity can become a target in its own right.
- Developing a comprehensive baseline analysis for all 20 target areas may be demanding. Complementary data collection tools or existing baselines developed in other contexts can be valuable sources of information and support the exercise. For example, participation in the GLAAS comprehensive analysis of strengths and challenges in water, sanitation and hygiene has proven a useful tool to supplement baseline analysis and target setting under the Protocol. GLAAS helps countries to systematically analyse the enabling environment as well as inputs for the water and sanitation sector at national level, including the delivery and effectiveness of sanitation and drinking water services, and to address government plans, policies and laws, institutional arrangements and investments in terms of financial and human resources.
- For EU Member States, information gathered under the relevant EU Directives (e.g. on drinking water, bathing water and urban wastewater) can constitute a good foundation for baseline analyses required by the Protocol. A comprehensive baseline could be further complemented with information on target areas under the Protocol that are not explicitly addressed by the EU *acquis communautaire*.
- The baseline analysis is a key tool for promoting discussion of the targets and should be widely disseminated among stakeholders and published on the national website for the Protocol.
- It is useful to involve sub-national and local actors in the development of the baseline analysis.

<sup>4</sup> The UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS).



## Box 13

**Baseline analysis benefitting from GLAAS: Serbia****Case summary**

The national working group established in Serbia for the target-setting process conducted a baseline analysis as the first technical step in systematically reviewing the legal framework (national and international) and the water, sanitation and health situation in Serbia. The analysis benefited from Serbia's participation in the GLAAS reporting cycle for 2014 and the complementary data gathered through this exercise. The baseline analysis was published as an electronic publication with a view to disseminating and communicating its results to the general public.

**Why is it a good practice?**

The establishment of good and efficient coordination mechanisms and intersectoral collaboration played an important role in the development of the baseline analysis.

The development of the baseline analysis proved to be a good tool for assessing the water, environment and health situation in the country. The analysis also proved essential when prioritizing areas for setting targets.

The development of the baseline analysis was initiated promptly after ratification of the Protocol, in order to meet the two-year deadline for setting national targets.

The GLAAS process was undertaken in parallel with development of the baseline analysis and enabled the national working group to identify drivers and bottlenecks, knowledge gaps, strengths and weaknesses, challenges and priorities.

**Overcoming challenges**

Data gaps and the poor quality of data constituted significant challenges. Recognition of this problem led to the formulation of targets to address this situation. These included the rapid assessment of drinking water quality in rural areas, assessment of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools, and improvements to data collection methodology for WASH in schools.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- Data collected through the GLAAS process complemented and facilitated development of the baseline analysis under the Protocol.
- Publication of the baseline analysis ensured outreach to relevant stakeholders and the general public.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Ensure efficient collection of data for the baseline analysis through existing mechanisms such as GLAAS and supplement this data with inputs from a broader range of stakeholders.
- Publish the outcomes of the baseline analysis to raise awareness at the national level.

## Box 14

**Baseline analysis and prioritization of targets: Belarus****Case summary**

The baseline analysis was initiated and coordinated by the interministerial council appointed by the Minister of Health (see Box 11). The analysis was based on information gathered from relevant stakeholders including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Ministry of Housing, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Emergency, Ministry of Sport and Tourism, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Energy, the National Statistical Committee, local authorities (Oblast/provincial level), academic institutions and others. All stakeholders provided their overview of the situation, identified their challenges and needs, and proposed future actions.

The analysis also took into account previous studies including reviews of the water sector (2010, 2012), reports on implementation of the State Programme on Clean Water and the baseline analysis carried out for the development of the Water Strategy, along with a number of international reviews.

The draft baseline analysis was discussed at three meetings of the interministerial council and ultimately adopted as a basis for the development and prioritization of targets. Prioritization was carried out by the interministerial council, with the involvement of research institutions and several other stakeholders, in line with criteria such as the consequences of prevailing problems in the water sector for health, achievement of the MDGs, ongoing state programmes in the water sector, and the potential for implementation within the planned time frame taking into consideration financial and human resources, especially for short-term targets.

The entire target-setting process took about two years and the targets were officially adopted in 2013.

### **Why is it a good practice?**

Targets under the Protocol should address a country's needs and priorities. A substantiated and well-grounded baseline analysis and a clear prioritization process are crucial steps in the target-setting process. Data collected from a broad range of stakeholders and other sources allowed reliable and comprehensive information to be obtained.

Setting clear criteria for prioritization and accurately assessing existing realistic financial, technical and resource capabilities enabled the development of country-specific priority targets.

### **Overcoming challenges**

Identifying and prioritizing health-related needs and issues from the significant volume of data on the water sector proved a challenge. It was necessary to develop clear criteria for prioritization and apply these in practice.

The involvement of a broad range of stakeholders including professionals with experience in risk assessment and developing national water strategies, state programmes, and other national and local plans of actions, proved invaluable in improving communication and understanding of the target-setting process.

In addition, the exchange of experience with other countries, directly or through sub-regional workshops, was particularly helpful in ensuring an efficient and timely target-setting process.

### **Success factors and lessons learned**

- Close cooperation between the interministerial council and the broader stakeholders group enabled the collection of reliable information for the development of an accurate baseline analysis.
- The use of existing resources including previous water sector reviews and reports on the implementation of relevant state programmes permitted the effective development of a baseline analysis and the identification of targets to follow up on actions initiated and identified as necessary in the water sector.
- Setting clear criteria for prioritization was essential to the process.
- Consideration of the experience of other countries resulted in a more efficient target-setting process, and minimized challenges and possible delays.

### **How to replicate this practice**

- Ensure that stakeholders engaged in the initial baseline analysis are involved in the target-setting process.
- Benefit from the use of all existing data sources, both national and international.
- Allow sufficient time for the preparation of the baseline analysis.
- Set clear criteria for the prioritization of targets.





## 5. Definition of draft targets

### Protocol text

Article 6, paragraph 2:

*For these purposes, the Parties shall each establish and publish national and/or local targets for the standards and levels of performance that need to be achieved or maintained for a high level of protection against water-related disease. [...]*

*Except where national or local circumstances make them irrelevant for preventing, controlling and reducing water-related disease, the targets shall cover, inter alia:*

- (a) The quality of the drinking water supplied, taking into account the Guidelines for drinking-water quality of the World Health Organization;*
- (b) The reduction of the scale of outbreaks and incidents of water-related disease;*
- (c) The area of territory, or the population sizes or proportions, which should be served by collective systems for the supply of drinking water or where the supply of drinking water by other means should be improved;*
- (d) The area of territory, or the population sizes or proportions, which should be served by collective systems of sanitation or where sanitation by other means should be improved;*
- (e) The levels of performance to be achieved by such collective systems and by such other means of water supply and sanitation respectively;*
- (f) The application of recognized good practice to the management of water supply and sanitation, including the protection of waters used as sources for drinking water;*
- (g) The occurrence of discharges of:*
  - (i) Untreated waste water; and*
  - (ii) Untreated storm water overflows from waste-water collection systems to waters within the scope of this Protocol;*
- (h) The quality of discharges of waste water from waste-water treatment installations to waters within the scope of this Protocol;*
- (i) The disposal or reuse of sewage sludge from collective systems of sanitation or other sanitation installations and the quality of waste water used for irrigation purposes, taking into account the Guidelines for the safe use of waste water and excreta in agriculture and aquaculture of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme;*
- (j) The quality of waters which are used as sources for drinking water, which are generally used for bathing or which are used for aquaculture or for the production or harvesting of shellfish;*
- (k) The application of recognized good practice to the management of enclosed waters generally available for bathing;*
- (l) The identification and remediation of particularly contaminated sites which adversely affect waters within the scope of this Protocol or are likely to do so and which thus threaten to give rise to water-related disease;*
- (m) The effectiveness of systems for the management, development, protection and use of water resources, including the application of recognized good practice to the control of pollution from sources of all kinds;*
- (n) The frequency of the publication of information on the quality of the drinking water supplied and of other waters relevant to the targets in this paragraph in the intervals between the publication of information under article 7, paragraph 2.*

### Target-Setting Guidelines

The Protocol requires Parties to establish and publish national and/or local targets for the standards and levels of performance that need to be achieved or maintained for a high level of protection of human health and well-being, as well as for the sustainable management of water resources. Paragraph 2 (a) to (n) of article 6 of the Protocol identifies, inter alia, the general areas within which countries are required to set targets.

Targets, as commitments made to achieve a specific level of protection of human health and water resources, quality or service, should be understood in a very broad sense and not necessarily as quantifiable parameters only. For assessing progress and reporting purposes, reliable and valid quantitative and/or qualitative indicators need to be identified to measure progress towards targets.

For EU countries, several targets set may be closely related to existing EU requirements. Targets established under the Protocol can support and complement implementation of EU Directives in different ways by:

(a) Improving compliance. In a case where a Party faces compliance problems regarding specific obligations under the EU *acquis communautaire*, by setting targets it can develop a strategy to progressively improve such compliance;

(b) Complementing obligations of EU Directives. Parties may establish either more detailed or specific targets that go beyond current requirements of EU legislation or additional targets in areas that are currently not covered by EU legislation and which nevertheless are needed to address national problems.

### Lessons learned and good practices

- The Protocol covers the whole water cycle. For this reason, Parties are required to address all target areas under article 6. Hence, it is advisable to ensure that all stakeholders involved in the target-setting process understand this requirement.
- Setting targets in all areas identified by the Protocol can prove to be a challenge. It is therefore important to conduct a baseline analysis covering all areas, and to use the results as the basis for identifying areas in which one or more targets should be set in a particular country.
- Achieving larger targets requires a longer-term process. Accordingly, when prioritizing issues it is important to differentiate between what is achievable over the short, medium and long term, and follow an incremental approach that considers the available capacity and resources.
- Ensure that targets are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).
- Work carried out under the Protocol in the following areas can help inform the definition of specific targets: surveillance of water-related diseases, risk-based drinking water quality monitoring, small-scale systems, equitable access, safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems, and institutional water, sanitation and hygiene (e.g. in schools and health care facilities).

