

Key findings from FAIRWAY on Stakeholder Engagement and Governance Arrangements in Agricultural Drinking Water Catchments

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Multi-Actor Platforms in the Water–Agriculture Nexus: Synergies and Long-Term Meaningful Engagement

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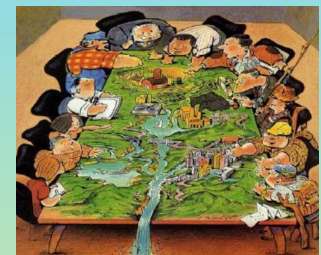
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Multi-actor engagement platforms

WFD and the common implementation strategy states that continuous and ongoing participation are important for successful engagement processes.

With this reference, we discuss conditions promoting long-term engagement of stakeholders considering the analysis of the establishment and development of nine different multi-actor platforms (MAPs) across Europe.



Multi-actor approaches refer to arenas organized for the interaction between different groups of actors and stakeholders including authorities, experts, and representatives.

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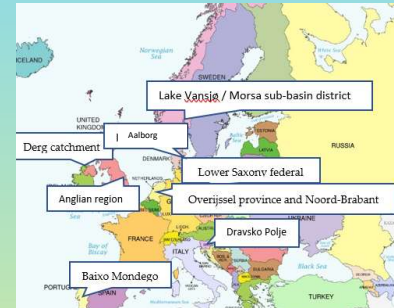
The Fairway project multi-actor platform (MAP) case studies

Nine MAPs to facilitate local and/or regional engagement processes to solve water quality challenges in: Denmark, England, Germany, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Portugal, and Slovenia

Each MAP has a coordinator to coordinate and nurture engagement.

Drinking water sources include ground water and surface water (more ground water sources).

Some MAPs addressed issues pertaining to nitrates and/or phosphorus, while others dealt with pesticides or all of these issues.



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Data and analysis

Nine MAPs represent different histories of engagement; some are new initiatives and some are affiliated with previous government-initiated projects, while other MAPs refer to long-term engagement platforms.

For each of the nine MAPs data is collected on:

- (i) the aim of the MAP,
- (ii) participants' understanding of the problem and objectives,
- (iii) participants' perceptions of synergies or added value associated with the MAP,
- (iv) achievements, and
- (v) risks challenging long-term continuation of the MAP



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MAPs at an initial phase of establishment

The MAPs in Portugal, Slovenia, and Denmark were established in the period between 2017 and 2018 in collaboration with local and regional actors, and water companies facilitated by a research team. **Initial situation** surface and ground water drinking water quality at risk.

Strategy: Formal and informal meetings were organized to build trust and to improve interaction among actors.

Achievements: learning and understanding of different perspectives, however it was acknowledge that development of trust requires time.

Risks challenging long term engagement and learning points:

Lack of funding; - different understanding of the problem situation, lack of common goals politicized issues, change of government staff and poor coordination among national-level authorities .



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MAPs representing ongoing multi-actor engagements

The MAPs in England, Northern Ireland, and Germany was established associated with pre-existing government initiatives for improved water quality. **Initial situation:** MAP was established in association with existing projects, surface and ground water drinking water quality at risk.

Strategies: Interactive events that included field demonstrations for practical learning, discussions, and experiments.

Achievements: Benefits expressed were access to agronomic knowledge and practical advice on best practice from farming industry actors; better understanding of perspectives and situations, improved dialogue.

Risks challenging long term engagement and learning points:

Lack of external funds, possible reliance on individuals, need for dedicated facilitation; the lack of legal compulsion for organizations to engage with the MAP. Weak and limited mandate.



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MAPs with a Long History of Engagement

The MAP in Norway is a continuation of the engagement platform established by eight municipalities in 1999 response to drinking water quality concerns. **Current situation:** Improved surface water quality, ground water not at risk.



Strategy: employment of daily manager for coordination; knowledge based decision; continuous monitoring and associated research projects, during initial years intense and frequent communication efforts with actors.

Achievements: improved water quality conditions; top-down political anchoring, bottom up engagement, an active MAP secretariat.

Low level of risk challenging long term engagement - as the engagement platform is embedded in the Norwegian governance approach to WFD.



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MAPs with a Long History of Engagement

The MAPs in Netherlands O and N-B were both established in 2011 for improved drinking water quality, through initiatives by the water company, with contributions from the provinces and the agricultural organizations.

Strategy: different types of activities including knowledge exchange and individual farm management advice on practical issues

Achievements: increased awareness on run-off, enhanced communication between farmers and the water company.

Risk challenging long term engagement: low risks het, financial incentives, and lack of clear mandate and anchoring in the governance structure.



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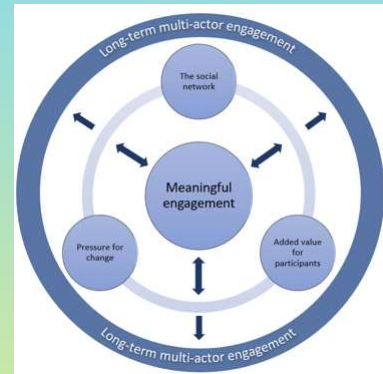
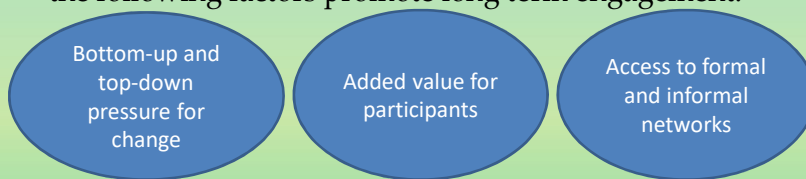
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Conditions important for enabling meaningful engagement

It can be expected that actors will not participate unless participation is experienced as meaningful



Meaningful engagement is defined as the right to be heard and the possibility to contribute to setting objectives; considering experiences from the case studies we argue that the following factors promote long term engagement:



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Meaningful participation and pressure for change



We understand a pressure for change to mitigate diffuse water pollution reflects a sense of urgency among local people and/or the government.

- A bottom-up mutual understanding of the problem situation and objectives impacts the sense of pressure
- Top-down pressure for change reflected in mandates, policies, and regulations, representing political anchoring,



Increase the understanding of perspectives; improve trust and confidence among the participants by such as:

- Undertake monitoring for knowledge based decision making
- Increase awareness by communicating monitoring results to actors
- A variety of communication strategies – including such as field visits, local media, pictures, farmer organisations, neighbourhood groups, and scientific publications, and more.

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Thank you for your attention



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