

Session 3 - Guidance provided in the preliminary sections of the Guide to reporting

Second meeting of the drafting group on the guide to
reporting under the water convention and as a contribution
to SDG indicator 6.5.2

Geneva, Switzerland, 3-4 September 2019

**Introduction, organisation of the process
and capitalizing on reporting**

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Main structure of the Guide

1. Introduction

1.1. Why reporting on transboundary water cooperation?

1.2. Why the need for a guide?

1.3. Process of developing the guide

1.4. Rationale for layout of the guide

1.5. How does reporting under the Water Convention relate to SDG reporting, and SDG indicators 6.5.1 and 6.5.2 in particular?

2. Organizing the reporting process

3. How to make the most out of reporting to advance transboundary cooperation

Guide, section 1. Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1. Why reporting on transboundary water cooperation?

1.2. Why the need for a guide?

1.3. Process of developing the guide

(...) The text of the guide was subsequently revised by the end of September, and reviewed by the Water Convention's Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Working Group in October 2019, before the final version was published in December 2019. (...)

Comments

- **Germany:** How will the guide be adopted and by whom? Should this not be explained, too?

Guide, section 1. Introduction

1. Introduction

1.4. Rationale for layout of the guide

The guide closely follows the structure of the reporting template. (...)

Comments

- **Germany:** Should we not mention when the current version has been adopted?

Guide, section 2. Organizing the reporting process

2. Organizing the reporting process

Experience during the first reporting exercise offers some guidance as to how the reporting might be organised, although much will depend on the particular country context. In some instance, a more basic reporting process might be justified due to, for example, the level of centralised knowledge and the number of transboundary waters shared, whereas a more detailed process may be warranted where data and information needs to be gathered from different national ministerial departments and/or sub-national entities.

Comments

- **Germany:** I do not really understand those sentences. I would like to have filled in templates which are comparable. This text gives leeway for “reporting light”, which I would not support. I propose deletion.

Guide, section 2. Organizing the reporting process

2. Organizing the reporting process

- **Designate a national focal point (person or organisation)** that has overall responsibility for co-ordinating the reporting exercise. The national focal point, such as the Ministry of Water, National Statistical Agency and/or the agency responsible for overseeing the entire SDG process, may vary depending on the country context.

Comments

- **Germany**: This might be a confusing term, because there are also national focal points under the Water Convention. They are of course not automatically the ones responsible for reporting.

Guide, section 2. Organizing the reporting process

2. Organizing the reporting process

- **Identify stakeholders that should be involved in the reporting** and consider possible sources of information. Section IV of the reporting template provides an indicative list of the types of institutions that may be consulted during the reporting exercise, which might include the ministry or authority responsible for water, the environment agency, a basin authority or authorities, local or provincial government, the national geological survey, non-water specific ministries (foreign affairs, finance, forestry, agriculture and/or energy), **national statistical agency**, civil society organisations, water user associations and the private sector.

Comments

Germany: A stakeholder or an instrument?

Guide, section 2. Organizing the reporting process

2. Organizing the reporting process

- Where possible, engage with neighbouring countries sharing transboundary waters, joint bodies and regional organisations ***in order to exchange on the filling in of the template or to coordinate answers concerning transboundary issues.*** As noted early, in certain circumstances States may have differing opinion
- **Germany** suggested entering the following sentence above: “in order to exchange on the filling in of the template or to coordinate answers concerning transboundary issues”.

Guide, section 3. How to make the most out of reporting to advance transboundary cooperation

3. How to make the most out of reporting to advance transboundary cooperation

Comments

- **Netherlands:** Suggest to make this part of the Introduction

Guide, section 3. How to make the most out of reporting to advance transboundary cooperation

3. How to make the most out of reporting to advance transboundary cooperation

- **At the national level**

Comments

- **Guatemala,** suggests to add the following text to “at the national level”:
 - the reporting process provides countries with the opportunity to clearly identify and assess the benefits obtained from cooperation (rights / results) as well as the responsibilities and risks assumed to achieve these benefits (obligations and challenges)
 - the reporting process provides countries with the opportunity to identify new opportunities for the joint development of transboundary waters.

- **Tips on completing the reporting template**

- The sections below offer guidance on completing specific questions and sections of the reporting template. A number of more generic tips for completing the template are provided here:
- **When answering open questions ensure that the responses are succinct whilst at the same time offering a “meaningful story”.**
- **Where appropriate provide links to further background information, such as the webpages of projects and programmes, river basin organisations, maps of transboundary waters, and the text of the agreements and other arrangements.**
- **Consider sharing drafts of the reporting template with ECE and UNESCO for feedback prior to formal submission.**
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- **Plan carefully and in advance so as to ensure that reports are submitted by the June deadline.**
- **Check for inconsistencies in responses, particularly in relation to the SDG indicator 6.5.2 criteria for operationality and the detailed responses in section II, particular on questions 1 and 2 (basins and arrangements), 3 (joint bodies), 4 (objectives, strategies and plans), and 6 (data exchange).**
- **Make sure to report on *all* transboundary rivers, lakes and aquifers even where an agreement or other arrangement and/or a joint body has not yet been established.**
- **There are no prizes for coming first! Reporting is a collective exercise designed to gain a *shared* understanding of progress in transboundary water cooperation and identify areas that might need support. Countries therefore do not benefit from either under- or over-estimating current progress in implementing cooperative arrangements.**

Comments

Netherlands: Include box ‘**Tips on completing the reporting template**’ under Chapter 4