### 5.1 Examples of targets in target areas required under article 6 of the Protocol

This section illustrates a variety of ways to cover target areas under article 6.2 (a) to (n) and provides examples of targets set in different countries.

#### Target-Setting Guidelines

The Guidelines provide detailed guidance on how to decide upon specific targets in the different areas of article 6, paragraphs 2 (a) to (n) and how to choose relevant, target-specific indicators to measure progress towards such targets. They also provide indications on issues related to the baseline analysis, the identification of problems and the prioritization on the basis of which targets and target dates are set in the different areas.

The Guidelines also provide for each thematic area a non-exhaustive list of issues to be considered for the process of target setting, which should serve as a starting point for a self-assessment. Parties will need to look at the proposed lists from their specific perspective and may need to address additional issues depending on their own needs and situations. The process of target setting shall be accompanied by the identification of suitable target-related indicators to measure progress, which might be of a quantitative or a qualitative nature.

Parties and other States have set a variety of targets under the Protocol in all target areas under article 6 of the Protocol. Table 1 provides examples of existing targets defined by different countries along with potential targets that could be set. It also indicates the relevance of a particular target to the water, sanitation and health targets under the SDGs.

Table 1

**An overview of examples of targets and their relevance to the SDGs**

Target area and target example	SDGs
<b>I. QUALITY OF THE DRINKING WATER SUPPLIED (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (a))</b>	
Reduce non-compliance of drinking water quality according to national standards by xx% by 20xx.	6.1
Improve collection and publication of drinking water quality monitoring data through development of an electronic information system.	6.1
Develop water safety plans for settlements by 20xx in x major cities, and by 20xx in xx rural communities.	6.1
Develop plans for the improvement of microbiological and chemical quality of drinking water in rural areas.	6.1
Develop and establish a national programme to improve drinking water quality by 20xx.	6.1
Adopt national legislation on health and safety for drinking water quality by 20xx.	6.1
<b>II. REDUCTION OF THE SCALE OF OUTBREAKS AND INCIDENTS OF WATER-RELATED DISEASE (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (b))</b>	
xx% reduction in the occurrence of water-borne diseases compared to 20xx by 20xx: (i) typhoid fever; (ii) bacillary dysentery; (iii) viral hepatitis; (iv) diarrheal diseases; and (v) parasitic diseases.	6.2, 3.2, 3.3, 3.9
Improve methodology for epidemiological investigation and assessment of water-borne outbreaks.	3.3, 3.9
Provide the latest equipment to laboratories for testing the safety and quality of drinking water.	3.3, 3.9
Regularly publish (once every five years) an overview of detected water-related epidemics, including identified causes, etc.	3.3, 3.9
<b>III. ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (c))</b>	
Improve access to drinking water in urban areas to 97% and in rural areas to 74% by 2020.	6.1
Increase access to improved water supply sources for children in schools and pre-school institutions.	6.1, 4.a, 11.1
Upgrade private water supply systems with unclear ownership/unsatisfactory water quality and security or connect to existing water supply systems.	1.4, 6.1, 11.1
Map access to safe drinking water including underserved groups.	1.4, 6.1, 11.1
By 20xx, ensure equal access to safe drinking water for children, pregnant and feeding women, and elderly persons.	1.4, 4.a, 11.1
Secure 100% access to safe water for all educational, medical and social facilities.	4.a, 6.1, 3.8, 11.1
Improve the WASH survey in schools by introducing new methodologies.	4.a, 6.1
<b>IV. ACCESS TO SANITATION (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (d))</b>	
Increase the percentage of connections to centralized sewerage systems in rural areas.	1.4, 6.2, 6.3
Improve sanitation in educational facilities through the construction of new sanitation systems including Ecosan toilets: xx by 20xx, and a further xx by 20xx.	4.a, 6.2, 6.3
Map access to adequate sanitation including underserved groups.	1.4, 6.2, 11.1
Complete the construction of wastewater treatment plants and sewers for public use according to EU Directives.	6.3
Raise awareness among teachers, school staff and pupils of the importance of hygiene of sanitation facilities in school.	4.7, 4.a, 6.2
Ensure, by 20xx, the development and implementation of technical regulations governing the construction and operation of improved treatment facilities, including small sanitation systems.	6.3
Improve the WASH survey in schools by introducing new methodologies.	4.a, 6.2
Develop water and sanitation safety plans (WSSP).	6.1, 6.2, 6.3
<b>V. LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE OF COLLECTIVE SYSTEMS AND OTHER SYSTEMS FOR WATER SUPPLY (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (e))</b>	
Implement Water Safety Plans in plants serving 5 000 residents or more.	6.1, 6.4
Reduce leakages from the water distribution network to less than xx% by 20xx.	6.3, 6.4
Ensure non-planned interruptions in the water supply are below 0.5 hours on average per inhabitant per year.	6.1, 6.4



<b>VI. LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE OF COLLECTIVE SYSTEMS AND OTHER SYSTEMS FOR SANITATION (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (e) (continued))</b>	
Increase the level of the population connected to centralized and local sewerage systems to xx% for urban populations, and xx% for rural populations.	6.3
Ensure wastewater treatment levels are as stated in the permits issued by the water boards.	6.3
Increase the efficiency of treatment plants.	6.3
<b>VII. APPLICATION OF RECOGNIZED GOOD PRACTICES TO THE MANAGEMENT OF WATER SUPPLY (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (f))</b>	
Increase the number of water utilities with Technical Safety Management confirmation and ensure compliance with the requisite technical standards.	6.1
Develop legislation for the implementation of Water Safety Plans in all water supply systems.	6.1
Establish and ensure the operation of regional associations of enterprises for collective and other systems of water supply and sanitation.	6.1 6.2
<b>VIII. APPLICATION OF RECOGNIZED GOOD PRACTICES TO THE MANAGEMENT OF SANITATION (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (f) (cont.))</b>	
Complete the construction of wastewater treatment plants and sewers for public use.	6.3
Ensure that all sewerage works that serve 50 persons/person equivalents or more have a satisfactory internal control system including a risk and vulnerability analysis covering the effects of climate change.	6.3, 11.5
Reduce by xx% nutrient inputs causing eutrophication.	3.9, 6.3
Reduce by xx% the release of harmful substances.	3.9, 6.3, 12.4
<b>IX. OCCURRENCE OF DISCHARGES OF UNTREATED WASTEWATER (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (g) (i))</b>	
Reduce the amount of wastewater discharge and mining, quarry and drainage water without treatment: xx% intermediate target by 20xx, xx% final target by 20xx; or inadequate treatment: xx% intermediate target by 20xx, xx% final target by 20xx.	6.3
Reduce discharges of untreated wastewater in xx city to at least xx% by 20xx, and to xx% by 20xx (compared to 20xx).	6.3
<b>X. OCCURRENCE OF DISCHARGES OF UNTREATED STORM WATER OVERFLOWS FROM WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEMS TO WATERS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE PROTOCOL (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (g) (ii))</b>	
Support the neutralization of storm water overflows by direct harmless infiltration or runoff via settling ponds.	6.3
Build installations for the treatment of storm water currently discharged into natural water bodies.	6.3
Ensure that leaks and discharges from overflows do not come into conflict with user interests such as drinking water, agricultural irrigation and bathing.	6.3
<b>XI. QUALITY OF DISCHARGES OF WASTEWATER FROM WASTEWATER TREATMENT INSTALLATIONS TO WATERS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE PROTOCOL (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (h))</b>	
Develop and establish standards for the quality of effluents from treatment plants discharged into open water bodies, and related procedures by 20xx.	6.3
Decrease the discharge of pollutants into water bodies (compared to 20xx): persistent organic pollutants xx%; nitrogen xx%; and phosphorus x%.	6.3
Ensure that discharges from the municipal sewerage sector are in accordance with requirements set in the Pollution Regulations or individual permits.	6.3
Increase the efficiency of sewage by constructing new, modernized treatment plants: intermediate target by 20xx: construct xx units and xx modernized units; final target by 20xx: construct xx units and xx modernized units.	6.3
<b>XII. DISPOSAL OR REUSE OF SEWAGE SLUDGE FROM COLLECTIVE SYSTEMS OF SANITATION OR OTHER SANITATION INSTALLATIONS (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (i), first part)</b>	
Harmonize national legislation with the EU Water Framework Directive.	6.3
Update the national Sewage Sludge Ordinance.	6.3
Prohibit the discharge of sewage sludge into waters, according to Decree. Sewage sludge must be treated before placement elsewhere than in landfills, according to Decree.	6.3
Increase the safe utilization and disposal of sewage sludge by xx%.	6.3
<b>XIII. QUALITY OF WASTEWATER USED FOR IRRIGATION PURPOSES (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (i), second part)</b>	
Ensure a mechanism is in place for the reuse of sludge from treatment plants and dry Ecosan toilets in agriculture and landscape management.	12.2, 12.5
Carry out a baseline analysis on the recycling and reuse of wastewater (legislation, health and environmental impacts, etc.) by 20xx.	6.3, 6.4, 12.2, 12.5

