



# ECHN Activity:

## How works the water management in your country?

ITALY

# Instructions

In order to generate knowledge out of water management insights from different countries, indicate the 5 most important key points reflecting water management in your country. Also, to support these key points, please attach a document referencing where the information can be found.

Examples of key points:

Who is responsible for the management of water resources?, How does water management work?, How does water resources monitoring network works?, Is there a priority of water use?, Is water considered public?, What is the water-industry relationship like?.

# Key point 1:

- Water, both surface- and ground-water, is a state property, thus is a public property. The first regulation on the withdrawal and usage of water was the Regio Decreto n.1775 del 11/12/1933 (National Law). It is still in force.
- Each citizen, as well as private or public agency, needs to submit a request to the Municipality / Province / Region of jurisdiction, before starting any activity connected to the withdrawal of water (e.g., before the construction of a well).
- Such request needs to be updated every 15 years (industrial usage), 30 years (drinking supply), 40 years (irrigation). Thus, the applicant is allowed using water for a limited period of time (not forever).
- According to the final usage (agricultural, industrial, drinking, hydroelectric power, bathing, etc.) and the requested amount of discharge, specific national and regional laws need to be followed.

# Key point 2:

- Main characters of the regulation system on water issues:
  - State, it acknowledges EU Directives and translates them in National Laws
  - Regions, they acknowledge the National Laws and translate them in Regional Laws; according the exceptional cases described in EU Directives, the Regional Laws may differ one from the other. (e.g., derogation on the application of fertilizers in Nitrate Vulnerable Zones)
- Main characters of the control system on water issues:
  - ISPRA, National Institute for the Environmental Protection and Research (it covers several roles, especially management and research; guidelines of ISPRA translate the National Laws in action)
  - ARPA, Regional Agencies for the Protection of Environment (they monitor the quality of environmental matrices, e.g., meteorological conditions, water contamination, air pollution)
  - Water Basin Authorities or Water District Authorities, they boundaries of jurisdiction follow the main water basins. They regulate the activities for the protection of the territory (especially floods, water crisis and drought) and coordinate the regional and subregional authorities being part of the same basin.
- Data collected by ISPRA, ARPA and Water Basin Authorities are public.

## Key point 3:

- Water services include “all services which provide for households, public institutions or any economic activity: (a) abstraction, impoundment, storage, treatment and distribution of surface water or groundwater, (b) waste water collection and treatment facilities which subsequently discharge into surface water.” [WFD, Article 2 (38)]
- Water services are managed by Municipalities or by Local public agencies.

# Key point 4:

- Water quality is monitored by:
  - ARPA, through their networks, at least twice per year. Analysis should fulfil the requirements of EU Directives on surface- and ground- waters for the achievement of a “good quality status”.
  - Water suppliers, through the networks they manage, at least twice per year, at different passages of the path (abstraction, distribution, waste water collection), to ensure a good quality of the resource both for human health and environment protection.
  - ASL (Local Authorities of Health), periodically monitor the quality of water distributed for drinking purposes.
- Waters are usually monitored twice per year, in spring and autumn, or in the first part and the second part of the year, according to the seasonality of the water cycle.

# Key point 5:

- Water uses (in order of priority of usage): drinking/domestic; irrigation; industrial; energy (hydroelectric power); recreational (e.g., thermal bath)
- In case of water crisis or drought, drinking and irrigation uses are guaranteed by law ([D.Lgs 152/06](#), art. 145, comma 3 & artt. 167-168)
  - D.Lgs 152/06 is the Italian law adopted in accordance with the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC
- The Water Basin Authorities monitor, plan and manage the activities to be followed in case of water crisis, delineating a Drought Management Plan. Example: <https://adbpo.gov.it/osservatorio-permanente/>
- A sustainable use of water resources need to be respected, both for human consumption and for ecosystems conservation (-> environmental flow, minimum stream flow), as well as for avoiding saltwater intrusion.

## Key point 6:

- The remediation of contaminated sites is regulated by National Laws (D.M. 471/99 and D.Lgs 152/06) according to the “Pay Polluter Principle”.
- Thus, the polluter – i.e., the party responsible for contamination – is obliged by law to remediate to any damage caused to water, land, protected species or natural habitats.
- The regulations define the threshold values and establish the criteria for the characterization of environmental matrices (air, water, soil), the risk assessment for human health, the monitoring program and the remediation actions.

# References

- Water services:
  - <https://www.eureau.org/>
  - <https://www.eureau.org/resources/publications/5268-the-governance-of-water-services-in-europe-2020-edition-2/file>
- Remediation of Contaminated Sites:
  - Pay polluter principle
    - Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012E%2FTXT>
    - Directive 2004/35/CE: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32004L0035>