

UNECE



**Protocol on Water and Health and the 2030 Agenda:
A Practical Guide for Joint Implementation**



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PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH AND THE 2030 AGENDA: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR JOINT IMPLEMENTATION

Executive Summary

Benefits of joint implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health and the 2030 Agenda

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)-World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe Protocol on Water and Health plays a key role in promoting and operationalizing the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) in countries of the pan-European region. The Protocol offers a sound approach, valuable experience and practical tools, and provides a successful regional platform to help propel the implementation of the water, sanitation and health related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an integrated manner, as well as other regional commitments, such as the commitments taken in the Declaration of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Ostrava Declaration).

The Protocol is a powerful tool to accomplish the 2030 Agenda by providing a sound approach and concrete tools for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.

The purpose of this practical guide for joint implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health and the 2030 Agenda is to highlight the benefits of and provide step-by-step guidance for coordinated action.

To successfully attain the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, the implementation of the SDGs is best achieved by taking full advantage of existing commitments and structures, with partnerships and synergies across sectors as a guiding principle. It is thus advantageous to build upon existing Protocol coordination platforms or, where they do not exist, to create such a platform to coordinate and guide the effective implementation of both the Protocol and the SDGs.

Not only are the goals and principles of the Protocol and the 2030 Agenda fully aligned, but the target areas under the Protocol are also closely linked to the targets under SDGs 3 and 6 and other targets related to water, sanitation and health. Using the Protocol framework and its process of target setting, including carrying out an in-depth baseline analysis, is therefore highly beneficial for establishing national SDG targets. The establishment of a coordinated set of targets and indicators ensures policy coherence, achieves synergies in implementation, and fosters integrated data collection and analyses. Countries that have already set their national targets under the Protocol could revise them in line with the SDGs to foster their joint implementation.

The Protocol provides tools and guidance, facilitates sharing of best practices and offers technical capacity-building at all levels, all of which facilitates the identification of appropriate and achievable national targets and indicators, and the monitoring of progress. All countries can use and benefit from

the tools developed under the Protocol, irrespective of whether they are Parties to the Protocol¹ or not.

The tools, methodologies and approaches promoted by the Protocol, such as the Water Safety Plan (WSP) and Sanitation Safety Planning (SSP) approaches and the methodology for equitable access self-assessment can be used to identify priorities and gaps to improve water, sanitation and health in accordance with the aspirations of the SDGs while raising awareness of their crucial importance for sustainable development.

Reporting under the Protocol supports the monitoring of water, sanitation and health related SDGs, while allowing to go beyond globally agreed SDG indicators to enable in-depth tracking tailored to country priorities. Countries may use the data collected under the Protocol's mandatory reporting system to monitor progress under the SDGs, to report on achievements and challenges to the UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, as well as to report progress under the Ostrava Declaration.

In order to make the joint implementation possible, it is important that the Protocol and the SDG focal points seek out communication mechanisms to discuss synergies, potential collaboration, as well as information and data exchange. Such a harmonized approach would benefit both processes and effectively reduce implementation and the reporting burden on national authorities.

The Protocol and the 2030 Agenda are mutually reinforcing. The Protocol is a legally binding tool that goes beyond the SDGs and will continue after 2030. The momentum of the SDGs can be capitalized upon to raise awareness of the central position of water, sanitation and health to achieving many other development goals and to promote accession to the Protocol. The Protocol implementation at national, regional and global levels clearly facilitates the achievement of universal and equitable access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation for all, thereby promoting human health and well-being.

¹ A list of Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health can be consulted at https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXVII-5-a&chapter=27&clang=_en

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) - World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (hereafter “the Protocol”) is a legally binding instrument available to countries in the pan-European region. It aims to achieve an adequate supply of safe drinking water and sanitation for everyone and effectively protect water resources. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) is a global commitment, which provides significant policy stimulus towards attaining integrated goals for sustainable development, including reaching universal and equitable access to safely managed water and sanitation, and good health and well-being for all. With many synergies and common characteristics, it is natural to implement the Protocol and the targets of the 2030 Agenda related to water, sanitation and health in an integrated way to support their effective implementation at the country level and to avoid duplication of efforts.

The main objective of the *Protocol on Water and Health and the 2030 Agenda: A Practical Guide for Joint Implementation* (hereafter “the Guide”) is to provide background information and step-by-step advice on how to identify, establish and operationalize the links between the Protocol on Water and Health and the water, sanitation and health related targets of the 2030 Agenda.

The Guide presents a comprehensive and pragmatic approach for joint implementation and it is structured around two parts:

- Part 1 provides an overview of the synergies between the Protocol and the 2030 Agenda. It contains basic information and objectives on the treaty, and on the water, sanitation and health related targets of the 2030 Agenda, as well as on follow-up and review processes and on procedural mechanisms under the Protocol.
- Part 2 complements Part 1 by spelling out actions for implementation. It contains practical, step-by-step guidance on how to bring together Protocol and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation at the country level, as illustrated in the joint implementation checklist (see Figure 7). Concrete solutions are illustrated by a variety of country case studies, which are interspersed throughout Part 2. They reflect countries’ experiences and lessons learned with joint implementation and thus may inspire other countries in adapting the suggested approaches.

The primary audience of the Guide are government officials from the different sectors and focal points involved in the implementation of the SDGs related to water, sanitation and health, and the national focal points under the Protocol.

The Guide also serves as a source of information for other stakeholders, including national decision makers mandated with programming and policy development in water, sanitation, health and other sectors; the United Nations (UN) family and other international agencies supporting SDG implementation; water and sanitation service providers; civil society organizations; and the donor community.

PART 1

SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE PROTOCOL AND THE 2030 AGENDA

Part 1 focuses on the interlinkages between the Protocol and the 2030 Agenda. In particular, it provides information on the target setting process under the Protocol, the work of the Protocol bodies, and activities carried out under the Protocol's programme of work. It also maps the water, sanitation and health related targets of the 2030 Agenda and addresses their synergies with the Protocol, as well as presenting follow-up, review processes and global monitoring initiatives.

1.1 Protocol on Water and Health

The Protocol was adopted in 1999 at the third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (London, 16–18 June 1999). Its objective is to promote at all appropriate levels, nationally as well as in transboundary and international contexts, the protection of human health and well-being, both individual and collective, within a framework of sustainable development, through improving water management, including the protection of water ecosystems, and through preventing, controlling and reducing water-related disease (article 1).¹ The Protocol urges countries to approach water, sanitation and health in a holistic manner. It applies to the whole water cycle and addresses surface freshwater; groundwater; estuaries; coastal waters which are used for recreation or aquaculture; enclosed waters available for bathing; water in the course of abstraction, transport, treatment and supply; and waste water throughout the course of collection, transport, treatment and discharge or reuse (article 3).

The implementation of the Protocol is intersectoral by nature. It encourages governments to take a whole-of-government approach and fosters substantive interaction between different sectors, such as water, health, environment, education, agriculture, finance and others, to work together to achieve its overall objectives. Focal points under the Protocol are appointed to support and promote activities under the Protocol, as detailed in Text box 1.

Text box 1: Focal points under the Protocol on Water and Health

The focal points under the Protocol on Water and Health are officially nominated representatives of the ministries responsible for the implementation of the Protocol. As the Protocol is an intersectoral instrument, there are typically two focal points: one from the ministry responsible for water management and/or environmental protection; and one from the ministry of health. The focal points are entrusted with promoting and supporting activities related to the Protocol within their countries and organizations, including the coordination of target setting and reporting processes. Focal points usually coordinate and facilitate dissemination of Protocol-related information to other concerned national authorities, organizations and the general public, communicate with the joint secretariat of the Protocol, and address information requests from the public. The Protocol focal points may be considered information multipliers as they can reach and motivate important target groups and potential supporters, such as policy makers, donors, media and the general public, to get them involved in the implementation of the Protocol.

The list of the Protocol focal points is available at: <https://www.unece.org/env/water/addresses.html>

¹ Full text of the Protocol is available at <https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2000/wat/mp.wat.2000.1.e.pdf>

The Protocol also empowers civil society to contribute in a meaningful way to target setting and implementation, and to take action. The objectives of the Protocol align closely with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda, and the Protocol can be considered as a precursor of several SDG principles such as universality, intersectorality, equity, prevention and safety.

1.1.1 Setting targets under the Protocol

According to its article 6, the Protocol requires countries to pursue the aims of access to drinking water for everyone; provision of sanitation for everyone within a framework of integrated water management systems aimed at sustainable use of water resources, ambient water quality which does not endanger human health, and protection of water ecosystems. For these purposes, it requires countries to establish national and/or local targets, to implement measures to ensure targets are met, and to regularly review and report on the progress achieved. The Protocol target areas are detailed in its article 6.2 and are illustrated in Figure 1.

Targets set under the Protocol are meant to be time-bound and tailor-made by reflecting the country’s socioeconomic and environmental health conditions, as well as its priorities and improvement needs in the water, sanitation and health domain. The established targets should be accompanied by a realistic action plan, outlining prioritized and time-bound measures towards achieving the set targets. This approach lies at the core of the Protocol’s planning, performance and accountability framework.

According to article 7 of the Protocol, countries shall each collect and evaluate data on their progress towards the achievement of the targets and on indicators designed to show how that progress has contributed towards preventing, controlling or reducing water-related disease. Countries prepare national summary reports and submit them to the Meeting of the Parties of the Protocol every 3 years.