<b>XIV. QUALITY OF WATERS WHICH ARE USED AS SOURCES FOR DRINKING WATER (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (j), first part)</b>	
Enforce the delimitation of first-level sanitary zones to protect drinking water sources: xx% by 20xx, and at least xx% by 20xx.	3.3, 3.9, 6.1
By 20xx, develop a national strategy for the protection of water resources.	3.3, 3.9, 6.1, 6.5, 6.6
Develop a manual for well owners	6.1, 6.b
Ensure that a GIS (Geographical Information System) is in place that provides information on the quality of drinking water sources.	3.3, 3.9, 6.1, 6.3, 6.5
<b>XV. QUALITY OF WATERS USED FOR BATHING (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (j), second part)</b>	
Achieve compliance of waters used for bathing with the standards of microbiological parameters in all recreational areas of national status.	3.3, 3.9
Ensure that locations adapted for bathing have excellent water quality in accordance with the EU Bathing Water Directive.	3.3, 3.9
Draw up bathing water profiles in accordance with EU Directives.	3.3, 3.9
Improve the collection of bathing water quality monitoring data through the development of an electronic information system.	3.3, 3.9
<b>XVI. QUALITY OF WATERS USED FOR AQUACULTURE OR FOR THE PRODUCTION OR HARVESTING OF SHELLFISH (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (j), third part)</b>	
Meet directives on requirements for aquaculture.	6.3
Decrease the percentage of non-compliance with physical, chemical and biological standards of water samples from ponds used for aquaculture.	6.3
Achieve compliance with EU WFD protection measure targets on fisheries. Initiate investigation on surface waters. Implement protection plans by 20xx.	6.3
<b>XVII. APPLICATION OF RECOGNIZED GOOD PRACTICE TO THE MANAGEMENT OF ENCLOSED WATERS GENERALLY AVAILABLE FOR BATHING (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (k))</b>	
Draw up and issue a handbook on good operational practice for artificial bathing waters.	6.3
Update the technical regulations on swimming pool waters.	6.3
Achieve quality standards for enclosed waters generally used for bathing.	6.3, 3.3, 3.9
Develop a best practice guide in accordance with the rulebook on bathing water quality.	6.3
<b>XVIII. IDENTIFICATION AND REMEDIATION OF PARTICULARLY CONTAMINATED SITES (ART. 6, PARA. 2(l))</b>	
Make a thorough inventory of contaminated sites with preliminary assessments of possible health and environmental risks. Use this assessment for future risks analyses and assessments of the ensuing need for decontamination, along with an economic evaluation of such an intervention.	12.4
Identify and establish a registry of contaminated sites that adversely affect waters within the scope of this Protocol.	12.4
Conduct a risk assessment of contaminated sites that threaten bodies of water covered by the protocol and treat/improve if necessary.	6.3, 12.4
Plan and implement measures to reduce pollution of water from contaminated sites.	6.3, 12.4
Strengthen appropriate legislation on waste reuse, recycling and safe disposal.	12.4
Ensure compliance with the Basel and Rotterdam Conventions.	12.4
<b>XIX. EFFECTIVENESS OF SYSTEMS FOR THE MANAGEMENT, DEVELOPMENT, PROTECTION AND USE OF WATER RESOURCES (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (m))</b>	
Develop River Basin Management Plans that includes health aspects.	6.5
Develop a strategy for managing the quality of water resources by 20xx.	6.3, 6.5, 6.6
Develop GIS databases for RBMPs with pollution sources, water abstraction sites, etc.	6.3, 6.4, 6.5
Meet the requirements for achieving "good status" for all waters, as set out in the EU Directive.	6.3, 6.5, 6.6
<b>XX. FREQUENCY OF PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON THE QUALITY OF DRINKING WATER SUPPLIED AND ON OTHER WATERS RELEVANT TO THE PROTOCOL (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (n))</b>	
Publish regular reports and consumer information on drinking water quality.	6.1, 6.b
Establish a Clearing House under the Protocol on Water and Health by 2016.	6.1, 6.b
Publish data on drinking water quality on the Food Safety Authority website and on municipality websites.	6.1, 6.b
Develop public awareness campaigns on water issues.	6.1, 6.b







## 6. Financial and economic matters related to the setting of targets

### Target-Setting Guidelines

Each set of targets needs to be linked to a clearly defined set of concrete measures. Such measures will be effective only when resources, including financial aspects, are addressed during the process. While it may not be necessary or possible to undertake comprehensive cost-benefit analysis for all the possible targets under discussion, some sort of assessment of benefits in combination with the costs may be of help in getting political and financial support for actions. The process could be supported by appropriate political and financial strategies, which could help:

- (a) To assess total investment needs of target setting;
- (b) To identify investment needs for short to medium-term targets;
- (c) To identify policies and measures which are necessary to finance the achievement of the targets;
- (d) To support claims of relevant ministries responsible for municipal services on the public budget;
- (e) To prepare and make the case for external funding requests;
- (f) To improve accountability;
- (g) To improve monitoring.

Parties should also collect information on possible funding instruments.

### Lessons learned and good practices

- Consideration of financial implications is crucial to the smooth running of the target-setting process, especially in the initial stages (e.g. establishing a working group and undertaking a baseline analysis).
- Identifying the concrete measures necessary to achieve targets requires estimates of resource requirements and therefore contributes to setting more realistic targets and efficient implementation.
- A cost-benefit analysis for each target may prove challenging and may not be relevant in all cases. However, an assessment of benefits in combination with an estimation of costs will help to obtain political and financial support for measures and also help prioritize targets and target dates.
- Allocating funding for the implementation of measures is crucial. Aligning targets and pre-existing strategies with previously allocated budgets is an efficient means to achieve the set targets.
- Lack of secure funding should not limit the target-setting process. Established targets can act as a tool to attract additional funding at both national and international levels.

#### Box 15

#### **Obtaining cost estimates for target setting from professional organizations: Norway**

##### **Case summary**

While estimating the costs of potential national targets under the Protocol, the Norwegian Food Safety Authority and Environment Agency, which was tasked with formulating the targets, discovered that the costs related to the renewal of old infrastructures for drinking water and sewage – one of the most relevant targets for Norway – presented a significant economic challenge.

Two existing analyses were used as a basis for justifying the need to set such a target, as well as for estimating the costs of measures to ensure its achievement. The Association of Consulting Engineers, the Norwegian member to the International Federation of Chartered Engineers, published a survey on the status of public infrastructure in Norway, which pointed to water and sanitation as two areas where standards are poor due to aging pipes with worsening conditions over time. Norwegian Water, an association representing Norway's water industry, estimated that over NOK 200 billion (about EUR 21 billion) needed to be invested in maintenance up to 2030, with another NOK 300 billion required for new infrastructure related to water and wastewater.

The above reports, in addition to the findings from inspection data from the Norwegian Food Safety Authority, were chosen as baseline data to estimate the needs and costs of potential national targets related to maintenance. The data and recommendations from the sources described were found to be reliable, and a new cost-benefit analysis was found to be unnecessary.

Regarding implementation of the target on the renewal of old infrastructure for drinking water and sewage, all necessary costs and investments were to be paid by the consumer through Norwegian municipal taxes or directly to the service providers. 90% of the population receives water from service provider companies owned by the municipality. The consumer cannot be charged more than the cost to run the service as all public systems operate under a set of laws that adhere to a “full cost recovery” principle. As a result, only comparatively limited funds could be allocated for the implementation of this target. These funds were earmarked for the activities of governmental bodies (e.g. the National Institute of Public Health) including legislation revision, awareness raising, managing internal control systems and so on.

### **Why is it a good practice?**

The decision to build on analyses and estimates published by non-governmental professional organizations resulted in acceptance of the identified challenges and of the measures and associated costs necessary to implement the target. The costs mentioned in the Norwegian national targets were therefore estimated by the sector itself.

By building on available reliable estimates the government saved time and financial resources. A dedicated cost-benefit analysis or analysis of cost estimates would have taken considerably longer and likely delayed target setting and the implementation of measures by several years.

### **Overcoming challenges**

Convincing the Norwegian Ministry of Local Government and Modernization represented a challenge. The Ministry feared that the economic burden would prove too great for municipalities, especially smaller ones, as owners of water and sanitation infrastructure. As a compromise, it was agreed that the action plan would be formulated in consultation with other relevant ministries prior to implementation of the targets. A consultation was held in 2015, where agreement was finally reached and the action plan was accepted.

### **Success factors and lessons learned**

- Partnering with professional, reputable organizations led to a more effective and efficient process and made the recommendations more acceptable.
- The “already-in-place” cost recovery principle enabled the government to agree on and approve the targets. Reaching political agreement would have proved challenging had the state been solely responsible for the costs, due to the high amounts involved.

### **How to replicate this practice**

- Examine relevant existing and reliable reports and studies that can help to estimate the costs (and benefits) of targets.
- Identify methods and systems that will allow the implementation of costly measures to be spread over longer periods of time and across larger groups of the population.

## 7. Public involvement in the process of setting targets

### Protocol text

Article 6, paragraph 5(b):

[...]In doing all this, they [the Parties] shall make appropriate practical and/or other provisions for public participation, within a transparent and fair framework, and shall ensure that due account is taken of the outcome of the public participation. [...]

### Target-Setting Guidelines

Public participation will enhance the social acceptance of the targets, contribute to a relevant and realistic outcome of the target-setting process and ensure that there are partners, such as NGOs, for the implementation of the programme of measures. The proposed targets, target dates and relevant programme of measures should be disseminated as much as possible to the broader public, relevant professional communities and other stakeholders. Consultation with the public should be organized to present and discuss the draft targets and programme of measures. The opinions of the public and stakeholders should not only be consulted, but also taken into account in the elaboration of the documents and further elaboration/revision of the targets and programme of measures. The availability of resources — be they related to finances, time, capacity, social traditions, information and/or creativity — can be a limiting factor. However, limits to effective participation processes should not be an excuse for avoiding participation.

### Lessons learned and good practices

- Public participation in the target-setting process is often achieved through the involvement of NGOs. They play an important supporting role in the process including by disseminating information through their networks and organizing stakeholder meetings at different stages of the target-setting process.
- The formal participation of NGOs as members of the intersectoral mechanism helps to secure their continuous involvement, including at the implementation stage.
- Dissemination of information related to the various stages of the target-setting and implementation process, through different channels such as media and information centres, facilitates public involvement and results in stronger ownership and support from the public.
- The active involvement of professional associations may contribute significantly to the formulation, acceptance and implementation of targets.
- National and sub-national authorities should also be involved in the public participation processes to ensure synergies.

