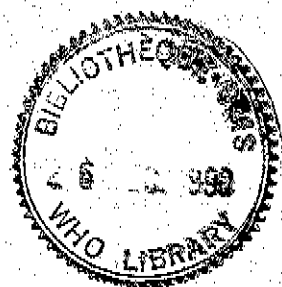


EUR/ICP/CWS 015 ✓

# POST-WATER-DECADE STRATEGIES



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
Regional Office for Europe  
COPENHAGEN

## TARGET 20

### Water pollution

By 1990, all people of the Region should have adequate supplies of safe drinking-water, and by the year 1995 pollution of rivers, lakes and seas should no longer pose a threat to human health.

#### Index:

WATER SUPPLY  
SANITATION  
DRINKING WATER  
EVALUATION  
FORECASTING  
EUR

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## POST-WATER-DECADE STRATEGIES

### Report on a WHO Subregional Consultation

Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia  
26-30 June 1990

Note

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# CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction . . . . .	1
Evaluation of the Water Decade . . . . .	2
Projects proposed for external support . . . . .	4
Strategy . . . . .	4
Financial policies . . . . .	5
Monitoring . . . . .	6
Elements of the strategy . . . . .	7
Recommendations . . . . .	8
Individual Member States . . . . .	8
Groups of Member States . . . . .	10
The international community . . . . .	10
Annex 1 Project proposals . . . . .	12
Annex 2 Terms of reference of working groups . .	15
Annex 3 Participants . . . . .	17



## Introduction

As the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD) is coming to an end, the WHO Regional Office for Europe, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Federal Institute of Public Health, Belgrade, organized a Subregional Consultation on Post-Water-Decade Strategies in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia, on 26-30 June 1990.

The Consultation was opened by Mr Dusko Bobarevic, Director, Department for International Relations, Federal Secretariat for Labour, Health, Veterans' Affairs and Social Policy, and by Mrs Nada Dorsner, Member of the Presidency of the Assembly of the City of Dubrovnik. Representatives of the United Nations agencies also gave addresses of welcome.

Special greetings were sent by the Executive Secretary for the Global Consultation on Safe Water and Sanitation for the 1990s, who stressed the importance of linking the WHO European programme with global efforts to provide adequate water and sanitation services to the populations of the world.

The Consultation was attended by 30 participants from 17 Member States of the Region, a representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Resident Representative and the Programme Officer of UNDP (Yugoslavia), the UNDP/WHO Coordinator of the IDWSSD, representatives of the WHO Regional Office for Europe and headquarters, and eight Yugoslavian observers. The participants are listed in Annex 3.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- to carry out a subregional evaluation of the progress made during the past decade based on an analysis of the questionnaires sent to Member States

as part of the new Regional Office's water and sanitation evaluation procedures;

- to present country by country the proposed national strategies and policies for the water supply and sanitation sectors;
- to draft a subregional strategy for the future in order to improve upon the present situation;
- to present project proposals for various countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Romania, Turkey, Yugoslavia) for external support;
- to provide an opportunity for the external support agencies (ESAs) invited and Member States to exchange information on the basis of the draft project proposals.

## Evaluation of the Water Decade

In a presentation on the major outcomes of the Decade Programme, it was emphasized that although the levels of service originally envisaged had not been attained, the Programme had nevertheless helped to identify the priorities for development of the water and sanitation sector, led to the development of country, intercountry and regional coordination mechanisms, and strengthened national institutional capabilities. The momentum it had created should be maintained and reinforced in order to reach satisfactory service levels, if possible before the turn of the century.

The results of a comparative analysis of water and sanitation services in the European Region at the beginning and at the end of the Decade indicated that with regard to drinking-water, town-dwellers lack adequate services only in certain urban fringes, whereas the percentage of rural people without services is still significant in some countries. Where wastewater disposal

is concerned, major efforts are still necessary to provide many urban sectors with the appropriate sewerage networks and efficient treatment facilities. For rural areas the evaluation proved more difficult than expected, but the information collected nevertheless confirms that substantial efforts are also needed to improve sanitary conditions in the countryside.