Figure 1: Target areas under the Protocol

Drinking water quality
Reduction of scale of outbreaks and incidents of water-related disease
Access to drinking water
Access to sanitation
Levels of performance of collective systems for water supply and sanitation
Recognized good practices to the management of water supply and sanitation
Discharges of untreated waste water and untreated storm water overflows
Quality of discharges of waste water
Disposal or reuse of sewage sludge from sanitation systems and quality of waste water used for irrigation
Quality of waters used as sources for drinking water, bathing, aquaculture and shellfish production
Recognized good practices to the management of enclosed waters available for bathing
Identification and remediation of particularly contaminated sites
Effectiveness of systems for the management, development, protection and use of water resources
Frequency of the publication of information on the quality of drinking water supplied

1.1.2 Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting

The body that supports countries in setting their targets under the Protocol is the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting. In 2010, the Task Force elaborated the *Guidelines on the setting of targets, evaluation of progress and reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health* (hereafter “Target Setting Guidelines”)² and more recently published the 2016 *Collection of good practices and lessons learned on target setting and reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health*³ (hereafter “Collection of Good Practices”). The current *Guidelines and template for summary reports in accordance with article 7 of the Protocol* were adopted at the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (Geneva, 14–16 November 2016).⁴

1.1.3 Compliance Committee

In accordance with article 15 of the Protocol, the Compliance Committee established in 2007 has the mandate to facilitate, promote and aim to secure compliance by Parties with their obligations under the Protocol with a view to preventing disputes. The Committee’s functions include considering submissions, referrals or communications from the public relating to specific issues of compliance; preparing, at the request of the Meeting of the Parties, a report on compliance with, or the implementation of, specific provisions of the Protocol; and monitoring, assessing and facilitating the implementation of and compliance with the Protocol reporting requirements. Since 2010, the Committee also has the mandate to undertake consultation processes with Parties to assist them in implementing the provisions of the Protocol. The Committee may support countries by developing an accurate situation analysis, providing advice and recommendations to enable Parties to set and implement targets, and assisting them in seeking support from donors, specialized agencies and other competent bodies.

Text box 2: Protocol on Water and Health and the human rights to water and sanitation

The Protocol on Water and Health is a special instrument as it has both an inter-state regulatory dimension and a human rights one. The rights to water and sanitation and the specific obligations arising from them are addressed in detail through a combination of techniques. Unlike a typical human rights instrument that formulates a right and leaves the obligations implicit, the Protocol requires Parties, in essence, to exercise due diligence in ensuring access to water and sanitation and protecting water bodies within their jurisdiction, setting out four clusters of obligations: (a) to set targets relating to water, sanitation and health, and to monitor them; (b) to develop systems to respond to emergencies; (c) to gather, develop and provide relevant information to the public; and (d) to cooperate with other Parties to the Protocol in these matters.

1.1.4 The Protocol on Water and Health programme of work

The programme of work of the Protocol includes a number of activities that promote and facilitate implementation of the targets set by the countries. Activities range from the development of policy and technical guidance and practical support tools, to in-country capacity-building, exchange of experience and good practices through the Protocol’s intergovernmental regional platform, as well as the implementation of specific technical assistance projects. All these activities are also of great use to support the implementation of the water, sanitation and health aspects of the 2030 Agenda.

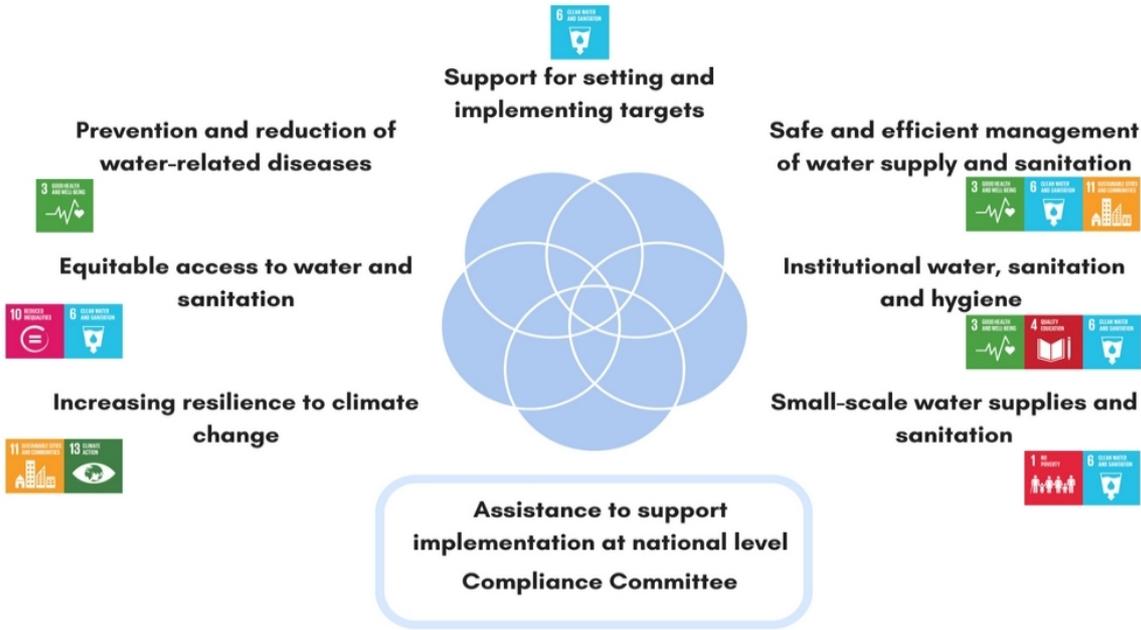
² United Nations sales publication, No. Sales No. E. 10.II.E.12. Available at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=11644>

³ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.II.E.20. Available at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=44286>

⁴ Available at http://www.unece.org/env/water/pwh_work/tsr.html

The Protocol’s programme of work is adopted by the Meeting of the Parties every three years. The areas of work shown in Figure 2 reflect priorities and areas of common concern for countries in the pan-European region and they therefore also inform target setting under the Protocol. Figure 2 further illustrates the linkages between the Protocol’s programme areas and the relevant SDGs.

Figure 2: The Protocol on Water and Health programme of work



1.2 The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

On 25 September 2015, the 193 countries of the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Development Agenda titled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".⁵ The 2030 Agenda covers 17 SDGs and 169 targets, reflecting the broad scope of sustainability issues. Half of the SDGs address various aspects of environmental sustainability, representing a shift to a more comprehensive development paradigm. The references to human rights and non-discrimination, both in the preamble and declaration, and to the concepts of universality and substantive equality for women and girls define strong principles for implementation. The central message “Leave no one behind” means that no goal will be met unless it is met for everyone, which emphasizes the need to reach out to the most disadvantaged groups.

“The Sustainable Development Goals and targets are integrated and indivisible, global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities. Targets are defined as aspirational and global, with each Government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances. Each Government will also decide how these

⁵ Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, available at http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

aspirational and global targets should be incorporated into national planning processes, policies and strategies. It is important to recognize the link between sustainable development and other relevant ongoing processes in the economic, social and environmental fields.”⁶

While the SDGs are not legally binding, governments agreed to take ownership and establish national frameworks for the achievement of the 17 Goals. The Protocol on Water and Health is a powerful instrument, which can be utilized by governments in setting their own national targets on water, sanitation and health, reflecting the national circumstances. This could be done in coherence with existing national targets set under the Protocol, or by setting joint targets.

Moreover, countries have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review of the progress made in implementing the Goals, which will require quality, accessible and timely data collection. Regional follow-up and review will be based on national level analyses and contribute to follow-up and review at the global level. Data collected under the Protocol’s mandatory reporting system can be used to monitor and review progress under the water, sanitation and health related SDGs.

1.3 Water, sanitation and health related goals and targets under the SDGs

Water and sanitation is central to sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda with strong linkages to many other Goals. SDG 6 is the main Goal related to water and sanitation. It aims to “ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”. SDG 6 has 8 targets and 11 corresponding global indicators, most of which overlap with Protocol targets, as detailed in its article 6 and common indicators used in reporting. Reflecting the entire water cycle, the targets within Goal 6 are interlinked with many other Goals and across sectors. Figure 3 illustrates all the SDG targets that are relevant to water, sanitation and health.

Figure 3: SDG targets relevant to water, sanitation and health

Goal	SDG target	Description
1 - NO POVERTY	1.4	Ensure access to basic services
2 – ZERO HUNGER	2.2	End malnutrition and meet targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age
3 - GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	3.2	End preventable deaths of new-borns and children under 5 years of age
	3.3	End neglected tropical diseases and combat water-borne diseases
	3.8	Achieve access to quality essential health-care services
	3.9	Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination
	3.d	Strengthen early warning, risk reduction and management of health risks
4 - QUALITY EDUCATION	4.a	Build and upgrade educational facilities that provide safe and effective learning environments
5 - GENDER EQUALITY	5.1	End discrimination against women and girls

⁶ Para. 55, Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, available at http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E

	5.5	Ensure women's participation and equal opportunities for leadership in decision-making
6 - WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL	6.1	Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all
	6.2	Achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, end open defecation and pay special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations
	6.3	Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse
	6.4	Increase water-use efficiency and sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity
	6.5	Implement IWRM, including through transboundary cooperation
	6.6	Protect and restore water-related ecosystems
	6.a	Expand international cooperation and capacity-building
	6.b	Support and strengthen participation of local communities in water and sanitation management
9 – INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	9.1	Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all
10 – REDUCED INEQUALITIES	10.2	Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all
	10.3	Ensure opportunity and reduction of inequalities of outcome
11 – SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	11.1	Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services
	11.5	Reduce number of deaths and number of people affected and direct economic losses caused by water-related disasters
	11.b	Increase number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters
12. SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	12.4	Achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes, and reduce their release to water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment
13. CLIMATE ACTION	13.1	Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters
15 – LIFE ON LAND	15.1	Ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems
16 – PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	16.6	Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions
	16.7	Ensure inclusive and participatory decision-making
	16.10	Ensure public access to information
17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS	17.9	Enhance international support for capacity-building
	17.14	Enhance policy coherence

	17.16	Enhance multi-stakeholder partnerships
	17.18	Increase availability of high-quality and disaggregated data

1.4 Follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda

1.4.1 The High-level Political Forum

The High-level Political Forum⁷ (HLPF) is the main UN platform on sustainable development which plays a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs at the global level. As part of its follow-up and review mechanisms, the 2030 Agenda encourages member states to “conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven” (paragraph 79). The Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) serve as a basis for the regular reviews by the HLPF.

1.4.2 Voluntary National Reviews

The Voluntary National Reviews are state-led, involving ministerial and other relevant high-level participants, and provide a platform for partnerships including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders.⁸ The VNRs aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs also seek to strengthen the policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs.