#### Box 16

#### **The important role of umbrella NGOs in securing broader public participation: Ukraine**

##### **Case summary**

The target-setting process in Ukraine was carried out with the support of the joint Ukrainian-Norwegian project on national target setting, initiated through the Project Facilitation Mechanism. A project working group including representatives of different ministries and state agencies, NGOs, research and river basin organizations was established to support and review project implementation. Once set, the draft national targets were opened for public review by the relevant stakeholders.

Public participation in the review process was coordinated by MAMA-86, a Ukrainian national environmental NGO. The process included over two months of decentralized public consultations in different regions and a two-day public hearing. The draft targets were actively distributed to NGOs and stakeholders at sub-regional and local levels via e-mail and post, as well as during relevant events on the Protocol on Water and Health.



As a result of these consultations, MAMA-86 collected 23 written submissions with numerous comments, which were conveyed to the team responsible for drafting the targets. The submissions were also presented at the meeting of the Steering Committee of the National Policy Dialogue in Ukraine and at two meetings of the national working group on Protocol Implementation. The role played by MAMA-86 in channelling public feedback to the national working group contributed to improving the draft targets on access to water and sanitation in schools, water quality and water-related diseases.

### **Why is it a good practice?**

Ensuring broad public participation is a challenge in a relatively large country with several geographical administrative areas and a large number of NGOs operating at national and local level. The public consultation process cannot be limited to publication of the draft targets in newspapers and on websites. However, organizing an effective public consultation process may prove challenging for state authorities. Delegating organization of the public consultation to a recognized and experienced umbrella NGO such as MAMA-86, with its broad network and long experience of environmental issues, proved successful. While only limited funds were available for the process, MAMA-86 facilitated financing of relevant activities through its existing international NGO networks.

### **Overcoming challenges**

A key challenge was lack of understanding and acceptance of the need for public participation, due to the perception that the process must be planned and organized by the competent authorities.

Ukraine's substantial land size required advance planning to adequately involve the public, identify stakeholders and discuss how to involve them in the process.

Involving an external stakeholder proved useful, particularly as the Ministry underwent administrative reforms during the target-setting process. It was therefore important to maintain good communication and relations with all involved parties throughout the working period.

As a member of the project working group, MAMA-86 was well informed of the time schedule for the consultation on target setting and was able to mobilize its resources on time. MAMA-86 also has long-term partnerships with international NGOs (Women for Water Partnership and Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council) who financially supported the public participation work. MAMA-86 was able to involve stakeholders and NGO representatives from different regions and cities/rural areas of Ukraine through its network members and branches by organizing regional and local events to discuss water and health-related issues within the scope of the Protocol.

### **Success factors and lessons learned**

- The umbrella NGO's experience and knowledge of public participation mechanisms and procedures, as well as its capacity to organize public participation processes, was crucial to their success.
- The willingness of government stakeholders to accept inputs from the public consultation was also essential to the process.
- The success of the consultation process owed much to the NGO's capacity to secure financial resources for public participation through alternative financing methods.

### **How to replicate this practice**

- Seek the involvement and support of NGOs with coordinating abilities or other stakeholders who have the capacity and competence to organize and facilitate the public participation process.
- Allocate dedicated and adequate resources for the public participation process. In resource-constrained situations, endeavour to identify alternative financing sources.
- Recognize the need for building the capacity of public participation mechanisms and take measures to develop such capacities among the responsible authorities and NGOs.

## Box 17

**Using ongoing consultation processes on water and health issues to facilitate public involvement: Romania****Case summary**

The group responsible for drafting the targets identified raising awareness among stakeholders – including the public at a local level – as a key challenge. As several draft targets set under the Protocol overlapped in scope with the requirements of EU Directives, and the target-setting period also partly overlapped with other public consultations (e.g. on the EU Water Framework Directive, river basin management plans and the strategy on sewage sludge from wastewater treatment plants), a decision was taken to disseminate information on these processes together.

Two broad consultative processes included discussion of the Protocol's targets on their agendas and consultation meetings on river basin management plans (which include targets required under the Protocol) were held to inform stakeholders about water issues at local and county/basin level. In parallel, the National Administration "Apele Române" organized public meetings at the national level focusing on specific target groups of stakeholders to share knowledge about specific issues in water management, water resource and water quality protection.

The National Administration "Apele Române" also published an online questionnaire to gather public feedback; however, this received only a limited response likely due to limited public involvement in the preliminary consultation processes on water, health and environment issues.

The draft targets were also published on the official website of the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, and on the website of the National Administration "Apele Române"<sup>5</sup> and its branches.

Following completion of the target-setting process the two ministries responsible for the Protocol continued their efforts to increase public awareness of the targets.

**Why is it a good practice?**

Involving two organizations in the public consultation processes helped to reach a broader group of stakeholders.

Combining consultations on the targets with other relevant processes resulted in more efficient use of resources, helped to prevent consultation fatigue, and allowed interconnected issues and proposed actions to be presented together.

The consultation processes enabled the public to reach a better understanding of the problems involved and also helped to identify other issues. The collaboration and participation of all stakeholders (e.g. administration, water users, NGOs and general public) at all levels was key for developing projects, activities, and measures for water and sanitation infrastructure.

**Overcoming challenges**

The public was provided with numerous ways to become involved and comment through established channels even if ultimately the feedback received was limited.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- The process was facilitated by the use of ongoing consultations within existing consultative bodies, for example, on water management (River Basin Committees).
- Planning for public participation started early because of the lengthy time required to set up the process.
- Coordination of public participation by national authorities was necessary including at local and county level.
- Collaboration with the Romanian Water Association representing water utilities provided added value due to their extensive technical expertise in the field of water supply and sanitation.

<sup>5</sup> Apele Române – National Administration Romanian Waters

**How to replicate this practice**

- Maintain regular contact between decision-makers and key stakeholders, such as professional associations and NGOs, as this allows for an efficient consultation process.
- Adjust the composition of consultative groups to match specific issues identified at national, local and river basin level.
- Arrange regular meetings with the general public to promote the active and open participation of the communities concerned.

**Box 18****An experienced NGO takes the lead in facilitating the involvement of NGOs and civil society in public consultations: Armenia****Case summary**

In Armenia, several legal instruments highlight the role of the public. For example, the 2002 Water Code includes provisions on access to information and public participation in the decision-making process, and the 2003 Law on Freedom of Information ensures access to information and public awareness about services provided to the public, including water supply services.

During the target-setting process an experienced NGO, Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment (AWHHE), coordinated the involvement of a number of relevant NGOs throughout the public consultation on national targets. AWWHE organized a regional workshop in November 2012 to raise awareness of the Protocol and strengthen the role of civil society organizations in its promotion and implementation. The workshop took place prior to the first Steering Committee meeting of the Armenian National Policy Dialogue (NPD), to increase awareness and provide an opportunity for the public to express their concerns directly to the responsible authorities. Participants from Georgia also shared their views and experiences. Three follow-up stakeholder consultation meetings organized by AWWHE gave representatives of different NGOs an opportunity to propose inputs to the NPD Steering Committee and working group meetings through the coordinating NGO, which acts as a member of the Steering Committee.

**Why is it a good practice?**

Public involvement and follow-up at the regional level focused on the situation of water and sanitation in rural areas and on solutions for local problems, such as decentralized approaches (e.g. ECOSAN toilets, septic tanks or other technologies). A number of NGOs made concrete recommendations for prioritizing national targets, based on local issues and priorities. These were conveyed by AWWHE which took the lead in promoting and coordinating action by civil society.

**Overcoming challenges**

Awareness of the Protocol and the draft targets was quite limited among NGOs and the general public. Involving these stakeholders through consultative meetings was therefore a necessary step and proved successful. Public participation and access to information impacted the quality of decisions and also resulted in efficient dissemination of updates to the public regarding the status of the process. In addition, the meetings provided the public with an opportunity to express any concerns to the relevant authorities.

The need for financial and human resources should not be underestimated. Supplementary external funds raised via the FinWaterWeii<sup>6</sup> programme played a critical role in facilitating effective public participation in the process.

<sup>6</sup> FinWaterWeii is the programme for Finland's water sector support to the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia under the Wider Europe Initiative. See [www.environment.fi/default.asp?contentid=405313&lan=EN](http://www.environment.fi/default.asp?contentid=405313&lan=EN).



**Success factors and lessons learned**

- NGO consultations triggered interest in the Protocol and its application to the NGO community.
- Providing adequate opportunities to relevant NGOs and communities to voice their concerns and priorities, and to convey their comments and suggestions to the Steering Committee, proved very useful.
- The coordination mechanism supported by AWHHE facilitated the inputs of NGOs to the working group in a coherent manner throughout the target-setting process.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Identify an NGO with experience and competence to mobilize and coordinate the involvement of other relevant NGOs.
- Establish whether NGOs are capable of raising funds for public consultations, in addition to funds allocated by the national government.

**Box 19****Facilitation of public consultation through Aarhus centres and Regional Development Agencies: Serbia****Case summary**

Promotion of the Protocol at local level was recognized as a useful tool to facilitate accession and subsequently implementation. Accordingly, the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection signed an agreement with six Aarhus centres,<sup>7</sup> established in Serbia (Belgrade, Nis, Novi Sad, Subotica, Kragujevac and Novi Pazar), to make available the necessary stimulus, tools, information and assistance for effective awareness-raising campaigns.

Public awareness campaigns were organized during pre-and post-accession stages.

Partnership with Aarhus centres and Regional Development Agencies led to the organization of national workshops to which local authorities and the public were invited. Awareness-raising campaigns on water-related topics were launched in Aarhus centres with the participation of media representatives and stakeholders, including NGOs and youth representatives. All activities were announced on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection. These workshops secured the support of local stakeholders in setting national targets and building cross-sectoral cooperation between different institutions at the national and local level. They also resulted in a stronger understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders under the Protocol.

