

Stakeholder involvement in the planning of river basin management and its implementation in Armenia

*Prepared for:
“Europe-INBO 2023” international conference
October 16-19, 2023
Valencia, Spain*

Martiros Nalbandyan

Deputy Chairman of the Water Committee,
Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures,
Republic of Armenia



Outline

- Role of the Water Committee
- Development of RBMPs in Armenia
- Public participation in RBMP development
- Linkage with other processes
- Lessons learned and remaining challenges



Role of the Water Committee

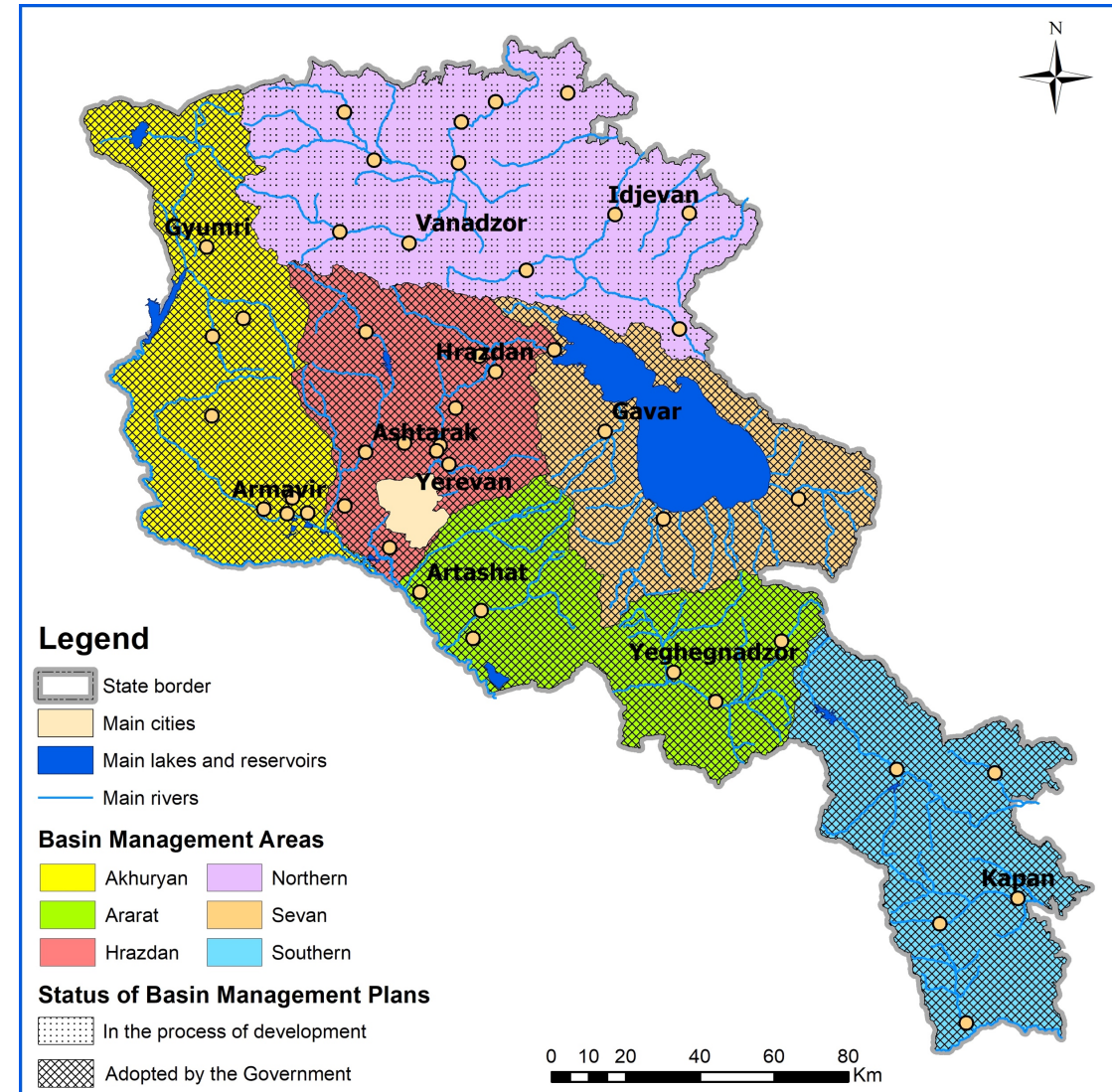
	Management and protection of water resources	Regulation of tariffs	Management of water systems
Authorized agency	Water Resources Management Department	Public Services Regulatory Commission	Water Committee
Main functions	Monitoring and allocation of water resources, strategic management and protection of water resources	Regulation of tariffs for noncompetitive water supply and discharge services in drinking, household, and irrigation water sectors; Protection of consumer's rights	Management of water systems under the State ownership; support to establishment of WUAs and FWUAs; Arrangement of tenders on management of water systems
Enforcement tool	Water use permits	Water system user permits	Lease contract

Role of the Water Committee

- Management of state-owned water systems
 - Irrigation
 - Water supply and sanitation
 - Drainage
 - Hydrotechnical systems
- General political task/goal
 - Management of state-owned water systems and ensuring safe use
 - Ensuring implementation of the national water program
 - Development and implementation of investment policy of water systems, and organizations of expertise of investment programs

Development of RBMPs in Armenia

- EUWI+ (2016-2021)
 - Sevan RBMP, officially adopted in December 2022
 - Hrazdan RBMP, officially adopted in December 2022
- EU4Environment Water and Data (2022-2024)
 - Northern RBMP (expected adoption, fall 2024)



Public participation in RBMP development

- Requirements of the Armenian legislation
 - Water Code
 - Article 5 (Basic principles of management, use and protection of water resources and water systems) **recognizes the importance of public participation and awareness in the process of management and protection of water resources**
 - Article 20 (Public participation) requires that draft RBMPs are subject to public notice
 - Article 106 (Participation of NGOs and citizens in protection of water resources and water systems) **defines the role of public participation in protection of water resources and requires decent consideration of recommendations of public organizations and citizens in water management**
 - Government of Armenia Resolution No 217-N of 2003 “On Approving the Procedures for Ensuring Public Notification and Transparency of Documents Developed by the Water Resources Management and Protection Body ”
 - **Requires that while designing RBMPs public participation is ensured through public hearings and discussions, and communicating respective information through mass media**

Public participation in RBMP development

- Requirements of EU WFD
 - Article 14 of the EU WFD
 - Guidance document 8 “Public participation in the context of EU WFD”
 - Two public consultation meetings in RBMP development process
 - Significant pressures and their impact, main issues in the basin
 - Program of measures



Linkage with other processes

- Law on EIA and Expert Examination, 2014
- Government of Armenia Resolution “On Order of Public Notification and Discussions ”, 2014
- **Four rounds of public hearings while RBMPs undergo EIA and expert examination**
 - Preliminary assessment of RBMP
 - Application of preliminary assessment
 - Public notification and hearing on environmental impact strategic assessment of the RBMP
 - Final hearing

Lessons learned and remaining challenges

- Significant progress in public participation in RBMP development
- Role of public participation in RBMP implementation is still very weak, practical mechanisms of public involvement should be elaborated



Thank you for your attention!



Email address: martiros.nalbandyan@gov.am



Website: www.scws.am



<https://www.facebook.com/watercommitteearm/>