The VNRs provide Member States with an opportunity to report on their achievements and challenges in the area of water and sanitation, using their experiences from the implementation of the relevant SDGs and experiences gained through the implementation of the Protocol, thereby achieving greater coherence and coordination between the two processes. During the implementation of the SDGs, SDG 6 will be included a number of times in the reporting framework. There will also be an opportunity to report on water and health related targets under other Goals, as described above under section 1.3.

1.4.3 UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

The UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD) follows up on and reviews the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the pan-European region. Focusing on practical, value-added and peer learning, it creates a regional space to share policy solutions, best practices and challenges in SDG implementation and helps to identify major regional and sub-regional trends. As an intergovernmental mechanism, the RFSD is convened by UNECE, in close cooperation with the regional UN system. It is open to the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including international and regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector. The RFSD provides an opportunity for countries to report on the progress achieved in the area of water, sanitation and health beyond global indicators, including with regard to the activities and impact of the Protocol’s work.

⁷ The establishment of the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) was mandated in 2012 by the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), *The Future We Want*. The format and organizational aspects of the Forum are outlined in General Assembly resolution 67/290. The Forum meets annually under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council for eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment and every four years at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of the General Assembly for two days

⁸ See <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnr/>

1.4.4 Reporting on global indicators

A robust follow-up and review mechanism for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires a solid framework of indicators and statistical data to monitor progress, inform policy and ensure accountability of all stakeholders. A global indicator framework was adopted by the General Assembly on 6 July 2017 and is contained in the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on Work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.⁹ The agreed indicators for SDG 6 and custodian agencies of the different indicators are summarized in Figure 4. The data collected by the custodian agencies is compiled in an annual report, which highlights the gains and challenges of full realization of the 2030 Agenda, based on the latest available data.¹⁰

1.4.5 UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6

UN-Water coordinates the efforts of UN entities and international organizations working on water and sanitation issues. One of UN-Water's main objectives is to provide coherent and reliable data and information on key water trends and management issues. To meet the needs of the 2030 Agenda, UN-Water has launched the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 (see Figure 4), which includes the work of the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP), the inter-agency initiative, Integrated monitoring of water and sanitation related SDG targets (GEMI), and the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-water (GLAAS) managed by WHO. The objectives of the UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 are to:

- Develop methodologies and tools to monitor SDG 6 global indicators
- Raise awareness at national and global levels about SDG 6 monitoring
- Enhance technical and institutional country capacity for monitoring
- Compile country data and report on global progress towards SDG 6

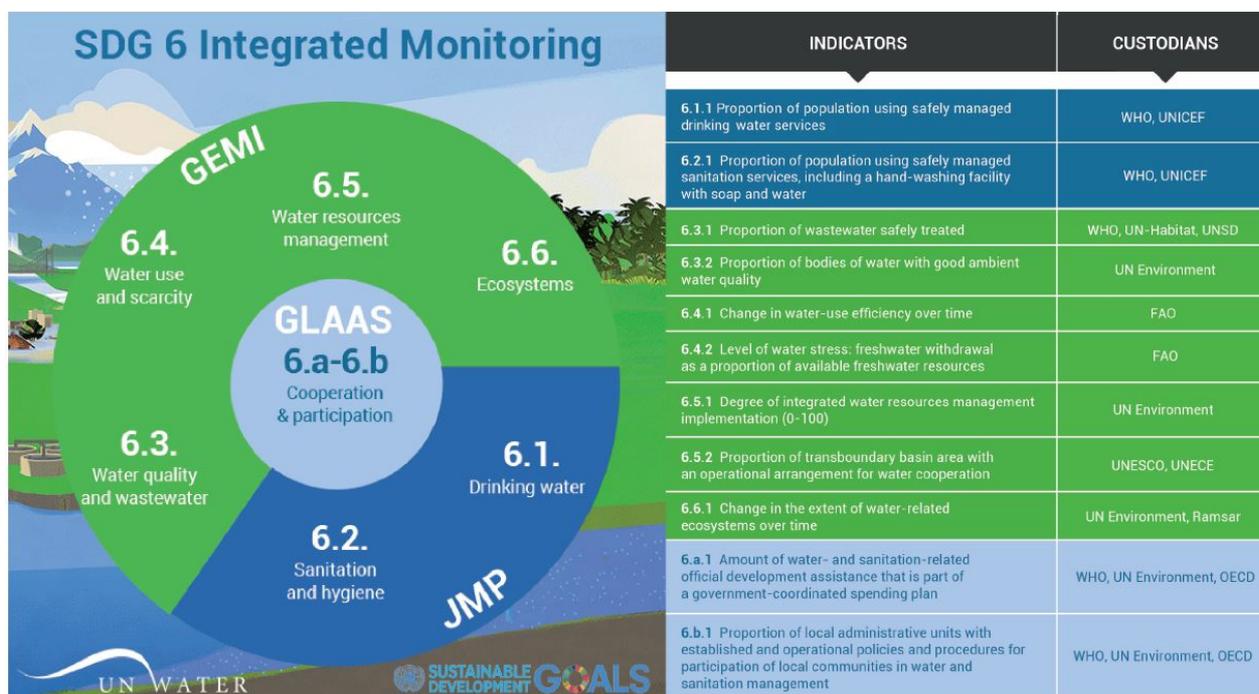
There are important synergies in data collection under the Protocol and the Integrated Monitoring Initiative. Data gathered at the national level within the Protocol's reporting exercises have been used under JMP and GLAAS. By way of illustration, the latest JMP baseline report on Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools (2018) has relied on national data on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools gathered under the Protocol, among others.

In a similar manner, countries participating in GLAAS have recognized the usefulness of the information collected under the baseline analysis carried out in the framework of the Protocol for identifying needs for policy improvement and resource allocation.

Figure 4: The UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative

⁹ See http://ggim.un.org/documents/A_RES_71_313.pdf

¹⁰ See <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/>



1.5 Synergies between the Protocol on Water and Health and the 2030 Agenda

The Protocol on Water and Health plays a key role in promoting and operationalizing the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in national and regional contexts. It offers a sound approach, valuable experience and practical tools, and provides a successful regional platform to help propel the implementation of the SDGs forward in an integrated and intersectoral manner.

At the same time, the 2030 Agenda, with its strong call for action in water, sanitation and health through SDG 6 and across several other SDGs, provides momentum for strengthening the role of the Protocol. Given their complementary aims, there is a clear added value in joint implementation. The Protocol’s planning and accountability approach—through baseline analysis, target setting and reporting—offers a practical framework for countries to translate the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda into tangible national targets and actions, which take into account national circumstances.¹¹

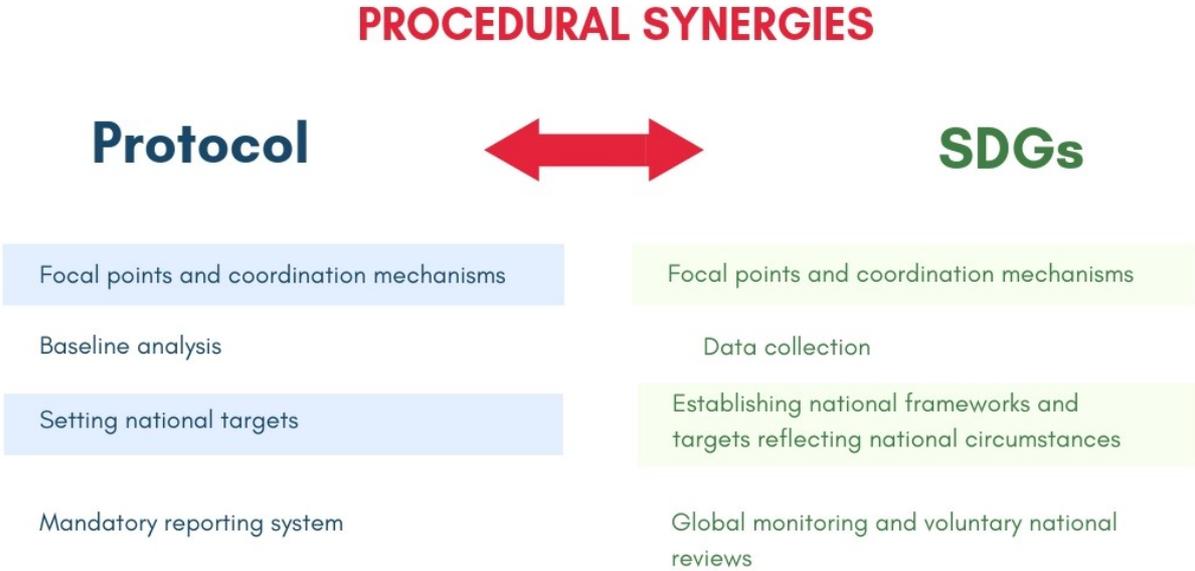
The Protocol’s focus on integrated and intersectoral approaches and coherent policies, in particular with regard to setting and implementing targets, is fully consistent with the 2030 Agenda and clearly stipulates whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches. The Protocol’s legally binding nature is also an important asset for channelling and sustaining the long-term efforts needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The Protocol’s intergovernmental framework and the different activities that constitute its programme of work offer a pan-European platform for all relevant stakeholders to build evidence, strengthen political commitment, develop policy and technical guidance, build in-country capacities, and share experiences and good practices for attaining the 2030 Agenda targets on water, sanitation and health.

¹¹ See http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/water/mop4/Informal_doc/1623256_E_FinalWeb_rev.pdf

From the substance point of view, the joint values and principles that underpin the goals and aims of the Protocol and the 2030 Agenda are universality, equity, prevention, safety, intersectorality and increased commitment to achieving the targets set. The Protocol can be considered as a precursor to the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda in that its attention and activities had already defined and detailed some of the essential ingredients of SDG 6, such as safely managed water and sanitation services (i.e. through promoting the WSP and SSP approaches), access to water, sanitation and hygiene for all, including in institutional settings such as schools and health-care facilities, among others.