The representative of the Nancy International Water Centre, a WHO collaborating centre in France, presented his analysis of answers to a questionnaire devised by the Centre and intended to form a basis for evaluating the Water and Sanitation Programmes in Europe. The questionnaire had been sent to 29 Member States, of which 12 had returned a completed questionnaire in time for the evaluation.

The preliminary assessment showed the following:

- some countries had had difficulty in collecting the relevant information and suggested that some of the questions be rephrased;
- some participants found the questionnaire to be a useful evaluation tool which would result in better intersectoral cooperation within countries and promote the collection of national data;
- the major shortcomings in the Programmes had been some countries' inability to enforce their existing legislation for the protection of the aquatic environment, and the costs of the services provided, which very often seemed to be below production cost.

The representatives of a selected group of countries presented their own assessments of Decade results together with their proposed national strategies and policies for the post-Water-Decade era.

## Projects proposed for external support

Representatives of selected countries also presented their proposals for the development of projects which would be supported financially by ESAs (see Annex 1: Project Proposals).

In the absence of any representatives of ESAs, the proposals were examined in plenary by all the participants and by the United Nations agency staff. The proposals were considered technically sound and relevant to the needs and priorities of the individual countries. However, it was felt that their format and the proposed plans for financing should be revised before they were submitted to the ESAs.

UNDP and WHO expressed their willingness not only to help the countries concerned revise their proposals but also to make sure that there was a proper follow-up with the ESAs.

## Strategy

The participants divided into three working groups to draft a set of recommendations for a Post-Water-Decade Strategy in Europe (see Annex 2: Terms of Reference of Working Groups).

A common European strategy for the post-Decade period is considered necessary in order to build on the momentum generated during the IDWSSD and to ensure a sustained commitment to the sector throughout the 1990s. It will serve to initiate and promote action both at the regional level and at various administrative levels within the individual Member States.

A global strategy, of which the regional European strategy will be one component, should provide a frame of reference for harmonizing the various national strategies, which will vary according to national

requirements. The national strategies should then form the basis for action plans which will be an element of each overall national development plan.

The general objective of the common European strategy for community water supply and sanitation for the post-Décade era should be to orient water and sanitation development towards the achievement of integrated management of water resources, stressing the environmental protection and health perspective. This orientation must be adopted in the context of the overall goal of health for all through primary health care. It also reflects the fundamental elements of the Action Plan adopted by the United Nations Water Conference at Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1977.

The new European strategy requires full endorsement by national governments and by the United Nations system to ensure the political commitment necessary to sustain development efforts in this sector.

At the national level this endorsement should be secured through those ministries and departments which have responsibility for the sector, implying that effective interdepartmental and interministerial coordination will be needed.

To ensure international endorsement WHO should take the appropriate action through its governing bodies and using the other established mechanisms of the United Nations system.

#### Financial policies

In the European Region, the most important source of financing for water supply and sanitation will be the Member States themselves, with cooperation and funding taking different forms according to the geopolitical and development situation of each country. As a general rule, investment should be based on cost recovery for the services provided, which implies sound systems management.

The price of water must take into account both capital and recurrent costs. Where appropriate, the cost of sanitation services can be included in the charges levied for water. Existing studies such as the OECD Manual on water pricing and the recent WHO Guidelines on cost recovery are useful for establishing suitable policies.

International financing institutions should make it a condition for their support that the project meets national objectives, that cost-recovery policies are being or will be implemented, and that adequate provision has been made for operation and maintenance.

The United Nations agencies should continue to promote technology transfer and pre-investment activities and play a more regulatory and management role in water supply and sanitation projects, using their limited financial resources as seed money.

