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UK Research  
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INN WATER

Promoting social innovation to renew  
multi-level and cross sector water governance

February 2026

# Result Factsheet

## ADVANCING WATER GOVERNANCE:

### Reference Guide for Programming

RESULT Type:  
**Scientific or technological R&D**

[Link to the guide](#)



Owner:  **SIWI**

Contributors:



ETIFOR  
valuing nature

**WAREG**  
European Water Regulators



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## Description

The Reference Guide for Programming offers water managers and practitioners a comprehensive, evidence-based toolkit for designing and implementing governance improvements. Based on European case studies and approaches validated in pilot sites, but designed for international applicability, the Guide synthesizes lessons learned to address common barriers and implement effective solutions. Users will find practical templates and “assessment-to-action” sheets across 16 core governance principles, extending the OECD framework with sustainability and resilience, to transform diagnostic insights into actionable steps for basin, utility, and regional contexts. , The Guide is a user-centric resource aimed at accelerating the transition from assessment to action and advancing best practices in sustainable water governance.

## TARGET AUDIENCES

### Water utility practitioners and basin authorities

Collaboration, tailored programming tools.

### Research and technology organizations

Helps in technical expertise, capacity building.

### EU and Member State policy institutions

Raise awareness and possibly influence policy.

## We specially need

We are looking for capacity-building partnerships with international organizations, policy networks, and training institutes. Collaboration to co-develop and deliver training modules based on the Guide will extend its impact globally, empowering practitioners to turn governance assessments into effective action plans.

## SDG's



## Unique value proposition

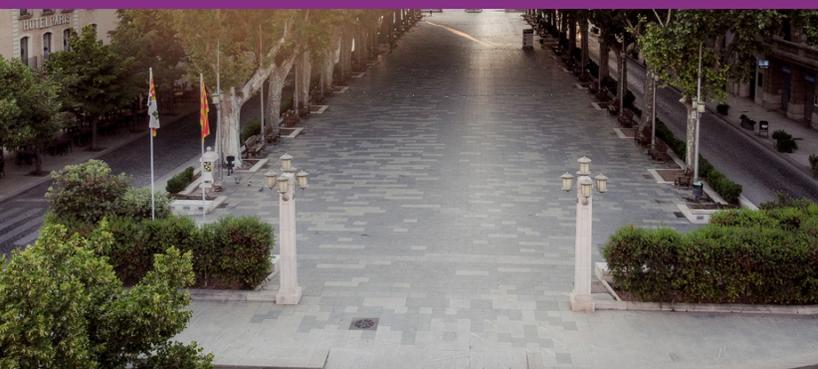
Building on the OECD Water Governance Principles, the tool integrates additional dimensions on resilience and sustainability, offering modular templates and practical case evidence for immediate application. Its “assessment-to-action” sheets enable users to move seamlessly from diagnostic analysis to the implementation of robust, locally adapted solutions.

## Use beyond the project life

The principles on which the guide is built are universal and the action sheets are designed to be used as standalone assessment-to-action sheets to inspire solutions to specific problems identified by practitioners. There is a universal use to the Reference Guide as the methodology is building on the water governance assessment framework based on the work of the OECD water governance initiative.

## Impacts

- **Scientific:** Advances governance knowledge by integrating resilience principles exceeding standard frameworks
- **Economic:** Delivers efficiency gains through resource optimization and performance-based approaches
- **Societal:** Strengthens cooperation, stakeholder engagement, and inclusive management
- **Environmental:** Enables sustainable programming for water resilience and biodiversity protection



## Key benefits



Accelerate transition from assessment to action.



Ensure governance coherence and cross-sectoral synergy



Strengthen science-policy interface for robust decisions.

## Replicability

The Reference Guide is designed to be used widely by any individual or institution looking for inspiration on how to improve specific aspects of water governance. Case studies are mainly from Europe, but applicability is worldwide.

### Contact:

Florencia RIEIRO (SIWI), [innwater@siwi.org](mailto:innwater@siwi.org)  
Graphic Design: Ananda ROHN (OiEau)

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