There also are several common procedural characteristics between the Protocol and the 2030 Agenda as illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Procedural synergies between the Protocol on Water and Health and the SDGs



The Protocol provides an effective platform to support countries in the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda and mainstreaming the SDGs in the existing sectoral strategies and policies. The clear overlap and complementarity between the Protocol target areas and the SDG targets related to water, sanitation and health indicate the added value of joint, streamlined planning and implementation. Addressing challenges in an integrated manner will avoid duplications, make intersectoral cooperation more effective and facilitate data collection and use, thereby maximizing the use of resources and ensuring policy integration. Along with a programme of work that aligns very well with the SDGs, the Protocol also offers many practical tools and in-country capacity-building, which will assist with their achievement. In countries where specific projects were implemented under the Protocol, national authorities were supported in implementing the Protocol and the 2030 Agenda by addressing systemic issues such as policy and institutional frameworks, adoption of national targets and indicators, data collection, national ownership and means of implementation.

Figure 6 illustrates the interlinkages between target areas contained in article 6 of the Protocol, SDG targets relevant for water, sanitation and health, and priority areas under the Protocol’s programme of work. The figure does not provide all potential interlinkages, rather it is a non-exhaustive model that

can serve as useful guidance when conceptualizing the synergies between the treaty and the 2030 Agenda.

While Figure 6 is specifically focusing on areas for target setting under the Protocol, many other principles and approaches running through the 2030 Agenda, such as public participation, social, economic and political inclusion, policy coherence and multi-stakeholder partnerships, are also at the core of the provisions of the Protocol, such as its article 5 on principles and approaches, article 9 on public awareness and education, and article 10 on public information.

In terms of follow-up and review, work under the Protocol facilitates and strengthens the reporting capacity of Member States by aligning the reporting under the Protocol with the 2030 Agenda review process and raising awareness and sharing knowledge on the linkages between the reporting system under the Protocol and the 2030 Agenda monitoring framework.

Finally, both the Protocol and the 2030 Agenda provide an opportunity for communicating progress, achievements and challenges in the area of water, sanitation and health. Raising awareness on these issues is key to ensuring the requisite political support for the attainment of the common objectives of both instruments. The momentum provided by the 2030 Agenda can be capitalized upon to bring the Protocol to the attention of high-level decision makers, which would in turn ensure the institutionalization and sustainability of the results of implementation of the SDGs beyond 2030.

Figure 6: Protocol on Water and Health target areas and interlinked SDG targets (non-exhaustive)

Protocol target areas (article 6.2)	Sustainable Development Goals and targets	Priority areas of work under the Protocol in support of targets implementation
(a) Quality of drinking water	<p>Goal 2: Zero hunger</p> <p>2.2 End malnutrition and meet targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.1 Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical diseases and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.9 Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination</p> <p>Goal 12: Sustainable consumption and production</p> <p>12.4 Achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes, and reduce their release to water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA2 – Prevention and reduction of water-related disease</p> <p>PA4 – Small-scale water supplies and sanitation</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p>
(b) Reduction of scale of outbreaks and incidents of water-related disease	<p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.2 End preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical disease and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.d Strengthen early warning, risk reduction and management of health risks</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.1 Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA2 – Prevention and reduction of water-related diseases</p>

	<p>6.2 Achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, end open defecation and pay special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities</p> <p>11.5 Reduce number of deaths and number of people affected and direct economic losses caused by water-related disasters</p> <p>Goal 13: Climate action</p> <p>13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters</p>	<p>PA7 – Increasing resilience to climate change</p>
<p>(c) Access to drinking water</p>	<p>Goal 1: No poverty</p> <p>1.4 Ensure access to basic services</p> <p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.2 End preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical disease and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.8 Achieve access to quality essential health-care services</p> <p>Goal 4: Good quality education</p> <p>4.a Build and upgrade educational facilities and that provide safe and effective learning environments</p> <p>Goal 5: Gender equality</p> <p>5.1 End discrimination against women and girls</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA3 – Institutional water, sanitation and hygiene</p> <p>PA4 – Small-scale water supplies and sanitation</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p>

	<p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.1 Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all</p> <p>Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure</p> <p>9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all</p> <p>Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities</p> <p>11.1 Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services</p>	<p>PA6 – Equitable access</p>
(d) Access to sanitation	<p>Goal 1: No poverty</p> <p>1.4 Ensure access to basic services</p> <p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.2 End preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical diseases and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.8 Achieve access to quality essential health-care services</p> <p>3.9 Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination</p> <p>Goal 4: Good quality education</p> <p>4.a Build and upgrade educational facilities and that provide safe and effective learning environments</p> <p>Goal 5: Gender equality</p> <p>5.1 End discrimination against women and girls</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA3 – Institutional water, sanitation and hygiene</p> <p>PA4 – Small-scale water supplies and sanitation</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p> <p>PA6 – Equitable access</p>

	<p>6.2 Achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, end open defecation and pay special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations</p> <p>6.3. Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure</p> <p>9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, with focus on affordable and equitable access for all</p> <p>Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities</p> <p>11.1 Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services</p>	
(e) Levels of performance of collective systems for water supply and sanitation	<p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical diseases and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.9 Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.1 Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all</p> <p>6.2 Achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, end open defecation and pay special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>6.4 Increase water-use efficiency and sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity</p> <p>6.a. Expand international cooperation and capacity-building</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA4 – Small-scale water supplies and sanitation</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p> <p>PA7 – Increasing resilience to climate change</p>

	<p>Goal 12: Sustainable consumption and production</p> <p>12.4 Achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes, and reduce their release to water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment</p> <p>Goal 13: Climate action</p> <p>13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters</p>	
<p>(f) Recognized good practice to the management of water supply and sanitation</p>	<p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.1 Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all</p> <p>6.2 Achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, end open defecation and pay special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>6.4 Increase water-use efficiency and sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity</p> <p>6.5. Implement IWRM, including through transboundary cooperation</p> <p>6.6. Protect and restore water-related ecosystems</p> <p>Goal 12: Sustainable consumption and production</p> <p>12.4 Achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes, and reduce their release to water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment</p> <p>Goal 15: Life on land</p> <p>15.1 Ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA4 – Small-scale water supplies and sanitation</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p>

<p>(g) Discharges of untreated waste water and untreated storm water overflows</p>	<p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical diseases and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.9 Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>6.6 Protect and restore water-related ecosystems</p> <p>Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities</p> <p>11.b Increase number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards mitigation and adaptation to climate change and resilience to disasters</p> <p>Goal 12: Sustainable consumption and production</p> <p>12.4 Achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes, and reduce their release to water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p> <p>PA7 – Increasing resilience to climate change</p>
<p>(h) Quality of discharges of waste water</p>	<p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical diseases and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.9 Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>6.6 Protect and restore water-related ecosystems</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p>

	<p>Goal 12: Sustainable consumption and production</p> <p>12.4 Achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes, and reduce their release to water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment</p>	
(i) Disposal or reuse of sewage sludge from sanitation systems and quality of waste water used for irrigation	<p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical diseases and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.9 Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</p> <p>12.4 Achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes, and reduce their release to water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment</p> <p>Goal 15: Life on land</p> <p>15.1 Ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p>
(j) Quality of waters used as sources for drinking water, bathing, aquaculture and shellfish production	<p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical disease and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.9 Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p>

	6.6 Protect and restore water-related ecosystems	
(k) Recognized good practice to the management of enclosed waters available for bathing	<p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical diseases and combat water-borne diseases</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA2 – Prevention and reduction of water-related diseases</p>
(l) Identification and remediation of particularly contaminated sites	<p>Goal 3: Good health and well-being</p> <p>3.9 Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>6.6 Protect and restore water-related ecosystems</p> <p>Goal 12: Sustainable consumption and production</p> <p>12.4 Achieve environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes, and reduce their release to water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment</p> <p>Goal 15: Life on land</p> <p>15.1 Ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p>

<p>(m) Effectiveness of systems for the management, development, protection and use of water resources</p>	<p>Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being</p> <p>3.3 End neglected tropical diseases and combat water-borne diseases</p> <p>3.9 Reduce deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and water and soil pollution and contamination</p> <p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.1 Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all</p> <p>6.2 Achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, end open defecation and pay special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations</p> <p>6.3 Improve water quality by reducing pollution, halve the proportion of untreated wastewater and increase recycling and safe reuse</p> <p>6.4 Increase water-use efficiency and sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity</p> <p>6.5 Implement IWRM, including through transboundary cooperation</p> <p>6.6 Protect and restore water-related ecosystems</p> <p>6.a. Expand international cooperation and capacity-building</p> <p>Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities</p> <p>11.5 Reduce number of deaths and number of people affected and direct economic losses caused by water-related disasters</p> <p>Goal 15: Life on land</p> <p>15.1 Ensure conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems</p> <p>Goal 17: Means of implementation and revitalize global partnership</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA2 –Prevention and reduction of water-related diseases</p> <p>PA5 – Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation systems</p> <p>PA7 – Increasing resilience to climate change</p>
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	17.9 Enhance international support for capacity-building	
(n) Frequency of publication of information on the quality of drinking water supplied	<p>Goal 6: Water and sanitation for all</p> <p>6.b. Support and strengthen participation of local communities in water and sanitation management</p> <p>Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions</p> <p>16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions</p> <p>16.7 Ensure inclusive and participatory decision-making</p> <p>16.10 Ensure public access to information</p>	<p>PA1 – Improving governance for water and health: support for setting targets and implementing measures</p> <p>PA6 – Equitable access</p>

PART 2

ACTIONS FOR JOINT IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of Part 2 of the Guide is to provide comprehensive and practical step-by-step advice for joint implementation of the Protocol and the 2030 Agenda. It outlines actions for joint implementation, as detailed in the joint implementation checklist (see Figure 7). In particular, practical guidance is provided with regard to establishing coordination mechanisms, undertaking a baseline assessment, setting and implementing targets, and monitoring, follow-up and review of progress. This section includes case studies from several countries of the pan-European region on how to jointly implement the Protocol and the SDGs, which reflect countries' experiences and lessons learned.