In the context of east/west and north/south cooperation, the United Nations system should identify countries requiring various types of assistance and those willing to provide it. The potential is already recognized for cooperation between the countries of western Europe and their rapidly changing neighbours in the east in order to tackle the latter's water and environmental management problems. This must form a vital element of the post-Decade water supply and sanitation strategy for Europe.

Using the mechanisms developed during the IDWSSD, the United Nations system should also act as a forum for the continuous monitoring and promotion of external support (bilateral and multilateral) to the sector.

#### Monitoring

The existing situation needs to be evaluated as a prelude to the post-Decade era. A starting point can be

the establishment of attainable and explicitly stated national targets for levels of service, which countries can strive to reach and which can be monitored, using statistical methods and criteria, in quantifiable terms. This will make it possible to identify trends and to adjust plans accordingly.

The results of the survey based on the WHO questionnaire need to be evaluated carefully in the light of the above. If necessary a fresh questionnaire could be designed and circulated periodically to the national focal points with the objective of developing a manageable information system.

#### Elements of the strategy

The nature of the problems identified varies according to socioeconomic conditions. In some countries considerable investment is still required in the provision of water supply and sanitation facilities to meet the desired service level; elsewhere the problems lie in the need to rehabilitate, refine and perfect existing systems.

After reviewing both the qualitative and quantitative problems, the working groups defined the following main elements needed in the strategy:

- protection of the aquatic environment by integrated management of water resources, paying particular attention to industrial and toxic hazardous wastes;
- investment and technology transfer to countries where systems are less developed;
- personnel development based on the training of staff at all levels in the design, administration, operation and maintenance of systems;

- better operation and maintenance, achieved by making adequate provision in terms of planning and resources;
- establishment of water supply and sanitation management information and statistical systems compatible with the existing national statistical systems;
- establishment of regional reference laboratories to provide technical support for the harmonization of water quality control procedures and to ensure the comparability of results.

## Recommendations

### Individual Member States

1. Member States should establish explicit and attainable targets for levels of service which are appropriate to their circumstances, meet primary health care requirements and are compatible with the sustainable utilization of water resources.
2. National water supply and sanitation information systems should be reviewed and strengthened to provide a rational basis for planning and evaluating progress in the implementation of programmes.
3. National programmes should be developed and implemented, with the aim of tackling clearly defined problems.
4. Higher priority should be given in future to developing and improving wastewater disposal and treatment facilities. In general these are less developed than water services, are essential for solving water resource problems and are important elements of environmental protection.

5. Training programmes should be developed to provide the qualified personnel needed to design, operate and maintain the systems. They should be preceded by an investigation of both formal and on-the-job training needs and facilities, and documentation and materials should be produced in national languages. Training is an area which lends itself to technical cooperation between countries in the sense of sharing of facilities and materials, as in the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCD).

6. Increased surveillance is needed of water supply networks, and in particular of the quality of the water when it reaches the consumer, to identify and counteract problems of secondary contamination and to facilitate the planning of network cleaning and rehabilitation.

7. The surveillance of water quality in small and individual water supply systems should be increased and improved to safeguard the health of the population in small communities and remote areas.

8. Better water quality surveillance generally is required in catchment areas, during treatment and distribution and throughout the waste treatment, discharge and/or reuse cycle.

9. Water distribution management needs to be improved by rationalizing and interconnecting systems and pressure zones to prevent wastage and local shortages and to reduce the occurrence of intermittent supply.

10. Applied technological research should be undertaken to solve problems, increase system reliability and reduce costs. Issues of particular concern include: disinfection (because of the problem of secondary pollution and its associated health risks); the reuse of wastewaters and the development of technologies to reduce water consumption by industry; and the need to improve distribution system efficiency by reducing scaling and corrosion and rehabilitating systems

generally. To ensure the widest possible dissemination of the results of applied research, mechanisms should be developed for transferring technology within and between countries.

11. Water policies should be implemented with the aim of reducing the wastage of water and funding investments from savings. Policies of this kind would include metering, incentives and/or penalties, and the appropriate tariff studies.