In parallel with these workshops and awareness-raising campaigns, WHO-Europe provided support to the ministries of health and the environment to develop a sustainable framework for intersectoral and multi-stakeholder cooperation, with a view to addressing key environmental and health issues. To this end, three regional promotional workshops were carried out in Central and East Serbia in November 2015, to promote small-scale water supplies and WASH in schools in accordance with Regional Priority Goal 1 on children health.

**Why is it a good practice?**

The use of Aarhus centres and Regional Development Agencies resulted in productive public awareness campaigns presented in the form of local workshops. These provided an opportunity for interactive discussion between different groups, authorities and stakeholders, which facilitated the setting of national targets.

The involvement of stakeholders at consultations led to improvement in the planning of measures to achieve targets. They also enhanced cross-sectoral cooperation between different institutions at the national and local level.

<sup>7</sup> The Aarhus Convention establishes a number of public rights with regard to the environment including: access to environmental information and public participation in environmental decision-making. Aarhus centres support implementation of the Convention and provide members of the public with practical resources to exercise their environmental rights.

**Overcoming challenges**

The main barriers were lack of awareness of public rights and the obligations of local/regional authorities in this regard, as well as an absence of national legal frameworks to enable cross-sectoral cooperation. A number of possible solutions to these challenges were proposed at the workshops.

Lack of financial, time and human resources as well as institutional changes following elections proved particularly challenging. The lack of human capacity was overcome by the creation of a coordination mechanism, the National Working Group, which brought together representatives of sectors involved in different aspects of the process (e.g. designing presentations and media campaigns, etc.).

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- The use of a participatory approach to raise awareness of the Protocol was a prerequisite for ensuring effective public participation in the target-setting process.
- This approach led to better acceptance of the definition and adoption of targets and measures by the general public, as well as of the implementation and evaluation of progress.
- NGOs played an important linking role ensuring good communication between the authorities and the general public.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Use Aarhus centres or other similar environmental information centres to host the public participation process.
- Share experiences and lessons learned from public participation processes at national and international workshops, to serve as a guide and stimulus for other countries with similar institutional set-ups.



## 8. Official adoption of the targets set

### Protocol text

Article 6, paragraph 3:

*Within two years of becoming a Party, each Party shall establish and publish targets referred to in paragraph 2 of this article, and target dates for achieving them.*

### Target-Setting Guidelines

The final, agreed targets and target dates should be endorsed at the appropriate political level (e.g. council of ministers or Parliament, depending on the national situation).

### Lessons learned and good practices

- Official approval, endorsement or adoption of targets at the appropriate political level is key to securing their effective implementation. Successful examples of official adoption include a joint order/decreed issued by the Ministry of Water or the Ministry of the Environment and Health, or a decision by the Cabinet of Ministers and Parliament.
- While one ministry usually assumes the leading role during the official adoption process, an interministerial consultation is an important step in confirming the commitment of other ministries and agencies to future implementation of targets.
- Targets and target dates can be adopted as part of a national programme or strategy dealing with water and health issues.

Table 2

### Examples of official adoption of targets

Country	Modality of official adoption
Norway	Decision of the Government
Republic of Belarus	Order of the Ministry of Health, signed by the Minister of Health
Republic of Moldova	Joint order of the Ministers of Health and Environment, signed by the two Ministers
Ukraine	Order of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
Romania	Joint Note signed by the Secretaries of State from the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, and the Ministry of Health

### Box 20

#### Challenges of adopting targets in a federal State: Switzerland

##### Case summary

In June 2007, the Swiss Parliament ratified the Protocol with a large majority, thereby committing to set national targets in all areas covered by article 6 of the Protocol within two years. The setting of targets was discussed mainly within a core team composed of representatives of the Federal Office for the Environment and the Federal Office of Public Health. A baseline analysis was performed and specific needs were identified. A summarized table including draft targets and a three-year action plan was developed with corresponding responsibilities, based on the findings of the baseline analysis. The approval of the drafted targets and action plan by the Federal authorities requires the involvement of the decentralized Cantonal authorities, which will be responsible for implementation. Accordingly, the targets were drafted in line with Cantonal needs. The target approval process has since been delayed pending confirmation of the acceptance of draft targets from all relevant stakeholders, in particular the Cantonal authorities, despite the availability of a detailed, structured explanatory document on draft targets.



**Why is it a good practice?**

To present the issues and involve the Cantonal authorities, the relevant Federal Offices produced a document linking the needs, short and long-term targets, actions and responsible stakeholders. The document provided detailed and reasonably justified targets and supporting information.

**Overcoming challenges**

Currently, the main challenge is to convince the Cantonal authorities of the importance and feasibility of implementing the targets set and the availability of funding, and to raise awareness about the legal obligations of Switzerland as Party to the Protocol. The implementing authorities do not seem to fully agree with the justifications supplied for the targets and the realities of the financing. Due to the involvement of a high number of administrative stakeholders and the challenges described above, the official adoption process has not yet concluded.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- While the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels is critically important, having too many stakeholders may also lead to disagreements and delays.
- The target-setting process can become a tool for enhanced intersectoral collaboration and for raising political and administrative awareness.
- Setting targets that take into account needs and short and long-term objectives at national and local level provides a good basis for stakeholder ownership.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Involve the necessary stakeholders at all levels in the target-setting process (e.g. Federal and Cantonal levels in Switzerland).
- Secure support from key stakeholders at national and local levels.
- Consider the specifics of the national decision-making processes, as these can vary significantly among countries.



## 9. Publication and promotion of targets

### Protocol text

*Article 10, paragraphs 1-3:*

*1. As a complement to the requirements of this Protocol for Parties to publish specific information or documents, each Party shall take steps within the framework of its legislation to make available to the public such information as is held by public authorities and is reasonably needed to inform public discussion of:*

*(a) The establishment of targets and of target dates for their achievement and the development of water-management plans in accordance with article 6;*

*(b) The establishment, improvement or maintenance of surveillance and early-warning systems and contingency plans in accordance with article 8;*

*(c) The promotion of public awareness, education, training, research, development and information in accordance with article 9.*

*2. Each Party shall ensure that public authorities, in response to a request for other information relevant to the implementation of this Protocol, make such information available within a reasonable time to the public, within the framework of national legislation.*

*3. The Parties shall ensure that information referred to in article 7, paragraph 4 [on the assessment of progress towards the targets set], and paragraph 1 of this article shall be available to the public at all reasonable times for inspection free of charge, and shall provide members of the public with reasonable facilities for obtaining from the Parties, on payment of reasonable charges, copies of such information.*

### Target-Setting Guidelines

The agreed targets, target dates and programme of work must be published and brought to the attention of all stakeholders, at the national, provincial and local levels, as well as to the population. For this purpose, the Internet, relevant newspapers or television and other media should be used. Relevant local and national organizations can also play an important role in disseminating and publicising targets, target dates and monitoring programmes.

### Lessons learned and good practices

- The publication of targets through formal channels such as ministry websites, national bulletins, etc., should be complemented by broader and more active publication and promotion of the targets through the Internet, the media and other available means to make them accessible to different professional groups and civil society.
- Once the targets are set, they should be communicated to the joint secretariat for publication on the Protocol website. This is an important step in ensuring their availability to the Protocol's bodies and the international community.
- Preparation of a reader-friendly version of the targets, which also describes the process, can play a useful role in their promotion and in sharing experiences at local, national, regional and international levels.
- Awareness-raising campaigns should be carried out under the lead of the responsible authorities. However, NGOs can play an important role in supporting the practical organization of campaigns.
- Publication of the targets and other relevant information should be actively communicated within relevant governmental institutions through appropriate communication channels.
- The establishment of dedicated clearing houses (resource centres) or the use of existing mechanisms, such as Aarhus centres, for disseminating information can play an important role in promoting the targets.

## Box 21

**The involvement of state stakeholders and NGOs in promoting the Protocol: Armenia****Case summary**

Having developing its targets, Armenia published a report entitled *Setting Targets and Targets Dates under the Protocol on Water and Health in the Republic of Armenia*. The report, available in three languages (Armenian, English and Russian), was distributed among key stakeholders and presented the current situation and issues to be dealt with under the Protocol. It also described the target-setting process and the targets themselves including target dates and measures proposed to improve the efficiency of water management and achieve safe drinking water and adequate sanitation.

Additional promotion brochures were printed and made available online in Armenian and English for broader circulation. One stakeholder actively involved in developing these materials was the Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment (AWHHE). Promotion materials were disseminated during Steering Committee meetings and at various events organized at national and international level. In addition, copies were sent to Armenian Aarhus centres for dissemination at local level.

The promotion materials proved useful in raising awareness among stakeholders including state authorities at national and local level, water utilities and sanitation facilities operators, as well as the general public. Copies were also distributed during international meetings organized within the framework of the Protocol.

**Overcoming challenges**

The development of promotion materials required a significant outlay in terms of resources. These were provided by FinWaterWei.

While both the public and the international community appreciated the promotional materials, their wider use by State stakeholders was proscribed by limited availability, with the materials only available from Protocol and AWHHE websites.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- The promotional materials proved of great interest to local, national and international communities.
- The expertise provided by different stakeholders helped to enhance the quality of the materials.
- Close cooperation was maintained with Armenian Aarhus centres to disseminate the publication and leaflets.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Enhance their quality of promotional materials by securing support from different stakeholders.
- Ensure that both NGOs and governmental authorities are involved in this process.
- Make promotion materials available online via national and international websites, as well as through Aarhus centres, so as to secure broader access by the international community.



## 10. Developing programmes of measures and action plans to implement the targets set

### Target-Setting Guidelines

Together with the targets set, a proposed monitoring programme to attain the targets in the agreed time frame should be defined and agreed upon. This programme should contain a clear time plan and political, administrative, behavioural and infrastructural indicators, based on the target set, a clear distribution of responsibilities and a financial strategy. Existing projects, strategies and other activities should be taken into account. Implementation should start as soon as possible after the targets are agreed, and should be regularly evaluated. A programme committee can be established to this end, which can meet once or twice a year to review the progress made and to adjust the monitoring programme if needed.