Figure 7: Joint implementation checklist

Joint implementation checklist

- 1 Identify and establish contact between SDG and Protocol focal points**
- 2 Identify existing intersectoral coordination mechanisms**
- 3**
 - Use the most appropriate existing coordination mechanism to jointly implement SDGs and the Protocol, **OR**
 - Establish an intersectoral mechanism for joint implementation, **OR**
 - Create good communication channels between coordination mechanisms for the Protocol and for the SDGs
- 4 Use data from the Protocol baseline analysis to assess the situation with respect to water, sanitation and health and identify gaps and priorities for improvement**
- 5**
 - Set national SDG targets in coherence with the existing national targets set under the Protocol, **OR**
 - Set joint national targets for the SDGs and for the Protocol
- 6 Establish action plans and develop implementation measures**
- 7 Use Protocol tools and mechanisms for targets implementation**
- 8 Monitor and review progress, based on data collected under the Protocol reporting system**

2.1 Establishing coordination mechanisms

To implement the 2030 Agenda, governments agreed to establish national frameworks for the achievement of the 17 Goals and set their own national targets by taking into account national circumstances and the existing national planning processes, policies and strategies. The Protocol similarly requires its Parties to establish national or local arrangements to coordinate the target setting, monitoring and reporting processes between their competent authorities. To this end, the Protocol has developed guidance on how to set up national coordination mechanisms on water, sanitation and health issues, which is available in the Target Setting Guidelines and the Collection of Good Practices.

It is important to build upon existing Protocol coordination platforms or, where they do not exist, to create such a platform to coordinate and guide implementation of both the Protocol and the SDGs related to water, sanitation and health.

2.1.1 Building upon existing mechanisms

If a platform to implement the Protocol already exists, this should be built upon to integrate the implementation of SDG 6 and other Goals related to water, sanitation and health so as to avoid duplication and ensure policy coherence. If a platform does not yet exist, one can be established and charged with coordinating and guiding both the Protocol and SDG implementation. It is crucial that the platform is composed to represent all relevant government sectors and not only water, environment and health but also, for example, finance, education, rural development and infrastructure. The coordination body should further involve water and sanitation service providers, the private sector (where relevant), civil society organizations and academia. A formal structure will help mobilize the involvement of the relevant ministries and authorities in the process and secure long-term support for implementation. Where two coordination platforms exist, i.e. one for the Protocol and one for the SDGs, it is key that they establish good communication channels and share information and data to ensure consistency and coherence in approaches. This principle is illustrated by Case Study 1 from Portugal and Case Study 2 from Hungary.

Formal, accountable and continued cooperation can be ensured through the use of existing national coordination mechanisms and platforms, such as national water councils, steering committees under the National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) and other intersectoral groups, including those mandated with the development of National Environmental Health Action Plans (NEHAPs). Case Study 2 from Hungary and Case Study 3 from Albania showcase such successful inter-ministerial cooperation and illustrate how existing mechanisms can be employed dealing with both the Protocol and the SDGs. The use of such structures can reduce the burden of Protocol and SDG implementation and expedite the operation of the national coordination and implementation platform due to well-established cooperation, regular communication and long-standing relationships within the group.

2.1.2 Involvement of political leaders

Where a common platform for joint political and technical implementation is established, it should involve senior management in ministries, such as heads of departments, in addition to political leadership. This will allow for coping with political changes and overcoming bottlenecks in the process. As illustrated in Case Study 1, the involvement of dedicated members with personal commitment and leadership (e.g. national focal points) in the coordination platforms can also be effective.

Case Study 1: Bringing together the Protocol and the SDG processes in Portugal

Portugal considered the Protocol as a complementary enforcement tool for the 2030 Agenda, contributing to the success of both governance instruments. The target setting processes under the Protocol and under the SDGs were almost simultaneous processes that took place during 2017.

An important challenge in Portugal was to bring together the bodies responsible for the implementation of the Protocol and SDG 6. The alignment between the two processes was achieved at the technical expert level during the target setting process when the Protocol working group introduced the benefits of using the Protocol tools to the implementation body responsible for SDG 6. The benefits considered included defining common targets and indicators, and using and analysing data in an integrated way, thus avoiding duplication of efforts.

As some of the experts of the working group of the Protocol were also cooperating with the SDG 6 implementation body, they facilitated the establishment of a more straightforward communication mechanism between the focal points, which allowed both bodies to become aware of the mutual benefits and to establish concrete points where both instruments should be linked (e.g. the articulation of the Protocol indicators and those already identified for monitoring progress with SDG 6). Raising awareness on the Protocol and its benefits was facilitated through the implementation body responsible for SDG 6 during the target setting process, which also provided an opportunity to transfer Protocol best practices on target setting to the SDG 6 implementation process. Ensuring common needs and challenges to achieve targets for both the Protocol and SDGs was crucial to accelerating the target setting process and to providing more visibility to the Protocol.

Main message: Creating a direct communication channel at technical level is mutually beneficial and allows for synergies between the SDGs and Protocol coordination bodies.

Case Study 2: Inter-ministerial cooperation on water and sanitation in Hungary

The implementation of the Protocol in Hungary was initially coordinated by the Water and Health Special Committee led by the National Health Institute. Though the Special Committee no longer has an official mandate, it still retains its former commitments and cooperation on water and health issues as an inter-ministerial network of experts. In turn, the national implementation of the SDGs is the responsibility of the Inter-ministerial Coordinating Committee of International Development Cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Specific tasks related to SDG 6 were delegated to the concerned ministries, which are also part of the inter-ministerial expert network under the Protocol.

The key challenge in the process was to obtain official approval of all involved ministries for the participation of experts in the exercise, despite the already existing working relations between the stakeholders. The well-established working relations of the involved experts from the different ministries improved the flow of information and data sharing in the development of indicators for SDG targets 6.1 and 6.2. For example, the definitions of the important terms, harmonized during the equitable access self-assessment under the Protocol previously undertaken in Hungary, will be used in reporting on the SDGs. The previous work under the Protocol generally supports the following aspects of the SDGs implementation: (1) assessment of the current status; (2) communication between the involved stakeholders; (3) planning; and (4) reporting on progress in implementing SDG targets 6.1 and 6.2.

Main message: Bringing together Protocol and SDG experts supports SDGs implementation.

Case Study 3: Improved coordination between Protocol and SDG related matters through an intersectoral mechanism on water issues in Albania

The Albanian National Strategy for Development and Integration 2015–2020 is the highest strategic document that combines the EU integration agenda with the country’s sustainable economic and social development agenda, including the link with the SDGs. With the water sector considered as one of the Strategy’s main priorities, the government of Albania applied a new approach by establishing an Integrated Policy Management Group for integrated water resources management (IWRM), including four sub-thematic groups (Water for People, Water for Food, Water for Industry and Water for the Environment) as a high level technical platform to integrate different line ministries, local government, development partners, focal points and NGOs towards achieving national objectives.

The sub-group Water for People, which is also responsible for the implementation of the Protocol and SDG 6, is an inter-institutional platform that can be used for different issues related to water supply and sanitation processes that include more than one institution. This group has developed the National Sector Programme for Integrated Water Management that serves as a nation-wide instrument through which all objectives and measures are coordinated. It established a single national, strategic water sector framework and improved budget-planning methodology based on the prioritization of funding within and between different objectives in the water sector. The Programme is an important instrument to successfully achieve SDG 3 and SDG 6, as well as Protocol targets. The sub-group Water for People made communication easier between the Protocol and SDG focal points and promoted the Protocol as a mechanism that helps establish national targets and actions towards SDG 3 and SDG 6 implementation. The National Sector Programme has also been used by the SDGs Working Group to prepare the Voluntary National Review report for SDG 6.

Main message: Using an integrated approach for water governance through the establishment of an intersectoral mechanism is highly beneficial.

2.2 Assessing the situation

Prior to setting national objectives and targets under both the Protocol and the SDGs, it is important that countries thoroughly assess their national water, sanitation and health situation. To this end, a baseline analysis is an essential step to inform the identification of meaningful targets in the national context. The target setting process under the Protocol offers a framework for such an in-depth baseline analysis as a prerequisite for establishing targets for each specific area referred to under article 6 of the Protocol and relevant SDGs. Analysis of data on the water, sanitation and health situation and an assessment of key issues and challenges should help to identify specific issues that require policy focus and attention. Countries that are in the process of revising their targets should also undertake such an analysis. In countries where a baseline analysis has already been conducted under the Protocol, it is advisable that SDG focal points make use of its results. If it has not yet been undertaken, conducting a baseline analysis should be done in an integrated manner, and information and data should be shared among the SDG and the Protocol processes and focal points.

An in-depth baseline analysis is a prerequisite for establishing appropriate SDG targets. Using the Protocol framework and its process of target setting facilitates such an analysis.

The baseline analysis can also provide valuable insights for existing data gaps, which need to be closed to gain a full understanding of the situation and thus a better basis for policymaking and target setting. Case Study 4 provides an example of a regional survey on small-scale water supplies and national situation assessments in Georgia and Serbia.

Case Study 4: Regional situation assessment to collect data and improve access to drinking water in rural areas

Improving the situation of small-scale water supply and sanitation systems is one of the priority work areas under the Protocol. In many countries, comprehensive information on small-scale water supplies is typically not readily available at the national level, especially when it comes to very small systems. This is also relevant for the SDG process, as SDG 6.1 calls for universal and equitable access to safe drinking water for all. However, information on the safety of the services, especially from very small systems, may not be available for reporting. Region-wide surveys conducted under the Protocol can help in appreciating the situation of small-scale water supplies in rural areas; the results of such surveys, in absence of national baseline data, can support the identification of issues and improve interventions.

In order to close the knowledge gap about small systems, rapid assessments of drinking-water quality and sanitary conditions were conducted in Georgia in 2012 and in Serbia in 2016^a under the auspices of the Protocol. In Georgia this helped to raise awareness at the national level, as well as informing the National Strategy and Action Plan on European Health and Water, which includes targets from both the Protocol and the SDGs. Applying the rapid assessment in rural areas in Serbia closed the knowledge gaps and informed decision makers on necessary remedial actions at national and local levels, including local self-governments and local bodies responsible for SDG implementation at the local level (Green Councils). New evidence gathered will also inform the process of revision of the national targets under the Protocol in Serbia.