12. The methods used for technological testing and epidemiological surveys need to be improved and harmonized, and raw water characterization systems should be reviewed and updated as appropriate.

#### Groups of Member States

13. At regional or intercountry level, groups of countries should collaborate by entering into agreements to support each other, as in DTCD, and by exchanging knowledge and experience by means of the appropriate training programmes.

14. They should develop joint programmes for the management and protection of shared water resources and transboundary rivers.

15. They should also use their knowledge and skills to help develop water supply and sanitation programmes in the less developed countries in other parts of the world.

#### The international community

16. The United Nations system should find ways of giving greater support to the water and sanitation sector, including more funding from agencies such as UNDP and more technical support from agencies such as WHO.

17. WHO and the other United Nations agencies involved in the Programme should strengthen their capacity to act

as a forum for dialogue between countries, should promote the exchange of experience and should monitor and report on developments in the sector.

18. With reference to monitoring, WHO should reassess its philosophy and methodology in the light of the experience gained so far in data collection and the comments received from national focal points, and should then produce a pragmatic system for assessing national and regional requirements.

19. Together with the other United Nations agencies involved in the Programme, WHO should set up an inventory of reference laboratories, training centres and expertise, and continuously update and disseminate this information.

20. The national water supply and sanitation focal points, as extensions of WHO in their countries, should be given support by the Organization to reinforce their ability to provide effective contacts, stimulate the sector nationally, and help them serve as an information source, a contact for external support agencies and a mechanism for the exchange of experience between and among countries.

21. The external support agencies should be approached to ascertain whether their criteria for project support are still appropriate to current needs in the rapidly changing new political context in this part of the world.

## Annex 1

### PROJECT PROPOSALS

- ALBANIA
1. La chlorination de l'eau potable avec du chlore gasé pour les villes de Tirana, Durrés, Vloré, Elbasan et Skhodër.
  2. Treatment of superficial water in Buvilla Reservoir for water supply of Tirana town.
- BULGARIA
1. Purification station for wastewater in the town of Balchik.
  2. Installation of ozonization and stabilizing treatment of drinking-water for the capital, Sofia.
- HUNGARY
1. Prevention and elimination of nitrites ( $\text{NO}_2$ ) from drinking-water distribution networks.
  2. Prevention of secondary contamination of drinking-water networks, with special regard to networks using deep-well water containing  $\text{NH}_4$  and humic acids.
- MALTA
1. Rehabilitation of the distribution network.
  2. Long sea outfall and treatment facility.
- POLAND
1. New water-catchment plants for the municipal water supply system in Warsaw.
  2. Sewerage and wastewater treatment system for Koden rural community.
- ROMANIA
1. Improvement of the water-quality monitoring system in Romania.
  2. Drinking-water quality protection in Bucharest by improvement of drinking-water supply and control.

TURKEY

1. Greater Bursa environmental infrastructure projects - water supply and distribution. Sewerage and sewage treatment works.

YUGOSLAVIA

1. Water-quality deterioration of the surface flow of rivers and lakes.
2. Long-term programme for drinking-water supply to people and industry in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 1989-2010
3. Distribution of volatile organochlorinated chemicals in the environment and their occurrence in drinking-water.
4. Control and rationalization of water consumption and reduction of water losses in the water supply system of the community of Vrnjacka Banja (SPA).
5. Investigation and monitoring of groundwater from the point of view of drinking-water supply.
6. Establishment of a national centre for permanent education and training of personnel for work in wastewater and drinking-water treatment plants.
7. Safe water supply under specific karst conditions on the Island of Cres.
8. Reduction of water losses from the Belgrade waterworks.
9. Development of an environmental health monitoring programme on drinking-water (model for GEMS water programme).
10. Interregional water resource system, Rzav.
11. Selection of the source and water supply for holiday resorts on the Montenegrin coast.
12. Renovation, modernization and enlargement of the purifying plant in Piran, May 1986.
13. Promotion of health aspects of drinking-water supply and basic

sanitation in developing countries, as an extension of activities of the technical unit for cooperation among developing countries.

