Water Governance Initiative: Results of the Satisfaction Survey 2018

Survey conducted between 03/05/2018 and 25/05/2018

The Satisfaction Survey 2018 sought WGI members feedback on the network’s 2015-2018 programme of work and suggestions moving forward. The results are expected to help shape the strategic orientations of the WGI over 2018-2021 and to improve internal and collective methods of work, taking stock of lessons learned and suggestions for improvements. Responses have been treated confidentially and the survey results will be discussed with all WGI members ahead of the 11th WGI meeting, which will take place 29-30 October 2018 in Zaragoza, Spain.
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1.1. Introduction

1. The OECD Water Governance Initiative (WGI) was launched 27-28 March 2013 as an international multi-stakeholder network of public, private and non-for-profit stakeholders gathering twice a year in a Policy Forum to share on-going reforms, projects, lessons and good practices in support of better governance in the water sector. In its first programme of work over the 2013-2015 period, the WGI met five times and all agendas, lists of participants and summary records from the meetings can be accessed online. During this period, the WGI delivered the OECD Principles on Water Governance which provide twelve critical governance items for governments and other stakeholders to design and implement effective, efficient, and inclusive water policies. To date, they have been endorsed by 170+ stakeholder groups or governments: 35 OECD Member Countries, 7 Non-Member Countries and 140 Stakeholder Groups.

2. The Survey assesses the WGI programme of work for the period 2015-2018. The WGI Terms of Reference for the 2015 – 2018 period was approved in April 2016 and set down as objectives the development of a Water Governance Indicator Framework and the collection a pool of Best Practices on Water Governance as two main outputs. These two tools were developed in a bottom-up multi-stakeholder fashion within two Working Groups on Indicators and Best Practices. Discussions were conducted both at the various WGI meetings that took place in the 2015-18 period, and numerous webinars in between meetings. The process finalised with launch of the OECD report “Implementing the OECD Principles on Water Governance: Indicator Framework and Evolving Practices” launched at the 8th World Water Forum in Brasilia (Brazil) on 21 March 2018 by the OECD Secretary General.

3. The tools to support the implementation of the OECD Principles have been delivered, now is time for the WGI to rethink its strategic orientations for 2018-21 on the road to the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar (Senegal). For this purpose, the OECD Secretariat conducted the Satisfaction Survey 2018. This note presents a synthesis of both the quantitative results of the survey and the qualitative comments received from respondents. The results will be presented at the 11th meeting of the WGI (29-30 October 2018, Zaragoza, Spain). In all, 76 member institutions have responded to the survey, a 70.4% response rate.

4. A similar survey was made in 2015 for the 2015-2013 period across the members of the WGI to collect feedback on the first two years of activities, and to identify areas for improvement that would help shaped the strategic orientations of the WGI over the 2015-2018 period. See link below for reference.

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Figure 1. Composition of Survey Respondents

Figure 2. Composition of the WGI
1.2. Taking stock of WGI activities (2015-2018)

1.2.1. Participation in and contribution to WGI

Figure 3. How many plenary meetings of the WGI have you attended?

[Source: WGI Satisfaction Survey, 2018]

Figure 4. Do you read or make use of the Highlights?

[Source: WGI Satisfaction Survey, 2018]

Figure 5. Do you share the Highlights with your networks or colleagues?

[Source: WGI Satisfaction Survey, 2018]

5. Results from the survey regarding the level of attendance in the WGI plenary meetings (5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th meetings) show a high turnout among members
A small share of members (13%) did not attend any meetings. The survey also revealed that 50% of respondents attended at least three meetings, indicating that these stakeholders have remained interested and engaged in the WGI since its inception.

6. The survey also showed that the detailed highlights prepared by the Secretariat after each plenary meeting are widely read and disseminated (Figure 4). The percentage of respondents that reported **reading or disseminating the highlights was very high** (94%), and 71% even read them when they attend meetings. A large majority of respondents (83%) claim to disseminate the highlights within their networks (Figure 5). Qualitative responses indicate that WGI members disseminate the highlights through different channels: internal email in their organisations, newsletters (e.g. IWRA Quarterly Newsletter and EurEau) and, a smaller share of members, through social media.

Figure 6. In which way(s) did you mainly contribute to the WGI?