### Lessons learned and good practices

- Target setting and the development of measures and action plans should be an integrated process, designed to establish a realistic and achievable set of targets.
- When developing a programme of measures or an action plan, it may be useful to expand the composition of the coordination committee or working group in charge of setting targets to include additional members with specific expertise, in particular those who will be ultimately responsible for implementing some of the targets.
- Relevant stakeholders such as water operators, local authorities and civil society should be involved in the preparation and implementation of programmes of measures and action plans, in order to secure their support during the implementation stage.
- When the target implementation process is expected to be long, programmes of measures or action plans should integrate intermediate stages or phases to allow for progressive step-by-step financing. Indicators should also be able to monitor the different stages in order to measure progress.
- A programme of measures or an action plan provides more information and operational detail than the targets themselves, and can therefore be a helpful instrument in prioritizing. The action plan also enables the identification of clear and time-bound responsibilities.
- To ensure their financial viability, programmes of measures and action plans should include financial and resource mobilization strategies including the national budget allocation, specific funds and possible contributions from donors, etc.
- Programmes of measures and action plans should be more flexible than the targets, so as to ensure they can adapt to changing conditions and financing (e.g. the yearly budget).
- Programmes of measures and action plans that are adopted at an appropriate political level ensure commitment and the availability of resources for implementation.
- Targets can be met without specifically developed programmes of measures and action plans under the following circumstances: when they concern the implementation of legal obligations (e.g. EU Directives or water safety plans), when they are included in national strategic programmes (e.g. remediation of contaminated sites), or when they relate to information coordination and dissemination (e.g. water quality information systems).

## Box 22

**From setting national targets to developing an action plan for implementation: Republic of Moldova****Case summary**

Moldova formally adopted national targets under the Protocol in 2010 by a joint order of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environment. The adopted document contained the targets set, target dates and the responsible institutions.

A number of implementation reviews carried out after approval of the targets highlighted the need to develop an action plan to stimulate and facilitate progress towards fulfilment. Accordingly, a memorandum of understanding was co-signed by the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Health of the Republic of Moldova, UNECE and SDC.

To ensure effective implementation, it was agreed that the action plan would be approved at the highest political level and be adopted as part of a national programme in the form of a legislative document. The process of developing the National Programme took over three years (2012-2016).

The final National Programme is a complex and comprehensive document and includes the revised national targets and target dates, a concise action plan defining specific activities to be carried out to achieve the targets, and a financial strategy to mobilize resources for implementation. It contains measures including the modernization and reconstruction of water treatment plants in six cities, the installation of filtration systems in 300 schools, and the consolidation and maintenance of 10 regional laboratories among others. The Government of the Republic of Moldova officially approved the document in July 2016.

Implementation of the National Programme is due to be carried out in two phases:

- Phase 1 (2016-2020): will focus on developing the regulatory framework, reforming operational management of water and sanitation systems while empowering operators to implement infrastructure projects, building the capacity of all partners involved in the achievement of targets, and strengthening capacities to monitor water quality and health protection in relation to water quality and sanitation;
- Phase 2 (2021-2025): will focus on implementing concrete infrastructure measures to achieve the targets set.

**Why is it a good practice?**

The review of progress made in implementing the targets and reporting under the Protocol revealed a need to elaborate a more concrete and well-defined action plan to ensure efficient achievement of the targets. The responsible institutions decided that the action plan should include concrete measures, allocate responsibilities and estimate costs for achieving those measures, and establish procedures for monitoring progress and evaluation. The institutions responsible for developing the action plan and the individual experts were the same as those initially involved in the target setting, which proved highly beneficial for the process.

**Overcoming challenges**

The Republic of Moldova was one of the first Parties to the Protocol to develop a comprehensive action plan to implement the targets. Accordingly, the lack of relevant expertise and capacity of national authorities was a particular challenge. Efforts to allocate funding for the development of the action plan also proved problematic. Solutions to these challenges were offered by the UNECE-SDC project, which provided international expertise and supported the work of the dedicated national experts.

Political instability was another major challenge during elaboration of the action plan. However, despite frequent changes in government which delayed official adoption of the action plan, development continued to build on earlier commitments made at the government level. Focal points from national authorities as well as other key technical experts remained involved in the development of the plan and also ensured high-level political support for the development and approval of the action plan.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- Progress reviews on target implementation and reporting exercises under the Protocol revealed shortcomings.

- Estimating the cost of measures proved helpful in revising and defining more realistic targets and target dates.
- Lack of funding for implementing measures need not necessarily be an obstacle to defining measures, as having a concrete action plan proved useful in attracting donor support for certain measures.

#### **How to replicate this in practice?**

- If possible, ensure that the experts initially involved in the target-setting process are also responsible for the development of the action plan.
- Ensure that all institutions ultimately responsible for implementing the measures are involved in the elaboration of the action plan or are regularly consulted during the process.
- Estimate the costs of measures, as this information will be necessary to set and revise realistic targets and target dates.
- Remember that prioritizing measures can be achieved by phasing their implementation.
- Ensure that approval of the action plan is made at the highest possible political level.
- Make sure that the action plan is officially adopted, as this can attract additional funding for the implementation of specific measures.

#### **Box 23**

#### **Developing a dynamic action plan to implement the targets: Norway**

##### **Case summary**

Having set national targets on water and health, the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services, as lead ministry for Protocol implementation, developed an action plan to achieve them. The action plan was designed to be a dynamic document subject to yearly reviews to ensure that the most efficient measures were taken to reach the targets.

The measures in question are limited to the responsibilities of the Norwegian Food Safety Authority and the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, which were delegated executive authority as subsidiary bodies under the Ministry. In addition, the plan covers optional measures to be carried out by Norwegian Water, the national association representing Norway's water industry. Ministries with adjacent responsibilities were also consulted during development of the action plan.

##### **Why is it a good practice?**

While the Norwegian targets are set at a general level, the action plan describes a flexible system with specific and realistic measures to be achieved within a shorter time frame, easing the review and evaluation of progress. The action plan also defines the concrete responsibilities of the different authorities concerned, waterworks and other bodies, which ultimately increases commitment and a sense of ownership.

##### **Overcoming challenges**

The main challenge was to make the action plan concise, specific and realistic with regard to its content and time frame. The preparations began with the development of a framework detailing all potential measures for each target. However, this approach made it difficult to focus on a limited number of concrete and realistic measures. The final action plan was structured around six thematic lines: empowerment, information, organizing and competence, knowledge and research, international cooperation and documentation.

##### **Success factors and lessons learned**

- An action plan with short-term and realistic deadlines facilitated agreement among stakeholders and contributed to effective implementation.
- Regular monitoring of progress and review of measures contained in the action plan enabled dynamic and realistic achievement of targets.

### **How to replicate this practice**

- Make the plan short and simple with a focus on the main challenges.
- Set realistic and short deadlines as these make progress more visible.
- Pursue continuous progress to avoid having to restart the process.
- Evaluate the action plan regularly and adjust when necessary, such as when new funding becomes available or new knowledge gaps are identified.





## 11. Increasing political awareness, communication and promotion

### Target-Setting Guidelines

Parties should ensure that data on their progress towards the achievement of set targets is commonly available and presented in readable, user-friendly and easily transferable formats. Practical arrangements for making the information accessible should be made. These can include:

- (a) Publicly accessible websites;
- (b) Publicly accessible lists, registers or files available at no charge;
- (c) Active information and support to the public in seeking information (e.g. via newspapers or radio);
- (d) Provision of points of contact (e.g. via newspapers or radio);
- (e) Creation of a clearing house on the Protocol

### Lessons learned and good practices

- Raising awareness among politicians about the Protocol is crucial to ensure the requisite political will for its implementation.
- Horizontal information channels within and between State bodies responsible for implementation of the Protocol are important.
- Raising awareness among relevant sectors and stakeholders at the regional or local level (e.g. through holding dedicated workshops and awareness campaigns) increases their commitment and facilitates their contributions to the implementation process.
- Widespread publication of information on the achievement of targets and their revision is highly recommended (e.g. through government and public websites, clearing houses or resource centres, Aarhus centres, etc.).
- National summary reports prepared every three years under the Protocol are a good tool for promotion and engaging the public, particularly if they contain success stories on implementation of the targets.

#### Box 24

#### Role of NGOs in promoting the targets set: Republic of Moldova

##### Case summary

Once targets have been set and the action plan for their implementation has been developed, it is important to inform stakeholders about the next steps. In the Republic of Moldova, an umbrella NGO, Eco-Tiras, was well positioned to organize promotional activities as a result of its previous involvement in all stages of the target-setting process.

Eco-Tiras, with support from Switzerland and UNECE, took the lead in publishing and distributing information materials, organizing awareness-raising campaigns and promoting the targets set on TV and in the press. In particular, the NGO produced a booklet describing the target-setting process, the targets set and the associated indicators in an understandable and reader-friendly manner. The publication was made available in three languages (English, Romanian and Russian) to reach different population groups, as well as donors and the international community. The booklet was widely distributed both in print and via the Internet.

Eco-Tiras also promoted the establishment of an information centre (Clearing House), which was set up under the auspices of the Moldovan National Centre for Public Health. In addition to disseminating information about the implementation of the Protocol in the Republic of Moldova, the Clearing House provides data on drinking water quality and access to improved water supply systems and sanitation. It also organizes training sessions for water professionals, holds meetings for local authorities and civil society, and conducts awareness-raising campaigns for the general public on issues related to water, sanitation and health.

**Why is it a good practice?**

Publishing and distributing information materials and organizing targeted awareness-raising campaigns facilitated the contributions of relevant stakeholders and the general public, thereby providing civil society with an opportunity to hold national and local authorities accountable for implementation of the targets.

