Implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health and the target setting process in Hungary

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Ratification of the Protocol

• Hungary was involved in the Protocol from the beginning

• Álán Pintér, former chief medical health officer was among the earliest propagators of the idea

• The Hungarian Government formally adopted the Protocol on Water and Health in October, 2005 (Government Decree 213/2005 (X. 5.))

• Implementation of the Protocol is the joint task of the ministries responsible for health and environment (two focal points)

• Implementation was started after the 1st Meeting of the Parties in January, 2007
Water and Health Expert Committee

- Official mandate from 2008
- Originally set up under the National Inter-ministerial Committee on Public Health
  - Chaired by the National Public Health Center
  - National focal points (health and environment)
- Members (technical representation):
  - Ministry of Human Resources (health)
  - Ministry of Interior (water resources)
  - Ministry of Agriculture
  - Cabinet of the Ministers (local governments)
  - Ministry of National Development (water utilities)
  - Local public health services
  - National Center for Epidemiology
  - NGOs (Water Utility Association, Pool and Spa Association)
Mandate of the Expert Committee

• Main task to coordinate the implementation of the Protocol in Hungary
  – Review and assess the progress of implementation
  – Report on the progress
  – Assist information exchange to facilitate implementation
  – Participate in the working groups and task forces of the Protocol (through national focal points)
  – Formulate short- and medium term tasks of the implementation
  – Propose an inter-ministerial framework to delegate tasks

• The Expert Committee shall formally meet at least once a year.
• First activity: drafting the targets and target dates
Target setting

- Experts identified problem areas
- Expert Committee drafted the targets (2008-2009)
- Meetings every 6 months
- Other stakeholders were also invited
- Targets were approved by the involved ministries and the Government
- Targets were submitted to the Secretariat in January, 2009.
- Targets and target dates were published on a dedicated website
Areas of target setting - 1

a) Drinking water quality (2010, 2015) – increase chemical compliance

b) Reducing water-borne disease (continuous) – improve surveillance


e) Public water supply and sewage performance – baseline analysis

f) Good management practices in water supply and sanitation – introduction of water safety planning

g) Reduction of untreated waste water (2015) – treatment to be introduced to all collective systems, decrease the proportion of combined sewers
j) Quality of water used as a drinking water source, (2009) – baseline analysis, action plan, indicators for bathing water quality


n) **Information systems improvement** (drinking water quality, bathing water quality) (2008, continuous)

o) **Climate adaptation** – strategic planning
Implementation of the targets

- Level of implementation varies between targets
- Usually the progress is more defined on areas which overlap with the EU obligations (availability of finances)
  - Drinking water quality
  - Bathing water quality
  - Access to drinking water and sanitation
- Other areas:
  - Enclosed bathing waters
  - Information systems
  - Disease surveillance
  - Capacity building
  - Water resource management
  - Small scale waste-water treatment
Target area: Drinking water quality

- Access to safe drinking water is limited by quality rather than quantity.
- Chemical contaminants of geological origin: As, B, F (+ammonium – nitrite formation potential).
- **Target:** 96% of the population to have access to safe DW by 2015.
- Intermediate target: 80% by 2010.
- Legal environment.
- National Drinking Water Improvement Programme.
- EU derogation.
Drinking water quality

- Arsenic
- Boron
- Fluoride
- Nitrite
- Nitrate

Comparison between 2008 and 2012 levels.
Arsenic (2012)
Boron (2012)
Arsenic and boron
Supply zones affected by arsenic non-compliance

![Bar chart showing supply zones affected by arsenic non-compliance for 2011, 2012, and 2013. The chart indicates the number of people affected with higher arsenic levels (>20 µg/L) and lower arsenic levels (10-20 µg/L).]
Waste-water treatment

- Tertiary treatment
- Biological treatment
- Untreated

Year: 2008 vs 2012
Water quality of drinking water sources

- **WFD**: all sources serving more than 50 people must be protected
- **1770 water sources (as of 2009):**
  - 1662 ground water
  - 92 bank-wall filtered well
  - 16 surface water
- **Target**: to protect all sources from anthropogenic contamination
- **Tool**: mainly legislative
  - Mandatory to define protective zones and blocks
  - Monitoring source water and produced water
  - Water safety plans of water supplies
  - Sensitive areas defined (nutrient, nitrate)
Information databases

• Information to the public and to other expert groups is essential for the implementation of all target areas
• Links in with other targets
• Some link in with EU requirements (DW quality, bathing water quality)
• Other databases:
  – Pool registry
  – Registry of contaminated sites
  – Water source database
  – Communicable disease surveillance database
  – System of interconnected water databases is under development
“Water for human use” database

Central data inventory

Drinking water supply

Natural bathing waters

Pools and spas

Proficiency testing for water labs

Approval of materials in contact with water
Information to the public on drinking water quality
Bathting water
Revision of targets and target dates

- Most target dates “expire” in 2015
- Revision of targets and target dates is due
- Taking into account outcomes of the recent reporting
- Formulate indicators of progress more clearly
- Participation in the Programme of Work
  - Equitable access
  - Prevention of water related disease
Potential directions of target revision

- Drinking water quality – secondary contamination
- Equitable access (scorecard assessment)
- Private wells
- Extension of WSP approach
- Risk based management of natural bathing waters
- Information to the public based on risk communication
Programme of Work 2014-2016

- Increasing involvement
- PA 2.4 Advancing water, sanitation and hygiene in schools
  - Co-leads: Georgia and Hungary
- PA 5 Equitable access to water and sanitation
  - Co-leads: France and Hungary
Thank you for your attention!
Rahmat!