Main message: Data collected under the Protocol at regional and national levels may support countries in identifying areas for action under the SDGs, as well as in improving the evidence base, enabling informed policy making and taking actions for improvements.

^a See <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/environment-and-health/water-and-sanitation/publications/2017/improving-drinking-water-supply-in-rural-areas-of-serbia-2017>

2.3 Setting targets

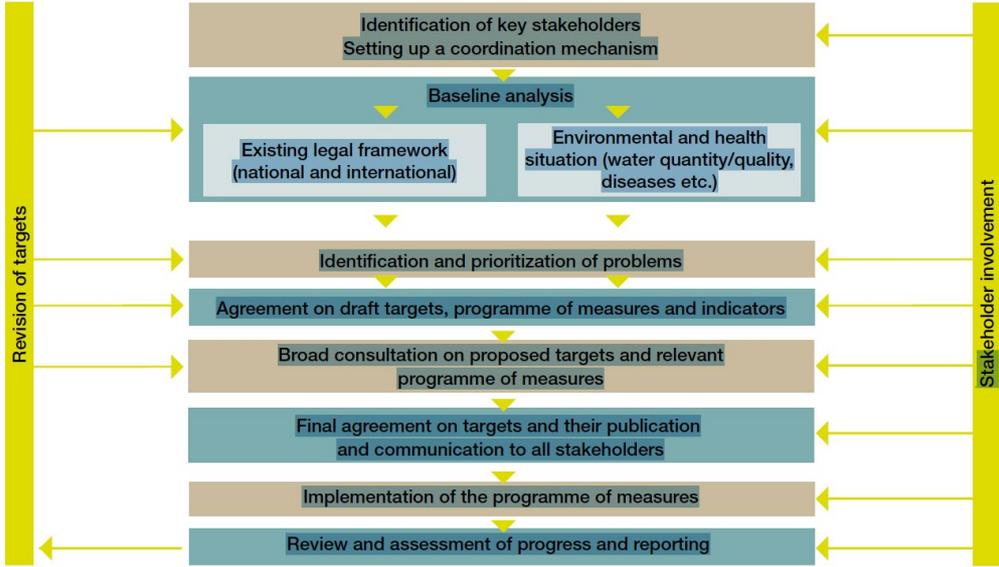
One distinctive aspect of the 2030 Agenda is that countries are supposed to implement the SDGs by setting national targets and developing implementation plans that are tailored to their own priorities and capacities in conjunction with establishing governance mechanisms and partnerships for implementation and monitoring and reporting frameworks.

The Protocol has long-standing experience in setting country-specific targets in a process that each Party is required to undertake within two years following ratification and that many non-Parties have also followed. Transparency, accountability and public participation are the building blocks of this process. The

Alignment of the Protocol targets and the SDG targets pertinent to water, sanitation and health is highly beneficial, as well as establishing the same indicators and harmonized data collection, management and analyses.

Protocol guides Parties through a progression of steps that is comprehensive, consultative and inclusive. The Protocol’s target setting framework is a practical tool that has resulted in successful implementation with positive results towards improving water, sanitation and health. It can also offer a clear framework for translating and operationalizing global SDGs into national contexts. The Protocol also promotes setting and implementing targets at the subnational level. Both the 2030 Agenda and the Protocol encourage countries to look beyond sectoral approaches and to establish synergies across sectors, such as agriculture, education and climate resilience. The target setting process under the Protocol is illustrated by Figure 8 and detailed in the Target Setting Guidelines.

Figure 8: The Protocol on Water and Health target setting process



If national targets and indicators have already been set under the Protocol, the responsible national authorities should rely on these when establishing their national targets and indicators for relevant SDGs, as illustrated in Case Study 5 from Portugal. All targets set by Parties to the Protocol are publicly available on the Protocol website.¹

Case Study 5: Integrating targets and indicators under the Protocol and the SDGs in Portugal

The Portuguese strategy for target setting under the Protocol was based on national legislation, national strategic plans and the SDGs. Where possible, indicators used for measuring progress towards targets set under the Protocol were the same as the ones for the national targets established under the SDGs.

As an example, the indicator established for the target set under Article 6.2 (d) of the Protocol “d.1: Increasing the level of service coverage through sewerage networks” is aligned with the Portuguese indicators proposed for monitoring SDG target 6.2, namely indicator

- 6.2.1.a “Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services, including a hand-washing facility with soap and water”, using a proxy indicator based on EU statistics on income and living conditions; and
- 6.2.1.b “Proportion of dwellings served by wastewater drainage (%) by geographical location

¹ See http://www.unece.org/env/water/pwh_targets_set.html

(NUTS, 2013)”, assuming that all households with service coverage through sewerage networks have safely managed sanitation services, including a hand-washing facility with soap and water.

The data used for monitoring both the Protocol and SDG indicators is collected by the Portuguese Water and Waste Regulation Authority (ERSAR) based on the indicator “Percentage of households located in the utility’s intervention area with satisfactory evaluation in the indicator ‘AR01 – Service coverage through sewerage networks’”.

As regards on-site sanitation, in 2016 Portugal included an additional indicator for the target set under Article 6.2 (d) of the Protocol “d.2: Increasing the level of service coverage through controlled on-site systems”. Under this indicator, data is collected for cases where municipalities collect and safely dispose of wastewater from on-site sanitation systems. Cases where the collection and disposal of wastewater is managed by private operators are not covered by this indicator; however, the indicator increases understanding and supports improving safely managed on-site sanitation systems.

Main message: The integration of Protocol and SDGs target setting processes leads to the establishment of coherent targets and indicators.

As targets under the Protocol are to be periodically revised, the 2030 Agenda offers the opportunity to review Protocol targets in terms of their relevance, comprehensiveness and appropriateness, and to update priorities in the context of the SDGs and other relevant global and regional commitments, such as the 2017 Declaration of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Ostrava Declaration). Likewise, the Protocol target setting process offers an opportunity to align national and international water, sanitation and health related policies. Case Study 6 from the Republic of Moldova illustrates how the establishment of revised Protocol targets provides a framework for the implementation of SDG targets related to water, sanitation and health. Case Study 7 from the Netherlands and North Macedonia provides examples of how the Protocol supports the integration of various national and international agreements in the water, sanitation and health domain.

Table 1 illustrates the overlaps of different areas between the Protocol and the SDGs by providing some examples of targets set by different countries; further examples can be found in the Collection of Good Practices.²

Table 1: A sample overview of examples of targets and their relevance to the SDGs

TARGET AREA AND TARGET EXAMPLE	SDGs
I. QUALITY OF THE DRINKING WATER SUPPLIED (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (a))	
Reduce non-compliance of drinking water quality according to national standards by xx% by 20xx.	6.1
II. REDUCTION OF THE SCALE OF OUTBREAKS AND INCIDENTS OF WATER-RELATED DISEASE (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (b))	
xx% reduction in the occurrence of water-borne diseases compared to 20xx by 20xx: (i) typhoid fever; (ii) bacillary dysentery; (iii) viral hepatitis; (iv) diarrheal diseases; and (v) parasitic diseases.	3.2, 3.3, 3.9

² See <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=44286>

III. ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (c))	
Secure xx% access to safe water for all educational, medical and social facilities.	3.8, 4.a, 6.1, 11.1
IV. ACCESS TO SANITATION (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (d))	
Increase the level of the population connected to centralized and local sewerage systems to xx% for urban populations and xx% for rural populations.	1.4, 6.2, 6.3
V. LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE OF COLLECTIVE SYSTEMS AND OTHER SYSTEMS FOR WATER SUPPLY (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (e))	
Implement Water Safety Plans in supply systems serving 5,000 residents or more.	6.1
XX. FREQUENCY OF PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON THE QUALITY OF DRINKING WATER SUPPLIED AND ON OTHER WATERS RELEVANT TO THE PROTOCOL (ART. 6, PARA. 2 (n))	
Publish regular reports and consumer information on drinking water quality.	6.1, 6.b

The Protocol recommends that the agreed targets and target dates are endorsed at the appropriate political level (e.g. by government decision or by council of ministers or Parliament, depending on the national situation) and then published and brought to the attention of all stakeholders and the general public at national and local levels. Non-governmental organizations can play an important role in disseminating and publicizing targets, target dates and monitoring programmes.

Case Study 6: Using targets under the Protocol to implement SDGs in the Republic of Moldova

The Republic of Moldova has considerable experience with target setting under the Protocol. The process was initiated in 2008, culminating with the adoption of 34 targets in 2010. While there was some progress in the implementation of the targets, not all of them were successfully implemented, so the Government decided to develop a stand-alone National Programme for the implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health for 2016–2025. The National Programme, that forms an integral part of the national legislation, contains revised targets for almost all Protocol target areas. At the moment of adoption of the Programme by the Government, the national authorities initiated a dialogue for SDG transposition into national policies. The National Programme was used as a framework for defining SDG targets on water and sanitation. Among the adopted national targets and indicators, five SDG indicators coincided with indicators of the National Programme, which is considered the best platform for achieving progress on existing gaps in water, sanitation and health. It also provides a good policy framework for the implementation of most SDG targets on water and sanitation in the absence of a national SDG implementation body. The established monitoring and reporting mechanism for the National Programme will provide more visibility to the Protocol and at the same time offer a practical instrument to monitor the implementation of water and sanitation SDGs.

Main message: Targets set under the Protocol that are adopted at high level can provide a policy framework for the implementation of SDG targets on water and sanitation.

Case study 7: Aligning national and international water-related health policies through target setting in the Netherlands and North Macedonia

Despite the high level of achievement on drinking water and sanitation in *the Netherlands*, new challenges require further attention, for example those related to climate change, emerging substances (including pharmaceuticals) and microbiological risks. The national targets set in 2011

under the Protocol did not completely reflect these challenges. The revision process, which started in 2018 with participation of government agencies and the public, will consider SDG 6 and other water and health related SDGs, as there is a clear relationship between their objectives. The revision will also be linked to the Ostrava Declaration under the European Environment and Health Process where water and health were identified as one of the priority areas for which countries are expected to develop national portfolios of action on environment and health. In 2018, work was in progress with regard to mapping the objectives of the water-related SDGs, the Protocol goals, the Ostrava Declaration, and the European Union and national policies and targets. The target setting process is therefore a chance to strengthen interrelations of several legal sustainable water management frameworks. The process is also expected to raise awareness among stakeholders about the existence of the Protocol as a support tool for SDG implementation.