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<th>70%</th>
<th>80%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Co-production of analytical work</td>
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<td>Leading some of the activities / mobilising your own internal resources</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Disseminating WGI results</td>
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<td>Presenting your work at meetings for discussion/peer-review</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<td>50%</td>
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*Ranked as no. 1 or 2 (most important)*
*Ranked as no. 3 or 4 (important)*
*Ranked as no. 5 (least important)*

**Source**: WGI Satisfaction Survey, 2018

7. In total, 68% of the members indicated that their contributions go beyond attending the plenary meetings of the WGI. The members mainly contributed to the WGI by **co-production of analytical work**, in the context of the activities of the Working Groups, and by **commenting on WGI documents and reports** prepared by the Secretariat, with respective shares of 65% and 46% (Figure 6). This is partly in line with one of the objectives of the WGI, which consist in providing a technical platform to discuss findings, working papers and draft reports on water governance. This is a task which can also be done remotely by members who cannot attend the meetings. However, only 17% indicated that they present their research and analytical work for discussion or peer-reviewing. The latter is an opportunity since a large pool of WGI members could...
further contribute to the collective knowledge by sharing their work. They could also make use of the network to improve the quality of their work. Members ranked the mobilisation of their own resources and the dissemination of WGI results as the 3rd and 4th contribution (42% and 29% respectively). The former shows the great commitment of members with the activities of the network, and also reveals some potential for further making use of those institutions that are ready to take a more active role. The latter points out that further thought may be required about the best format to facilitate dissemination (e.g. brochures, newsletters, policy briefs and other communication material, etc.).

1.2.1. Satisfaction with the overall WGI and Working Groups

8. The results of the satisfaction Survey point to a **high level of satisfaction**, above 95% for the Secretariat, the Chair, and the overall network, and of 87% for the Steering Committee (Figure 7).

![Figure 7. Overall satisfaction of members with the WGI](image)

Source: WGI Satisfaction Survey, 2018

9. The results of the Survey also point to a high participation and level of satisfaction (including “Very satisfied” and “Satisfied” responses) with the Working Groups (WGs), but there are slight differences between the two (Figure 8). In fact, 72 out of the 77 members that responded to the Survey participated in either the Indicators or the Best Practices and up to 19 members participated in both WGs. The Indicators WG scored above 84% for the three categories evaluated, and members were particularly satisfied with the “Outcomes / Materials produced” in this group (92%). The Best Practices WG scored above 82% for the “Process and Methodology” as well as
“Outcomes / Materials produced”, and 74% for “Co-ordination / Communication”. The next phase of the WGI should continue this path, but taking into account that qualitative answers call for further improvements in coordination, communication and content of the work. This useful guidance should be used to fit the structure with the new functions and objectives of the network, which will imply focusing on the implementation of the tools developed.

Figure 8. Satisfaction of members with the working groups

[\% of working groups’ contributors]
10. Respondents considered that the main benefit taken from the WGI is **learning from countries’ policy reforms and experiences** (51%) (Figure 9). During the 2015–18 period, four out of the six meeting were held outside the OECD premises, which was an opportunity for host countries to update delegates on the current state of water governance in their respective countries. The survey indicates that promoting this kind of sessions during the next phase of the WGI is a priority for members. The opportunity to **access and contribute to cutting-edge evidence-based analysis and research** (36%) was the second benefit that respondents highlighted. This contribution could be considered as a mutual benefit whereby the multi-stakeholder composition of the WGI also provides a valuable reality check for the work. It was notably the case throughout the development of OECD Indicators on Water Governance and the Evolving Practices, which followed a bottom-up and multi-stakeholder process within the WGI Working Groups. However, there is potential to expand the analytical base and the research discussed at the WGI. When comparing figures, one can conclude that if members contributed to discussions within the network by presenting their research and analytical work for discussion or peer-reviewing other members could benefit from the knowledge, and vice versa.

11. Noteworthy, raising the profile of their organisations in the Global Agenda, networking and creating partnerships, as well as providing a platform to disseminate their events, work and messages were ranked the lowest among the benefits perceived by members (29%, 26%, and 22%, respectively). WGI plenary meeting devote a large share
of time available to update delegates on Global Agenda developments and gives them the opportunity to share their actions that are contributing to achieve the goals. It also dedicates a long session on sharing events and recent developments in their organisations. However, and taking into account the low benefits reported by members in these two items, the next phase of the WGI could consider changing the format of meetings in this respect. A possibility could be to include thematic sessions where members could present their on-going research and analytical work for discussion or peer-review.