Involving an experienced NGO as the lead entity for promotion activities facilitated the work of the national authorities and helped to reach a wider public at national and local level.

**Overcoming challenges**

Awareness of the Protocol at local level within local authorities and civil society needed to be enhanced. This was significant because of the particular importance accorded to implementation of the national targets at local level. A dedicated and committed NGO was therefore responsible for continuous activities aimed at keeping civil society and the general public informed.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- The involvement of NGOs in awareness raising and promotion of national targets set and their implementation increased the effectiveness of these efforts and contributed to positive perceptions of proposed implementation measures among the population.
- Openness and flexibility among decision makers led to meaningful and useful public participation processes.
- The establishment of an information centre facilitated access to information among the general public.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Ensure that public participation continues after targets are set by keeping the public informed and involving them during the implementation stage.
- Involve the public in implementation on a non-discriminatory basis (i.e. ensuring their right to voice their concerns and influence the process, as appropriate).
- Ensure that efforts to raise public awareness about issues related to the Protocol on Water and Health are included within the national targets.



## 12. Review and assessment of progress and reporting

### Protocol text

Article 7, paragraphs 1 to 6:

1. The Parties shall each collect and evaluate data on:

(a) Their progress towards the achievement of the targets referred to in article 6, paragraph 2;

(b) Indicators that are designed to show how far that progress has contributed towards preventing, controlling or reducing water-related disease.

2. The Parties shall each publish periodically the results of this collection and evaluation of data. The frequency of such publications shall be established by the Meeting of the Parties.

3. The Parties shall each ensure that the results of water and effluent sampling carried out for the purpose of this collection of data are available to the public.

4. On the basis of this collection and evaluation of data, each Party shall review periodically the progress made in achieving the targets referred to in article 6, paragraph 2, and publish an assessment of that progress. The frequency of such reviews shall be established by the Meeting of the Parties. Without prejudice to the possibility of more frequent reviews under article 6, paragraph 2, reviews under this paragraph shall include a review of the targets referred to in article 6, paragraph 2, with a view to improving the targets in the light of scientific and technical knowledge.

5. Each Party shall provide to the secretariat referred to in article 17, for circulation to the other Parties, a summary report of the data collected and evaluated and the assessment of the progress achieved. Such reports shall be in accordance with guidelines established by the Meeting of the Parties.

These guidelines shall provide that the Parties can use for this purpose reports covering the relevant information produced for other international forums.

6. The Meeting of the Parties shall evaluate progress in implementing this Protocol on the basis of such summary reports.

### Target-Setting Guidelines

The review of progress should include a review of the targets set, with a view to improving them in light of scientific and technical knowledge. It is therefore necessary to establish feedback mechanisms linked to the evaluation of progress, involving reporting and follow-up procedures, and including informal mechanisms such as networking, which allows for the dissemination of ideas and information.

Parties should strive to present information on environment, water and health in a holistic and integrated manner rather than as a collection of single parameter indicators.

It is recommended that the coordination mechanism responsible for target setting be involved in the data collection, assessing and reporting under the Protocol. This will enable examination of the needs and possibilities to revise the targets according to recent knowledge and requirements.

The following aspects should be taken into account in the process of preparation of the national reports:

(a) While relevant ministries are usually responsible for the preparation of the national implementation reports, these reports are submitted to the Meeting of the Parties in the name of the Government of a particular Party;

(b) Taking into account the wide spectrum of issues to be covered in the report and various respective responsibilities, it seems advisable that a national inter-ministerial consultation process on the report should take place at various stages of the preparatory process;

(c) The inter-ministerial consultations provide an opportunity for environment and health ministries to engage other relevant ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Finance, Development or Natural Resources), agencies and authorities at various levels of government in a discussion on the implementation of the Protocol. It can therefore be useful to identify, in advance of the consultation phase, a list of the various agencies and authorities that can contribute to the preparation process;

(d) Parties are also encouraged to consider the participation of all relevant stakeholders in the preparation and use of summary reports, including NGOs, civil society, local communities, business and the media, and therefore to organize a broader consultation on the draft report;

(e) Reports should be submitted to the joint secretariat so as to arrive no later than 210 days before the meeting of the Parties for which they are submitted;

(f) If the Parties wish to ensure a meaningful consultation process and the timely submission of reports, they may wish to consider using the following timeline for the national report preparation process, keeping in mind that the reports should be submitted to the secretariat 210 days in advance of the meeting of the Parties:

- Preparation of the draft summary report through inter-ministerial consultations: 3 months
- Consultation on the draft summary report with the broader community: 30–60 days
- Final report preparation (including translation, where necessary): 30 days

### Lessons learned and good practices

- Although the Protocol requires Parties to review progress at least every three years by preparing a national summary report, a more frequent review based on the progress made in achieving the targets set is advisable to ensure achievement of the targets and, if needed, adjust the programme of measures for their implementation.
- While it is important to acknowledge the achievement of targets, some targets such as reducing water-related diseases or outbreaks may need to be revised to maintain a continuous focus on sustaining progress achieved to date.
- The regular reporting exercises under the Protocol represent an opportunity for Parties to review and self-evaluate their achievements. It is useful to revise current priorities and indicators according to the findings of the review.
- Preparing a good national summary report is a lengthy exercise that requires the involvement of a number of stakeholders. Therefore, detailed and advanced planning of the reporting process is key to ensuring the production of a good quality and informative report that can be submitted by the deadline.
- Securing the quality of data included in the summary report is crucial.
- Data for periodic reports might originate from various sources. For instance, data could be extracted from statistical databases, reports to GLAAS, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS),<sup>8</sup> the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP)<sup>9</sup> or other reports to WHO and EU.
- The national summary reports should focus on describing progress achieved in implementing the targets, accompanied by success stories illustrating how implementation of the Protocol contributes to improving the situation with regard to water, sanitation and health in the country.
- Public participation during the reporting process is highly recommended and plays a useful role in building and consolidating support for the Protocol's implementation.
- The involvement of NGOs and relevant local institutions in the data collection mechanism for reporting may facilitate the acquisition of data unavailable at the national level.
- Publishing and broadly disseminating the reporting results to the public is highly recommended.
- The reporting process on targets and their progress is also a useful tool for enhancing intersectoral cooperation and political awareness regarding the Protocol at the national level.

<sup>8</sup> UNICEF assists countries in collecting and analysing data through the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, an international household survey initiative designed to fill data gaps with regard to the situation of children and women.

<sup>9</sup> The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation aims to report on the status world-wide of the water supply and sanitation sector.



## Box 25

**Benefits of the annual review of progress for ownership and financial support: Republic of Moldova****Case summary**

Although the Protocol requires Parties to assess progress and report every three years, the Republic of Moldova also carried out annual reviews in the following key target areas: quality of drinking water supply, reduction in the scale of outbreaks and incidents of water-related disease, access to drinking water and access to sanitation. The results of the reviews were published in the National Annual Public Health Report.

Undertaking frequent reviews in selected target areas strengthened ownership and a sense of responsibility among stakeholders, thereby contributing to more effective implementation.

**Why is it a good practice?**

Each progress report represents an opportunity for the country to assess its achievements. Such assessment helps to review current priorities and measures implemented to date. Publication of progress reports is also important for maintaining the trend of achieved progress.

**Overcoming challenges**

Lack of capacity and financial resources within the responsible ministries made yearly reports a challenging exercise. However, showcasing the achievement of progress contributed to attracting additional donor funding for the implementation of specific measures.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- Using institutional memory to review progress and revise targets proved efficient and revived collaboration between the two key responsible ministries.
- Continuous involvement of stakeholders initially engaged in the target-setting process proved an advantage in recalling discussions and the rationales for taking decisions.
- Reviewing progress and reporting on achievements facilitated renewed financial support from donor community.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Use periodic reviews to secure the engagement of relevant stakeholders as well as support from the donor community.
- Ensure the continued involvement of stakeholders engaged in the initial target-setting process, so as to benefit from institutional memory.
- Make reports available to relevant stakeholders and the public, as this helps increase support for the implementation of targets.

## Box 26

**Reporting as a tool to raise awareness about the Protocol: Switzerland****Case summary**

In Switzerland, the Federal Office of Food Safety and Veterinary Affairs, the entity nominated as the focal point for the Protocol, coordinates the national reporting process. In addition, the Federal Office for the Environment manages several target areas stipulated under article 6 of the Protocol. These two Federal authorities prepare the draft report, which is followed by a broad consultation conducted with other relevant stakeholders. The Federal Office of Agriculture, SDC and the Cantonal enforcement authorities are key stakeholders also involved in the reporting process.

As Switzerland has a decentralized administrative system, local enforcement authorities play a vital role in collecting data on indicators that measure progress towards the targets. Other stakeholders, such as the Drinking Water Association and the Wastewater Association, have expressed an interest in participating in the reporting process, with a view to presenting their activities and showcasing their initiatives.

Switzerland has already commenced implementation of the draft targets, although these have not yet been officially approved. Accordingly, the report focuses on progress towards achievement of the set draft targets.

### **Why is it a good practice?**

The broad participatory process resulted in the collection of sufficient data to produce an accurate and up-to-date report on achievement of the targets and implementation of the Protocol.

Coordination and consultation with stakeholders renewed their commitment and involvement in the reporting exercise and resulted in valuable input and feedback.

### **Overcoming challenges**

The main challenge was to collect data for all target areas reported on from a number of stakeholders at different levels. There was a certain reluctance to share unpublished data that could be subject to interpretation and might therefore not be representative. Knowing that the national report would be widely disseminated and made available to the international community, stakeholders aimed to ensure that the information presented did not provide an incorrect or imbalanced impression of the situation. Consequently, it was important to coordinate and consult with all relevant stakeholders when collecting and interpreting data.

