

Foreword

The OECD has been providing governments with policy guidance on water over the last 50 years. That guidance builds on thorough analyses of water-related challenges, reviews of policy responses and governance arrangements, and intense consultation through OECD bodies and in other fora.

The Recommendation of the OECD Council on water is a legal instrument that captures and updates the main messages that derive from such a unique experience with water policies and governance. It was co-produced as part of the OECD Horizontal Water Programme, by the Directorates for Environment, Financial and Enterprise Affairs, Public Governance, Trade and Agriculture, and the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities. This co-production reflects the cross-cutting nature of water issues and policies, the need to address trade-offs and to enhance coherence and co-ordination across policy areas and communities.

The Recommendation provides countries with a strategic approach to develop a coherent water management system that contributes to sustainable growth and development. It sets out high-level policy guidance for water resources management and the delivery of water services. It is structured in substantive sections on Water Policies, Managing Water Quantity, Improving Water Quality, Managing Water Risks and Disasters, Ensuring Good Water Governance, and Ensuring Sustainable Finance, Investment and Pricing for Water and Water Services.

The Recommendation is recognised as a source of inspiration for - national and subnational – governments, civil society and the private sector. Since its adoption, the OECD has collated good practices that can support its implementation. They are compiled in this Toolkit. The Toolkit is designed to inspire and support countries, which have either adhered to, are considering adhering to, or aim to converge towards the OECD standard.

The OECD Secretariat stands ready to work with countries, which aspire to adhere to the Recommendation. Adherence can build a momentum towards ambitious policy reforms. It can signal a political will to converge towards international good practices that support the achievement of ambitious water policy objectives.

Updates of the toolkit and guidance towards adherence to the Recommendation are available on the dedicated OECD webpage (www.oecd.org/water).

Acknowledgements

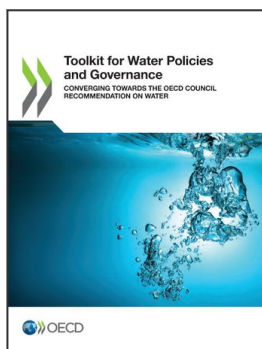
The Toolkit underwent an extensive and inclusive horizontal consultative process designed to ensure that each relevant OECD body contributes to its findings. It was developed with the active engagement and under the supervision of: the Environment Policy Committee (EPOC), the Committee for Agriculture (COAG), the Regional Development Policy Committee (RDPC) and its Water Governance Initiative (WGI), the Regulatory Policy Committee (RPC) and its Network of Economic Regulators (NER), the Public Governance Committee (PGC) and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), as well as relevant stakeholders such as Business at OECD, Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) and non-governmental environmental organisations (through the European Environmental Bureau). The delegates of these groups are gratefully acknowledged.

An Informal Water Liaison Group gathered permanent delegations to the OECD. It was brought together to discuss key milestones in the process and co-ordinate the Secretariat's interactions with experts from Adherent countries.

The process was steered by an inter-directorate working group, consisting of all members of the Secretariat of the OECD bodies, who co-produced the Toolkit. Catherine Gamper co-ordinated the whole process and Mikaela Rambali (both from the Environment Directorate) was the lead author and particularly instrumental in addressing comments received from delegates. The Toolkit was co-produced by a horizontal OECD team composed of Celine Kauffmann, Martha Baxter and Anna Pietikainen (economic regulation), Jack Radish and Charles Baubion (disasters and catastrophic risks) from the Public Governance Directorate; Guillaume Gruère and Makiko Shigemitsu (agriculture) from the Trade and Agriculture Directorate; Aziza Akhmouch and Oriana Romano (governance) from the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities; Mamiko Yokoi-Arai and Leigh Wolfrom (financial affairs) from the Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs. Section VI on Good Governance draws extensively on the 2018 report "Implementing the OECD Principles on Water Governance".

Xavier Leflaive supported the process, building on his experience with the negotiation of the Recommendation in 2016. Céline Folsché provided constructive legal advice. Brooke Demchuk helped with the dedicated survey. Ines Reale provided seamless administrative support. Anthony Cox, Deputy Director, Amy Plantin and Simon Buckle, Heads of Division, OECD Environment Directorate, ironed the final stages of the process.

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