



Water governance and ecosystem approaches: From policy to practice

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World Water Week, 26-31 August, 2018: Ecosystem
Based Water Management: From Policy to Practice
Session 3: Policy



Water crises are often governance crises

- ✓ Ecosystems based approaches and NBS require more than policy and financing
- ✓ Policies are often in place, but **implementation** is lagging
- ✓ Governance is **a means to an end**: to manage too much, too little and too polluted water

Water, a fragmented sector that is sensitive to multilevel governance

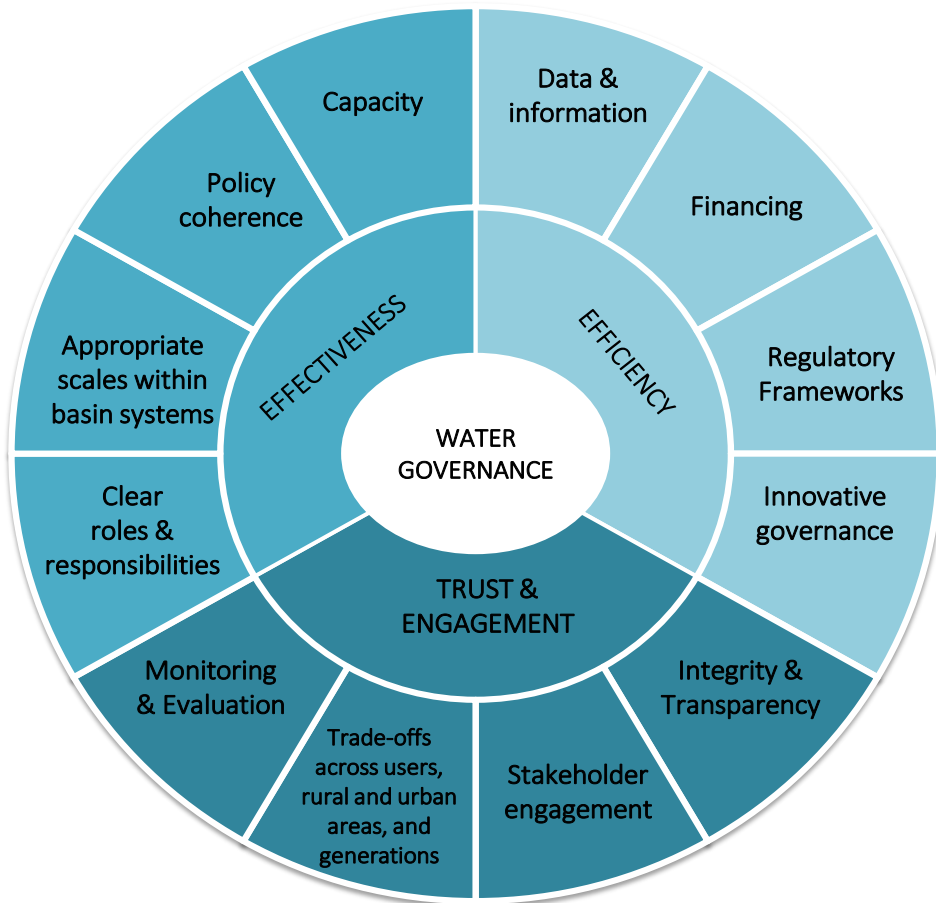
- ✓ Local and global issue, with **multiple actors** at different levels
- ✓ Capital –intensive, monopolistic tendencies, **market failures**
- ✓ **Interdependencies** across multiple stakeholders and sectors are poorly managed

No one-size-fits-all but a need to “mind” and “bridge” the gaps

- ✓ Beyond the question of **WHAT** to do to meet water challenges, there is a need to think about **WHO DOES WHAT, WHY, AT WHICH LEVEL** and **HOW!**



OECD Principles on Water Governance



- **Resulting from a multi-stakeholder process**
 - Developed through the OECD Water Governance Initiative (130+ network members)
- **Internationally recognized**
 - Endorsed by OECD member states in 2015
 - Included in the 2016 OECD Council Recommendation on Water (OECD Act)
 - Used by a range of NGOs, academics, governments to assess water governance systems
 - In their “Agenda for Water Action”, March 2018, the High level Panel on Water (HLPW) highlighted the OECD Principles on water governance and the Water Governance Initiative (WGI) as being especially valuable for states and stakeholders for implementing their recommendations



Some obstacles to ecosystem approaches



- Lack of data, information, methodology and capacity to assess social, economic and environmental benefits (harder to monetize)
- Increased level of complexity – more stakeholders working across multiple sectors across various scales (e.g. basin level)
- Institutional fragmentations
- Policy misalignments between water, environment, food production, etc.
- Different stakeholder interests and priorities: Vested interests in public and private sectors (including corruption), e.g. in considering investment options and who will get the contracts
- Complacency and lack of willingness among key decision-makers



What type of governance systems can benefit ecosystem based approaches

- Multistakeholder participation: It requires engagement of new actors and engagement strategies
- TAP approach: Make policy-making, planning and investment processes more transparent
- Coordinated and integrated approaches
- Allocation/re-allocation (environmental flows) e.g South Korea
- Environmental regulation
- Basin scale as entry point





Some pointers?

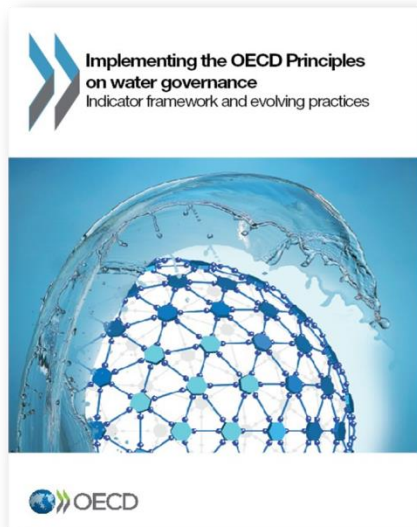


- Governance matters to ecosystem based approaches
- More policy research/analysis required on how governance can incentivize / disincentivize ecosystem approaches (for example regional cooperation between sub-national levels to cope with climate change adaptation, Source to sea perspective)
- Work towards better conceptual alignment that provides better basis for policy development and implementation alignment
- What capacities are need to advance on nature based solutions (NBS)? What governance measures can be put in place to assure that NBS is increasingly considered an investment option among others!
- The OECD Principles on Water Governance and related indicator framework provide entry-points for further analysis and stakeholder dialogue to advance on ecosystem approaches.

Question: How can current governance systems be strengthened to work towards improved environmental sustainability in parallel with social and economic development needs?



THANK YOU!



OECD Water Governance Indicator Framework:

- 36 input and process indicators within a **traffic light system**
- 100+ guiding questions within the **Checklist**
- **Action Plan**

Evolving practices on water governance:

- Around **5 continents**
- Across **water functions**
- National, regional, basin and local **scale**
- Across all types of **stakeholders** from central governments to indigenous groups



Range of water functions



At different scales



- **11 pilot test results of the water governance indicator framework**
- **50+ water governance practices**

<http://www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/oecd-principles-on-water-governance.htm>