### **Success factors and lessons learned**

- Reporting on progress achieved proved to be a useful tool for enhancing intersectoral cooperation (including with the public) and also raised political awareness of the Protocol at the national level.
- Involving local water operators in the data collection mechanism was particularly useful for obtaining data otherwise unavailable at the national level.
- Compiling data for summary reports was a demanding and time-consuming process, which required cooperation between different stakeholders, both horizontally and vertically.
- It was necessary to start the process of report preparation at least six months before the reporting deadline to ensure timely completion.

### **How to replicate this practice**

- Plan the reporting process well ahead of the submission deadline. The entire process consisting of the following steps – establishing an intersectoral working group, securing support from relevant stakeholders for the provision of data, drafting the report, review and consultation, translation, official approval and publication – requires at least six months.
- Remember that detailed planning is a key factor in producing a good quality national report.
- Allocate sufficient time and resources for the reporting exercise and ensure the involvement of dedicated personnel.
- Use the final report to increase awareness of the Protocol at operational, administrative and political levels both at the Federal and Cantonal level.

## 13. Review and revision of targets

### Protocol text

*Article 7, paragraph 4:*

*On the basis of this collection and evaluation of data, each Party shall periodically review the progress made in achieving the targets referred to in article 6, paragraph 2, and publish an assessment of that progress. The frequency of such reviews shall be established by the Meeting of the Parties. Without prejudice to the possibility of more frequent reviews under article 6, paragraph 2, reviews under this paragraph shall include a review of the targets referred to in article 6, paragraph 2, with a view to improve the targets in light of scientific and technical knowledge.*

### Target-Setting Guidelines

Every three years, on the basis of the data collection and evaluation, Parties shall review progress towards the targets and review their targets, with a view to improve them in light of scientific and technical progress. Such reviews can also occur more frequently (e.g. every year).

### Lessons learned and good practices

- The review of targets and the preparation of national summary reports under the Protocol enables the identification of shortcomings in targets set (e.g. lack of clear indicators of achievement or excessive ambition). These lessons are key to guiding revision of the targets and the target dates.
- Most Parties defined short, medium and long-term target dates, ranging from one year to over 10 years. More frequent reviews may be needed to ensure the achievement of targets, especially for short and medium-term target dates.
- Once the review shows that a target has been achieved, it should either be deleted or revised to increase the ambition levels or establish new target dates.
- The continued involvement of stakeholders initially engaged in target setting provides an advantage in the revision process.
- While revising targets, it is important to consider areas where no targets have been set and explore the need and possibility to establish targets in these areas. This is particularly important in cases where Parties omitted certain areas during the initial target-setting process due to a lack of requisite human and financial resources.
- The varying needs and challenges in the areas of water, sanitation and health should be taken into account when revising targets. The development and adoption of new policies, plans and programmes should also influence the revision of targets.

#### Box 27

#### Combining reporting under the Protocol and target revision processes: Hungary

##### Case summary

Hungary set its national targets in 2008 prior to the publication of the Target-Setting Guidelines. The majority of targets and associated target dates were set in areas considered of national importance. However, some targets were only broadly defined and measurable indicators were not in place for all of the targets. As a consequence, it became necessary to redefine the targets in 2010, in connection with the first reporting exercise under the Protocol, and add the relevant indicators.

By the third reporting exercise (2015–2016), most target dates had expired and many of the initial targets had been achieved, which made further revision necessary. The relevant governmental and non-governmental experts were asked to identify problem areas and potential targets belonging to their area of expertise at the meeting of the Special Committee on Water and Health, which first launched the reporting process. The meeting discussed these proposals and included them in the draft targets, as appropriate.

**Why is it a good practice?**

The intersectoral coordinating body that drafted the initial targets, the Special Committee on Water and Health, was responsible for their revision. The wide area of expertise embodied by the Committee members resulted in the identification of necessary improvements in all target areas. Recently developed national strategies, such as the Second National Climate Strategy, the National Water Strategy and the Second River Basin Management Plan, were also taken into account during the target revision process.

**Overcoming challenges**

To reduce the workload of the Special Committee the revision of targets was linked to the reporting process. Efforts to evaluate and summarize progress during the reporting exercise facilitated the identification of remaining or upcoming challenges. The Target-Setting Guidelines were found to be very useful in clarifying obligations under the Protocol and in defining well-formulated targets and indicators.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- Linking the revision of targets to the reporting process streamlined the evaluation of progress and the identification of priorities for revision.
- Reporting and revision processes were coordinated by the same intersectoral panel of experts, covering all areas of expertise related to water and health.
- NGOs were also involved to obtain their critical feedback on the national summary report and the revised targets.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Tri-annual reporting enables sufficient time for an overarching evaluation of progress towards achieving the targets, but also of their feasibility and revision needs.
- The intersectoral body coordinating the implementation of the Protocol should oversee all processes related to target setting and reporting, including revision of the targets.
- The Target-Setting Guidelines provide a good basis for revising national targets.

**Box 28****Minor revision of targets with a simpler adoption process: Czech Republic****Case summary**

In the Czech Republic, national targets were set and officially adopted in 2008. They ranged from short and medium-term targets with deadlines between 2008 and 2015 to longer-term targets with more flexible timelines.

The need to revise targets became apparent during preparation of the summary report in 2010. An assessment of current progress towards achieving the targets was conducted during 2011-2012. This led to the removal of targets already achieved or where legislation guaranteed future achievement. Revision of targets was also necessary in instances where reformulation was required to improve clarity and accuracy (e.g. clearer definitions regarding shared responsibility), where there was a need to merge two closely related targets, and where postponing some target dates was necessary due to personnel or resource constraints. The task group members performed this assessment and the revised targets were approved by the involved ministries and finally adopted by the government in September 2013. While a wider audience was involved in the initial target setting, this was not the case for the revision process as no new targets were set. The overall number of targets was reduced from 35 to 23.



**Why is it a good practice?**

Parties should aim to maintain realistic and up-to-date targets and should therefore make minor revisions on a regular basis. These should not require lengthy or complicated processes as with new targets and commitments.

**Overcoming challenges**

No special challenges were experienced as only minor revisions were undertaken. As such, the process did not require lengthy consultations or approval.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- Regular evaluation of progress achieved to date helped to keep intersectoral cooperation active.
- It also maintained a focus on the Protocol at higher political levels. The Ministry of Health is obliged to inform the Czech Government once a year about the status of implementation of strategic documents in areas of public health, health protection and health promotion (including the Protocol). The task group prepares short annual reports (two to three pages) on the status of target implementation.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Follow reviews of progress achieved to date with minor revisions of targets to improve clarity, combine targets for the sake of simplicity and revise target dates in line with realistic expectations for their completion, etc.
- When target revision does not involve the creation of new targets, agreement among the relevant ministries may be sufficient to proceed with the formal adoption process, in place of a broader consultation process.

**Box 29****Challenges to the process of revising targets: Slovakia****Case summary**

Slovakia set targets in 2007, but identified a need for revision in 2014 after some targets had been implemented and new issues had been identified. The first step in the process was to organize an intersectoral meeting, which focused on Protocol activities and progress regarding implementation. Participants were informed about the main objectives of the Protocol, the programme of work and relevant activities already underway in Slovakia. The meeting reviewed current priorities, challenges and gaps in the areas of water, sanitation and health. Further meetings were held to finalize the process. Revision of the targets followed the general practice for revising national legislation with the updated targets made available to the public. The Slovak Government adopted the revised targets in July 2014.

**Why is it a good practice?**

The revision process was carried out as an intersectoral activity. As a result, implementation of the Protocol received greater attention. The targets were updated in accordance with the procedure for revising national legislation and were finally adopted at the government level.

**Overcoming challenges**

It was not always possible to consult all experts involved in the initial target-setting process. However, efforts to involve key experts from different responsible entities ensured the adoption of a sound set of revised targets.

**Success factors and lessons learned**

- Revising the targets kept attention focused on the Protocol at the highest political level.
- While the Slovak Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment was responsible for implementing the Protocol, the Public Health Authority was nominated to take a leadership role and coordinate the revision process.
- Emerging and relatively new issues related to water, sanitation and health (e.g. climate change, water scarcity and drought, new chemical substances, etc.) were taken into consideration during the revision process.

**How to replicate this practice**

- Engage experts from the responsible institutions to participate in the revision process, and make the revised targets available to the public for feedback.
- Revise the baseline analysis as part of the revision process.
- Ensure the revised targets are adopted at the highest political level.

## Collection of good practices and lessons learned on target setting and reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health

The Protocol on Water and Health provides a framework for countries to attain an adequate supply of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation for everyone, and effectively protect water used as a source of drinking water. Articles 6 and 7 of the Protocol require Parties to set targets to improve the water, sanitation and health situation in their country and to collect and evaluate data and information on their progress towards achievement of the targets.

In 2010, the *Guidelines on the Setting of Targets, Evaluation of Progress and Reporting* were published to assist Parties in addressing challenges related to setting targets and reviewing and assessing progress. While applying the Guidelines, countries accumulated ample experiences including stories and key elements that contributed to the success of the process, as well as areas where things could have been done differently. Recognizing the usefulness of this collective experience and the benefits from learning from and replicating good practices, the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting decided to prepare the present publication.

The objective of the *Collection of good practices and lessons learned on target setting and reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health* is to provide concrete advice to countries planning to embark on the process of setting, revising or implementing targets, and reporting on the progress achieved in accordance with the Protocol.

The Collection represents a compilation of success stories, challenges and diverse approaches applied by Parties and other States working within the framework of the Protocol. It aims to complement the *Guidelines on the Setting of Targets, Evaluation of Progress and Reporting* by focusing on the ways in which countries have implemented them in practice. It follows the logical framework laid out by the Guidelines for setting targets and reporting, and covers each step of the process.

More information concerning the Protocol on Water and Health and its work on target setting and reporting is available at [www.unece.org/env/water/pwh\\_work/tsr.html](http://www.unece.org/env/water/pwh_work/tsr.html)

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