In 2016, the Health and Environment Committee of **North Macedonia** drafted the Action Plan for Health and Environment, which is part of the country's Health 2020 Strategy. Even if the country is not yet a Party to the Protocol, targets set in the Action Plan were defined with consideration of provisions and activities under the Protocol on Water and Health. For example, following a self-assessment of equity of access to water and sanitation, it was decided to establish local action plans for implementation by municipalities to address this issue. The targets were also aligned with the water, sanitation and health related SDGs, with the Action Plan explaining the correlation between national and SDG targets and indicators.

Main message: Setting water, sanitation and health targets in an integrated manner strengthens interrelations between the different legal frameworks.

Well-organized public participation in the target setting process enhances the acceptance of the targets by civil society and contributes to their quality and effective implementation by ensuring that civil society organizations become partners in achieving those targets. Case Study 8 from Ukraine showcases the importance of involving the public in the target setting process.

Case Study 8: The involvement of the public in target setting under the Protocol and the SDGs in Ukraine

In 2016, the official process of integrating the SDGs into national processes was launched by the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine. During 2015–2016, the Country Water Partnership (CWP) of Ukraine organized three national workshops and consultations with stakeholders to raise awareness on SDG 6 and to discuss national goals, targets and indicators as a precursor process to defining SDG targets. More than 100 representatives of national authorities, NGOs, water professionals, academia, educational institutions, water utilities and managers took part in the consultations. The national targets set under the Protocol and reports on their implementation submitted in 2013 and 2016 were used as a basis for CWP's consultations and the development of stakeholders' recommendations for national targets and indicators for SDG 6.1 and 6.2. The CWP thus supported establishing SDG 6 targets and indicators based on the Protocol's national targets provided by the Protocol focal points from the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Health. As a result of the stakeholder consultations, the approved national targets and indicators for SDG 6.1 and 6.2 are more comprehensive and detailed in comparison with the current Protocol targets, including for example, criteria on the quality and affordability of services. In turn, the national targets under the Protocol are already in the process of revision with the support of CWP in order to align them with the national SDG targets and their indicators.

Main message: Active involvement of civil society organizations can be instrumental in organizing the setting of national targets under the SDGs and promoting the Protocol tools to be used in this process.

2.4 Implementing targets

The Protocol is instrumental in facilitating the implementation of the water, sanitation and health related SDGs as it supports the establishment of institutional and legal arrangements for gradual implementation through its target setting mechanism. It also provides countries with practical tools for supporting capacity to achieve their objectives.

The Protocol facilitates and provides practical tools for the effective implementation of the water, sanitation and health related SDGs and national targets.

For example, the Protocol has consistently promoted the adoption of the WHO recommended WSP and SSP approaches. WSPs and SSPs are step-by-step risk-based approaches that can be applied to all water and sanitation systems to ensure that they are safely managed and meet health objectives in line with SDG targets 6.1–6.3. Under the auspices of the Protocol, the publication *Water safety plan: a field guide to improving drinking-water safety in small communities*³ has been developed and promoted as a tool to support WSPs in small-scale water supply systems as the most effective way of ensuring the provision of safe drinking water.

The *Equitable Access Score-card*⁴—a self-assessment methodology developed under the Protocol—facilitates intersectoral policy processes to help achieve access to water and sanitation for all, which is also in line with SDG targets 6.1 and 6.2. It supports countries in establishing a baseline measure of the equity of access to water and sanitation, identifying related priorities, discussing further actions to be taken and evaluating progress through a process of self-assessment.

The Protocol has been supporting several rapid assessment exercises, based on a WHO/UNICEF methodology, for systematically evaluating drinking water quality and sanitary conditions in water supply systems (see Case Study 4).⁵ This has proven particularly suitable for small-scale supply systems in rural areas. The use of the method also contributes to obtaining the baseline data necessary for target setting under both the Protocol and the SDGs.

The Protocol has also been instrumental in generating knowledge, raising awareness and promoting policy attention with regard to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in institutional settings like schools and health-care facilities. While WASH in institutional settings is clearly stipulated by SDG targets 4.a, 6.1 and 6.2, underpinned by the principles of universality, equity and attention to the special needs of women and girls, the Protocol-led activities at regional and national levels clearly raised the policy profile of institutional WASH in the pan-European region and led to target setting by countries in line with the SDGs.

³ See <http://www.euro.who.int/en/publications/abstracts/water-safety-plan-a-field-guide-to-improving-drinking-water-safety-in-small-communities>

⁴ See https://www.unecce.org/env/water/publications/ece_mp.wh_8.html

⁵ See https://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/rapid_assessment/en/

The Protocol facilitates national capacity-building and activities on the ground in support of the uptake of certain policies and instruments (such as WSP adoption in regulation and in water supply practice and application of equity assessments using the Equitable Access Score-card) and thus the implementation of national targets. The Protocol also provides an effective platform for convening different stakeholders to share knowledge and good practices across countries on various issues, such as source water protection, building resilience to climate change and water scarcity, wastewater treatment and reuse, water-related disease surveillance and outbreak response, institutional water, sanitation and hygiene in schools and health-care facilities, and effective management and surveillance of small-scale water supply and sanitation systems in rural areas.

In terms of institutional arrangements and financing, the Protocol provides guidance on establishing intersectoral action plans with adequate resource allocation, adopted at the highest possible appropriate level. Such action planning will translate the targets into a realistic and achievable set of actionable activities that can guide state fund allocation and donor support. This can include undertaking a cost-benefit analysis, which may facilitate obtaining political and financial support for measures and help prioritize targets and target dates. Examples of such action plans from Norway and the Republic of Moldova are provided in Case Study 9.

Case study 9: Developing dynamic action plans to implement targets, examples from Norway and the Republic of Moldova

Having set national targets on water, sanitation and health in **Norway** in 2015, the Ministry of Health and Care Services, as lead ministry for the Protocol's implementation, developed an action plan to achieve these targets. The action plan was designed to be a dynamic document subject to regular reviews to ensure that the most efficient measures were taken to reach the targets. While the Norwegian targets are set at a general level, the action plan describes a flexible system with specific and realistic measures to be achieved within a shorter time frame, easing the review and evaluation of progress. The action plan also defines the concrete responsibilities of the different concerned authorities, waterworks and other relevant stakeholders, which ultimately increases commitment and a sense of ownership. The action plan is structured around six thematic lines: government follow-up, information, organizing and competence, knowledge obtaining and research, international cooperation, and documentation.

Following the formal adoption of national targets under the Protocol in the **Republic of Moldova** in 2016, the Government decided to elaborate a concrete action plan to ensure efficient achievement of the targets. The action plan was adopted by the Government as a National Programme. It contains concrete implementation measures with allocated responsibilities and estimate costs, and establishes a specific monitoring and evaluation procedure.

Main message: Action plans allow for establishing flexible and realistic implementation measures, easing the review and evaluation of progress.

2.5 Monitoring, follow-up and review of progress

Good quality data is a precondition to the successful monitoring of progress of the SDGs related to water, sanitation and health. The mandatory reporting system and the data collected under the Protocol are useful to review SDGs implementation. Data collected within the reporting exercises under the Protocol has already been used under the UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-water (GLAAS) and the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (JMP), which are part of the UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6. Data collected under the Protocol can also be used to report progress in implementing the commitments taken under the 2017 Ostrava Declaration on Environment and Health.

Reporting under the Protocol supports the monitoring of the water, sanitation and health SDGs, while allowing to go beyond globally agreed SDG indicators to enable in-depth tracking of targets tailored to country priorities.

Such an approach is advisable to avoid the burden of multiple reporting, as well as to ensure the consistency of indicators, data collection and analyses. The SDG focal points should check the data available under the Protocol to avoid duplication of work and to ensure that conflicting information is not reported.⁶ The added value of reporting under the Protocol is that it goes beyond the global SDG indicators and allows more in-depth tracking of progress in the implementation of national targets.

Parties to the Protocol are required to submit reports in a 3-year cycle according to the timelines shown in Figure 9. In the reporting exercise, Parties are requested to collect and evaluate data, and report on progress towards the achievement of the targets set under the Protocol and on common indicators related to access to water and sanitation services, water quality, occurrence of water-related disease and effective management, and the protection and use of freshwater resources. The reports should also provide information on thematic focus areas, such as water-related disease surveillance and response systems, WASH in institutional settings, safe management of drinking water supply, and equitable access to water and sanitation. More information on the Protocol reporting system may be found in the *Guidelines and template for summary reports under the Protocol on Water and Health*.⁷

Figure 9: Timeline for reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health

⁶ See https://www.unece.org/env/water/pwh_work/tsr.html

⁷ See https://www.unece.org/env/water/protocol_fourth_reporting_cycle.html



Reporting under the Protocol is only mandatory for Parties. However, several other States have been submitting their national reports voluntarily as they have found the process useful for the self-assessment of progress in the area of water, sanitation and health. These countries could not only use the reporting under the Protocol as a basis for their follow-up and review of the relevant SDGs, but they can also use the SDG process to institutionalize reporting under the Protocol, bringing it to the attention of politicians and decision makers. An example of using the Protocol to report on the SDGs is provided by Case Study 10 from Norway.

Case Study 10: Using reporting on the targets set under the Protocol for reporting on SDG implementation in Norway

In Norway, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinates the overall SDG reporting and delegates to the Ministry of Climate and Environment the coordination of reporting on SDG 6. The Ministry of Health and Care Services contributes with updated information regarding SDG 6 and also coordinates the work under the Protocol on Water and Health. The links between the water, sanitation and health related SDGs and the Protocol are therefore clear at the national level.