14. Automatic monitoring station for supervising the quality of riverwater.
15. Monitoring stations for the control of Sava River water quality.

## Annex 2

### TERMS OF REFERENCE OF WORKING GROUPS

1. Organization

One chairperson  
One rapporteur

2. Task

To elaborate a set of recommendations for the development of a post-Water Decade strategy in Europe.

Questions to answer

- Is a common European strategy required?

Or should we aim at having only national strategies for the development of water and sanitation services in each country?

- If a common strategy is found acceptable, then

(a) what procedures should be followed if this strategy is to be "officially endorsed" by the European Member States?

(b) what national and international financial (investment) policies should be adopted:

- at national level (cost recovery)
- at United Nations-family level (UNDP, UNESCO, UNEP, WHO, etc.)
- at external support agency level
- within north/south or east/west groups of European countries.

(c) what mechanisms should be adopted for monitoring the implementation of this strategy?

3. Elements of the strategy

- analysis of remaining problems (situation analysis);
- proposed solutions to problems: priority areas - objectives of the strategy - expected output;
- links between the regional strategy and the global strategy.

4. Recommendations

- general
- to WHO headquarters, to Regional Office for Europe
- to UNDP and other United Nations agencies
- to external support agencies
- technical recommendations? (information systems?) (others?).

## Annex 3

### PARTICIPANTS

#### ALBANIA

Mr Vladmimir Gjino  
Ministry of Communal Economy, Directory of Water  
Works, Tirana

Mr Qeramedin Kodra  
Chief, Hygiene Sector, Institute of Hygiene and  
Epidemiology, Ministry of Public Health, Tirana

Mr Kastriot Shehu  
Institute of Communal Protection, Ministry of  
Communal Economy, Tirana

#### BULGARIA

Mr Gancho Hitzov  
Director, Water Supply and Sewerage, Sofia

#### FRANCE

Mme Pascale Buffaut  
Ministère de la solidarité, de la santé et de la  
protection sociale, Division des relations  
internationales, Paris

Mr Philippe Chaix  
Centre international de l'Eau de Nancy,  
Vandoeuvres-les-Nancy

ISRAEL

Mr Menahem Tal  
District Environmental Engineer, Public Health  
Department, Haifa

ITALY

Dr Luciano Coccagna  
President of Aqua Italia, Research and Development  
Manager, Culligan Italiana S.p.A., Cadriano di  
Granarolo E. (Bo)

MALTA

Mr Gary Mclay  
Water Expert, Water Works Department, Valletta

Mr Chris Vella  
Water Engineer, Water Works Department, Valletta

SAN MARINO

Dr Aldo Arzilli  
Sous-directeur du service de l'hygiène du milieu  
ambiant, Hôpital d'Etat de la République de  
Saint-Marin, Cailungo

SPAIN

Mr Filipo Barrioconal Sastre  
Head, Environment Health Engineering Service,  
Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs, Madrid

Ms Margarida Palau Miguel  
Ministry of Health and Consumer Affairs, Madrid

TURKEY

Mr Ayhan Durusu  
Project Director, Sewage Department, Iller Bankasi  
Genel Müdürlüğü, Kanalizasyon Dairesi Baskanligi,  
Opera Ankara

Ms Ayfer Öрге  
Project Director, Drinking Water Supply Department,  
Iller Bankasi Genel Müdürlüğü, Kanalizasyon Dairesi  
Baskanligi, Opera Ankara

Mr Yüksel Yavuz  
International Project Coordinator, Sey Architects,  
Engineers and Consultants Co. Inc., Ergenekon Cad.,  
Feriköy-Istanbul

UNITED KINGDOM

Dr Peter J. Newman  
Manager, Business Support Services, WRc Environment,  
Medmenham Laboratory, Marlow, Bucks.

