



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF HEALTH AND CARE SERVICES

Added value of setting targets under the Protocol on Water and Health

*Workshop on setting Targets and reporting under the
Protocol on Water and Health
Geneva 12th March 2009*

Added value for Norway

- Added value of setting targets under the Protocol on Water and Health = added value of joining the Protocol
- Two main pillars for Norway's commitment to the Protocol:
 - Supports national activities
 - Supports international commitments

Some relevant international commitments

- UN Millennium Development Goals
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Through the EEA Agreement Norway adheres to a large part of the EU legislation i.e.;
 - Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD)
 - Drinking water Directive 98/83/EC
 - Council Directive 91/271/EEC concerning urban waste-water treatment
 - Council Directive 91/676/EEC concerning nitrate pollution from agricultural sources

Setting targets can be a tool to pursue compliance with EU directives

- Example: Drinking water Directive 98/83/EC gives a number of parameters but;
 - Leaves it to the Member States how to achieve compliance.
 - Does not link parameters directly to the reduction of water borne diseases
- This against a background where Norway;
 - still has than a certain number of consumers receiving unsatisfactory drinking water with unacceptable health risks
 - Still has a somewhat elevated, number of illness cases reported per annum to the WHO

Setting targets can be a tool to complement EU directives

- The Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC (WFD) and the waste water directive focus on the impact on environment at large and drinking water is addressed only as one of several concerns.
- The protocol makes a point out of seeing the performance of collective water supply systems and sanitation systems in a public health perspective.

How does the Protocol support national activities?

- Creates a platform for bringing together different stakeholders (such as governmental and non-governmental organizations, scientific community, private sector and general public).
- Some of the Norwegian stakeholders:
 - The Ministry of Health and Care services,
 - The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 - The Ministry for the Environment
 - The Norwegian Food Safety Authority (coordinating body)
 - The Institute for Public Health
 - The Norwegian Pollution Control Authority
 - The Directorate for Nature Management.
 - Norwegian Water BA (National association of water and wastewater works.)

How does the Protocol support national activities? (cont.)

- The target-setting process draws attention to water and sanitation issues by:
 - Offering an opportunity and a framework to analyze the national situation, and target its challenges
 - Helping to focus the attention of decision makers to actions that are needed,
 - Communicating national targets to other stakeholders and the general public, which again raise awareness of responsibilities and commitments in the areas of water and health

How does the Protocol support national activities? (cont.)

- The target-setting process takes due consideration to the specific needs of each country:
 - Allows for targets to be tailor tailor-made to the specific problems in each country and to take a holistic approach to address them.
 - Allows for a realistic plan for improvement with prioritized time-bound targets adapted to the national situation to be elaborated.

How does the Protocol support national activities? (cont.)

- Clearly defined national targets can be used by national and local authorities as a basis for the allocation of resources to remedy shortcomings
- Clearly established and politically endorsed targets can also be a sound basis for requests for international assistance, enhancing possibilities of access to international funding, in particular through the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism (AHPFM)

Conclusions

- Parties should see the Protocol within the broad framework of other international commitments and not as a competitor to such commitments, but rather as a tool to support them
- At the national level the target setting process gives added value by:
 - Bringing together different stakeholders with relevance to water and public health
 - Drawing attention to water and sanitation issues
 - Taking into consideration each countries specific needs
 - Helping allocating recourses nationally and internationally