These inter-linkages have been utilized to benefit both processes. For example, in the Norwegian report on SDG 6 implementation, reference can be made to the ongoing work under the national targets set under the Protocol. In its reporting processes on SDG 3, the following reference to the Protocol was made “The quality of drinking water is generally good, but waterborne diseases that mainly cause gastro intestinal infections occurs. New regulation on drinking water and a 24/7 national help desk for water treatment plants was implemented in 2017 to ensure quality of the water supply.

These measures are also target measures under the UNECE-WHO Regional Office for Europe Protocol on Water and Health.” Regarding SDG 6, the following was mentioned, “Norwegians enjoy universal access to safe and affordable drinking water, adequate and equitable sanitation and sewerage for all. Nevertheless, it is expected that further efforts will be necessary to deal with the increasing impacts of climate change, such as changes in temperature, higher precipitation, more frequent extreme weather events and the spread of new pathogens (targets 6.1; 6.2). Water and sewage pipes are aging, and the renewal rate has not been adequate. An increased renewal rate is the main Norwegian target under the UNECE-WHO Regional Office for Europe Protocol on Water and Health.”

The main challenges were how to link the Protocol reporting process with the SDG reporting routine and how to use the Protocol targets for SDG reporting. The Ministry of Health and Care Services was approached by the Ministry of Climate and Environment requesting that it take responsibility for reporting on the SDGs related to drinking water. The Ministry of Health and Care Services then suggested that the Protocol targets, which were already accepted by the Government and therefore needed no new decisions or approval, could be used as a basis for reporting. The suggested reporting items from all involved ministries were then adopted in a government decision.

The fact that Norway already had an existing Protocol framework and had adopted national targets and action plans involving relevant national agencies, saved time and made it easier to propose that the targets be used for SDG reporting, as they had already enjoyed political attention within the Government.

Main message: Reporting on the Protocol targets within the process of follow-up and review of SDGs can save time and resources.

The VNRs also provide countries with an opportunity to report on achievements, challenges and lessons learned related to water and sanitation, using experiences from the implementation of relevant SDGs related to water, sanitation and health, as well as experiences gained through the implementation of the Protocol, thereby achieving greater coherence and coordination. As illustrated by Case Study 11, in Romania the Protocol framework was used to prepare the national VNR on SDG 6.

Case Study 11: Preparation of the Voluntary National Review on SDG 6 using the Protocol framework in Romania

In Romania, the Protocol on Water and Health has proved to be an important mechanism to implement SDG 6 and to review progress. The setting of national targets for SDG 6 and other water, sanitation and health related targets capitalized on the targets set under the Protocol. Similarly, the Protocol has been useful in the process of developing the Romanian 2018 Voluntary National Review on SDG 6. The elaboration of the Romanian VNR started in 2017 within an Open Working Group coordinated by the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry of Waters and Forests is part of this working group and has contributed to the matrix for the review of data on the progress in implementing targets under the Protocol collected within the 2016 reporting cycle. During this process, the national SDG focal points and the Protocol focal points worked together to develop the narrative report with a focus on SDG 6.

The report emphasizes that the Protocol is the mechanism to advance and operationalize progress on the SDGs and targets related to water, sanitation, hygiene and health, and has proven its effectiveness for sustainable development and for improving drinking water quality, sanitation and public health.^a

Concurrently, the VNR process will contribute to the preparation of the Romanian report under the Protocol to be submitted in 2019. Findings of the VNR will also allow the review of targets set under the Protocol in terms of their relevance, comprehensiveness and appropriateness, as well as updating priorities in the context of the 2030 Agenda and other relevant global and regional commitments.

Main message: The Protocol is an important mechanism to advance and operationalize progress on the SDGs.

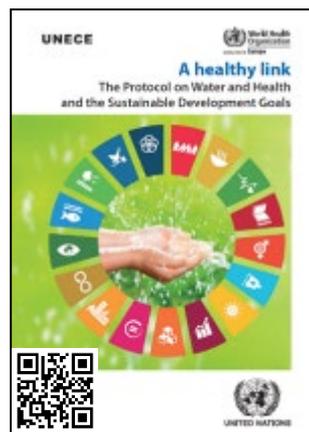
^a See Romania's Voluntary National Review Report 2018 at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/19952Voluntary_National_Review_ROMANIA_with_Cover.pdf

“Taking SDGs to the streets” and the involvement of citizens and civil society is a critical aspect of the 2030 Agenda, although sometimes data provided by civil society can be difficult to harmonize with official statistics. Partnerships with government entities whose data would be strengthened by the collaboration are essential. Monitoring is much more relevant to citizens if it is done at the local level. Therefore, support systems should be in place to educate and encourage people to use online information portals and information and communication technologies. The public can be involved in different ways, including via apps specifically developed for monitoring purposes, which can also help to raise awareness and foster civic engagement.

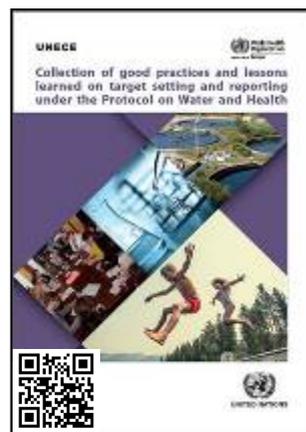
Publications developed under the Protocol on Water and Health



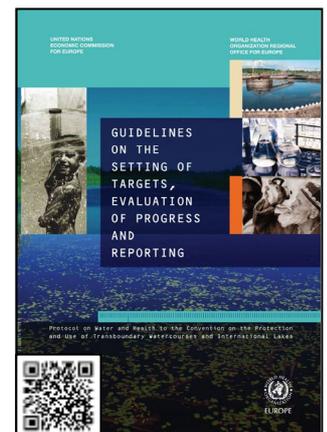
[The UNECE/WHO Protocol on Water and Health to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes](#)



[A healthy link: The Protocol on Water and Health and the Sustainable Development Goals](#)



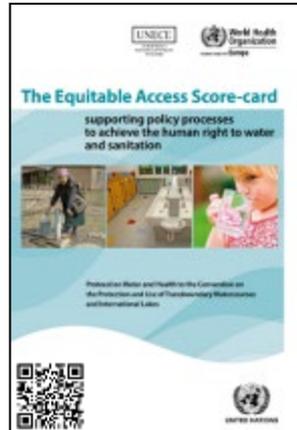
[Collection of good practices and lessons learned on target setting and reporting under the Protocol on Water and Health](#)



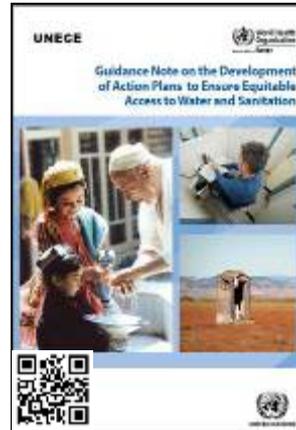
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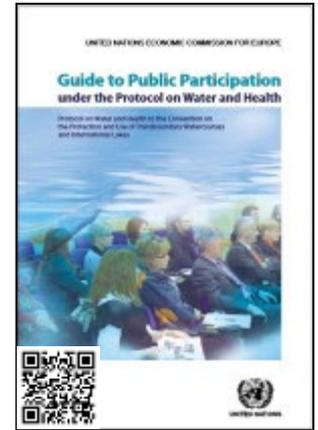
[No one left behind: Good practices to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation in the pan-European region](#)



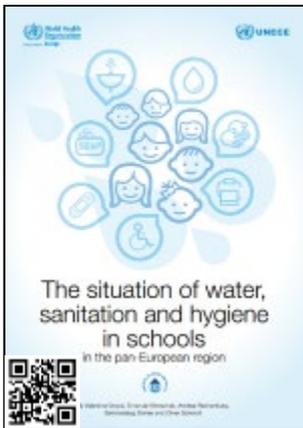
[The Equitable Access Score-card: Supporting policy processes to achieve the human right to water and sanitation](#)



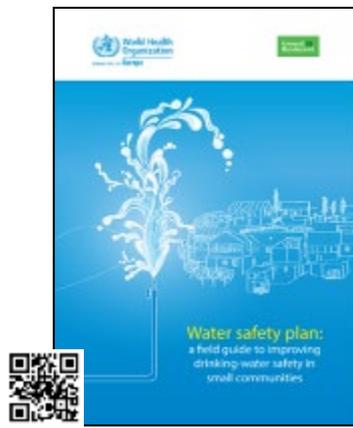
[Guidance Note on the Development of Action Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Water and Sanitation](#)



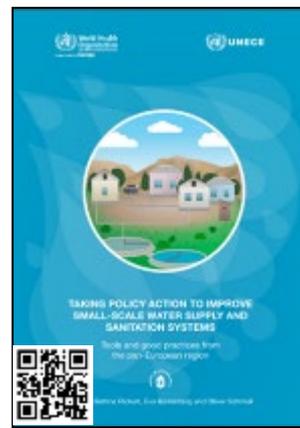
[Guide to Public Participation under the Protocol on Water and Health](#)



[The situation of water, sanitation and hygiene in schools in the pan-European region](#)



[Water safety plan: a field guide to improving drinking-water safety in small communities](#)



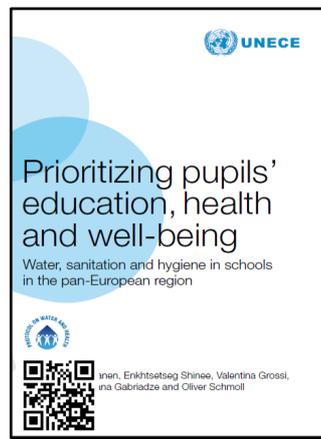
[Taking policy action to improve small-scale water supply and sanitation systems. Tools and good practices from the pan-European Region](#)



[Status of small-scale water supplies in the WHO European Region. Results of a survey conducted under the Protocol on Water and Health](#)



[Guidance on Water Supply and Sanitation in Extreme Weather Events](#)



[Prioritizing pupils' education, health and well-being. Water, sanitation and hygiene in schools in the pan-European Region](#)



[Small-scale water supplies in the pan-European region. Background, Challenges, Improvements](#)



[Policy guidance on water-related disease surveillance](#)



[Technical guidance on water-related disease surveillance](#)