YUGOSLAVIA

Dr Metka Macarol-Hiti  
Principal Sanitary Inspector, Republican Committee  
for Health and Social Care of the Socialist Republic  
of Slovenia, Ljubljana

Dr Ivan Pavlovic  
Federal Institute of Public Health, Belgrade

Dr Pavle Todorovic  
Republican Secretary for Environmental Protection of  
the Socialist Republic of Serbia, Belgrade  
(Chairperson)

### TEMPORARY ADVISERS

- Mr Xavier Bonnefoy  
Ingénieur sanitaire, DDASS des Vosges, Quartier de  
la Magdeleine, Epinal, France (Rapporteur)
- Ms Margarida Cardoso da Silva  
National Project Director, Projecto de Gestai  
Integrada dos Recursos Hidricos da Bacia,  
Hidrografica do Tejo (PGIRH/T), Lisbon, Portugal  
(Vice-Chairperson)
- Dr Myslibor Chalupa  
Head Chemist, Ministry of Forestry, Economy and the  
Woodcutting Industry of the Czech and Slovak Federal  
Republic, Prague, Czech and Slovak Federal Republic
- Dr Manole Cucu  
Director, Institute of Hygiene and Public Health,  
Bucharest, Romania
- Mr Philip Grech  
Chief Engineer, Sewerage Drainage Section, Public  
Works Department, Ministry for the Development of  
Infrastructure, Beltissebh, Malta
- Dr András Homonnay  
Director, ENVIMARK, Budapest, Hungary
- Dr Pencho Kazasov  
Senior Officer, Ministry of Public Health and Social  
Care, Sofia, Bulgaria

Professor Marek Roman  
President, Politechnika Warszawska, Warsaw, Poland  
(Vice-Chairperson)

Dr Frank-Ullrich Schlosser  
Forschungsinstitut für Hygiene und Mikrobiologie,  
Bad Elster, German Democratic Republic

Dr Tugrul Ulgen  
Deputy Director, Primary Health Care, Ministry of  
Health, Ankara, Turkey

## REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

### United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Mr Rasa Buric  
Programme Officer, UNDP, Belgrade, Yugoslavia

Dr Roland Reifenrath  
Resident Representative of the United Nations  
Development Programme, Belgrade, Yugoslavia

Dr Alexander H. Rotival  
UNDP/WHO Coordinator IDWSSD, Chairman of the  
Collaborative Council, UNDP, Geneva, Switzerland

## UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)

Mr Wilfried Gilbrich  
Programme Specialist, Division of Water Sciences,  
UNESCO, Paris, France

## OBSERVERS

- Ms Svetlana Bingulac  
Adviser, International Health Cooperation, Federal  
Institute of Public Health, Belgrade
- Professor M. Kristoforovic-Ilic  
Institute of Health Protection, Novi Sad
- Mr Stefan Maric  
Senior Adviser, Federal Secretariat for Agriculture,  
Novi Belgrade
- Dr Stanka Skunca Milovanovic  
Senior Adviser, Environmental Protection, Federal  
Secretariat for Labour, Health, Veterans' Affairs  
and Social Policy, Belgrade
- Professor Miladin Mirilov  
Adviser, Institute of Health Protection, Novi Sad
- Dr Dimitrije Popovic  
Chief, Service for Medical Ecology, City Institute  
of Public Health, Belgrade
- Dr Slavko Sobot  
Chief, Water Research Service, Department for  
Nutrition and Ecology, Institute of Public Health of  
the Socialist Republic of Croatia, Zagreb
- Dr Ljiljana Trajkovic-Pavlovic  
Senior Adviser in Nutrition, Department for  
Environmental Health, Federal Institute of Public  
Health, Belgrade

## WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

### Headquarters

Dr Greg Watters, Community Water Supply and Sanitation

### Regional Office for Europe

Ms Annette Enevoldsen  
International Water Decade Unit

Mr Oltio Espinoza  
Regional Officer for International Water Decade

Ms Jadranka Horvat  
Institute for Health Organization and Economics,  
Zagreb