Fostering better governance to overcome obstacles in the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive

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8ème conférence européenne sur l’application de la Directive Cadre sur l’eau
“Governance”, a means to manage complexity in water policy-making

- Variety of **interdependent stakes** and strong **territorial characteristics**

- Plurality of **mutually “dependent” actors**
  - from a sectoral point of view
  - from an institutional point of view
  - regarding the challenges inherent to water resources and services

- Increasing mobilisation of **new actors at different levels:**
  - at local level (citizens, civil society...)
  - at international and supranational level (EU, OECD, IFI etc.)

*Water requires a variety of competencies to be produced and delivered across ministries and levels of government: need for a **whole of government approach** with policy coherence at horizontal, vertical and global levels to manage this complexity!*

*Beyond the question of “which” water policies should be designed, there is a need to think about “how” they will be implemented and “by whom”!*
Objectives

1. Identify **good governance practices** for coordinating water policy
2. Provide an **institutional mapping** of the allocation of roles/responsibilities (design, regulation, implementation)
3. Identify key **coordination/capacity “gaps”**
4. **Assess** pros and cons of **governance mechanisms** used by governments to bridge gaps.
5. Provide **policy recommendations** for sustainable governance of water policy

=> *OECD Survey across 35 countries*, including **8 from the EU**: UK, France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium and Greece. It targeted both **central administrations** and **sub-national actors** (e.g. Agence RMC in France, CH del Ebro in Spain, AATO Tuscany in Italy, Wallonia and Flemish regions in Belgium etc.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIMENSION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative gap</td>
<td>Geographical “mismatch” between hydrological and administrative boundaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information gap</td>
<td>Asymmetries of information between policy making and/or implementation authorities and between public and non-governmental actors</td>
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<td>Policy gap</td>
<td>Sectoral fragmentation of water-related tasks across ministries and agencies.</td>
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<td>Capacity gap</td>
<td>Insufficient scientific, technical, and implementation capacity on the part of local water management actors (size &amp; quality of the infrastructure and resource they must manage)</td>
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<td>Funding gap</td>
<td>Unstable or insufficient revenues undermine effective implementation of water responsibilities at subnational level</td>
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<td>Objective gap</td>
<td>Different rationalities creating obstacles for adopting convergent targets</td>
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<td>Accountability gap</td>
<td>Difficulty to ensure the transparency of practices across the different constituencies</td>
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# Water Governance Instruments

## At horizontal Level

| Ministry of water  
(Bolivia) |
|---|
| Line Ministry   
(DEFRA in the UK) |
| High Level Structure   
(CONAGUA in Mexico, EA in UK, etc.) |
| Interministerial Commissions   
(France (MISE), Chile (CIPH); Brazil  
(CNRH)) |
| Inter-agency Programmes   
(Peru (PMGRH), México (PNH), the  
Netherlands...) |
| Coordination Group of Experts   
(E.g. implementation of EU WFD etc.) |
| Multisectoral conferences   
Chile (roundtables); Mexico (CICM); |

## At Vertical Level

| Water Agency, River Basin Organisation   
France, Spain, Brazil, Peru |
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<tr>
<td>Regulations</td>
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<td>Contracts between levels of govt.</td>
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<td>Financial transfers, investment funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance indicators</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Databases   
WISE, Eurobarometer, Aquastat, National information systems etc. |
| Inter-municipal cooperation |
| Citizens’ participation |
| Private Sector Participation |
Preliminary results from OECD Survey on Water Governance
Focus on the administration, policy and capacity gaps

Final results will be published in:

OECD Synthesis Report (Q1 2011)
*Water Governance: From Principles to Implementation*
The mismatch between hydrological and administrative boundaries, the lack of synergies between policy areas at local level and the lack of appropriate scale for investment are key concerns...

**Challenges: mismatch hydrological / administrative boundaries**

**Challenges: lack of synergies at local level**

**Challenges: lack of relevant scale for investment**
Despite the existence of river basin organisations ...

.... which missions vary between OECD and LAC countries in terms of regulatory powers
Policy gap

Fragmentation of roles and responsibilities across ministries and levels of government is a key challenge for 45% of OECD and 70% of LAC and countries surveyed...

Impact of central government sectoral fragmentation

Over-fragmentation of subnational responsibilities

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Despite existing efforts to coordinate water, agriculture, spatial planning and energy policies and the adoption of coordination instruments between central and sub-national governments.
The lack of capacity of local and regional governments is a major challenge for 45% of OECD and 70% of LAC countries surveyed.

... Not only to implement decisions from central government ... 

... but also in terms of staff and time ...
All surveyed countries have capacity building mechanisms for local governments (workshops, seminars, conferences) but no systematic experimentation at territorial level.
Some observations

1. No “optimality” in water governance and regulation: need to take into account institutions, plurality of actors in design/implementation stages;

2. ... But the confrontation of “local” and “national” experiences allow to identify good practices, based on what worked and what did not

3. Public actors agree on the need for a “systemic” of water policies with other areas of public policies ...

4. ... But this does not always occur in practice, because of a series of “gaps” preventing both “horizontal” coordination across ministries, and vertical coordination between levels of government;

5. Water sector requires the combination of a territorial approach and national or supranational tools to foster coherent policies;

6. This involves evaluating the governance challenges (coordination, capacity etc.) and adopting adequate instruments to meet them;

7. No “panacea” or “on-fits-all” model => need for combination various tools according to local needs and specificities
Thank you for your attention!
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