Public Participation in the Implementation of European Water Management Issues

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Where is France? : in European Union
where is the Seine Normandy basin?
Seine River in PARIS
EU States (25) shall encourage the active participation of all parties concerned in the implementation of this directive,

- **States shall ensure** that river basin district management plans (production, revision, updating) are published and submitted for the observations of the public.
European Water Framework Directive (WFD)

- each of the 450 millions European citizens has the possibility to give his opinion about main water problems and prioritary actions to solve the problems,

France 2005 public consultation procedures

- **Government (Prefet)** is the Legal Authority,

- **Water Agency** is Manager and Operator,

- Targets, Schedule, and Frame of Consultation Document are precisely determined.
How do we involve wide public?

- Document **easily understandable**,  
- Information of local and national **public medias** (TV, Newspapers...), 
- **Partnership at the local level** (communes) where water problems are usually more concrete,  
- **Encourage participation of small NGOs** and unorganized stakeholders (subsidies).
How do we consult them?

With a specific **survey**: 
First results of 2005 consultation:

• **Priority to stop water pollution by toxics substances** (pesticides and heavy metals),

• **Prepare management of crisis periods** (drought and flood), with local public,

• **Develop Information and education,**

• **More transparency about price of water,**

• **Enforce “polluter, pay” principle,**

• **Solidarity with south people.**
Potential benefits of public participation

- Increasing public awareness on environmental issues,
- more transparent and creative decision making,
- constructive dialogue with various publics,
- Increasing public acceptance on water management cost.
Lessons Learned: many questions are not resolved...

– What is the best way to inform the public?
  • media national or local (TV, newspapers…),
  • internet,
  • direct mailing,
  • public debate,

– Is the wide public really concerned by all subjects of water management?.
Conclusions

The two main challenges are:

• how integrate public opinion in a River District Management Plan?

• How restitute for the wide public results of the consultation?
Thank you for your attention.

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