Figure 9. What are the main benefits that you take away from the WGI?

Source: WGI Satisfaction Survey, May 2018
12. Looking back at the WGI’s 2015-18 work and the results, **100% of respondents consider that the WGI should pursue its activities** (Figure 10). For 65% of respondents, this is an absolute necessity, while 35% made suggestions in terms of rules of operations, scope of thematic coverage, and process facilitating interactions for the next generation of activities (see below).

1.3. Ways forward (2018 - 2021)

1.3.1. Suggestions for improvement

13. Respondents to the Satisfaction Survey **flagged some areas for improvement** in the next phase, with a primary focus on involving stakeholders outside the water box and improving communication and dissemination of WGI work in a more user-friendly fashion, but also the format and facilitation of meetings (Figure 11). Suggestions from the members to reach beyond the water sector includes increasing representation of the WGI in non-specific water events or using the implementation of the indicator framework to involve water-intensive industries, such as agriculture or energy. Respondents also suggested producing more user-friendly reports (beyond those OECD-style) to help communicating the content of the work and the methodology used by the WGI. Lastly, respondents called for **less** formal settings for WGI plenary meetings when possible and more small-scale and action-oriented discussions.
Figure 11. Where do you see room for improvement in the way the WGI should be operating in the future?

[Source: WGI Satisfaction Survey, May 2018]
1.3.2. Future priorities

Figure 12. Which strategic activities should the WGI prioritise to support the implementation of the OECD Principles on Water Governance?

[% of respondents]

Source: WGI Satisfaction Survey, May 2018

14. The survey provided guidance on strategic work areas of the WGI. A total of 82% of respondents consider that it is “very important” or “important” to facilitate the uptake and use of the Water Governance Indicator Framework to implement the OECD Principles (Figure 12). Qualitative answers call for reaching both OECD countries and non-OECD economies in these efforts. In fact, 22 members expressed their interest to volunteer as a lead institution for a self-assessment in their city, basin or country. Secondly, 67% of respondents considered it is key to develop capacity-building modules and train mentors/facilitators. A common call from respondents is that the WGI should seek partnerships with institutions that already have a long experience in capacity building, to leverage on the convening power of regional networks (e.g. in the Mediterranean, Asia, Africa, etc.) and to raise political awareness on the importance of water governance. Lastly, close to 73% consider that it is relevant to promote peer-learning through the water governance practices collected during the 2015-18 phase of the WGI. Again, 27 members expressed their interest to host/peer-review a webinar on practices.
15. Respondents were also asked to flag some of the thematic areas that could be explored in the next phase through the lenses of governance (Figure 13). Four thematic areas received high rating (“very important” or “important”), above 77%: Water, Climate Change and Megacities; Water and Circular Economy; Water, Energy and Food Security; and Water and Land Use. In particular, Climate Change and Megacities, and Circular Economy, received 55% rating (“very important”). The next phase of the WGI could therefore mainstream these thematic areas in some of its analytical and content work. The latter could also take the form of workshops, either in person during WGI plenary meetings or through webinars.
1.3.3. Mobilising resources to deliver WGI future priorities

Figure 14. Estimation of the 3-year total budget of the WGI in terms of OECD Secretariat staff, logistical costs and analytical work

[Source: WGI Satisfaction Survey, May 2018]

16. A fair amount of WGI members (52%) estimated correctly the 3-year total budget (approximately Euros 1.8 Mn over 3 years) of the WGI in terms of OECD Secretariat staff, logistical costs and analytical work (Figure 14). It is worth noting that one quarter of respondents considered the WGI has costs more than it actually does, and close to 19% think that it costs less. Members were also asked to estimate the total costs that themselves or their institutions incurred for engaging with the WGI throughout 2015-2018, in terms of travelling, in-kind contribution, staff provisioned to support inputs, if any, time devoted to WGI activities, etc. For the 77 responses received, the estimation was 2 263 572 €, if extrapolated to all members is around 3 Million €. The next phase of the WGI could make costs and budget requirements more explicit as part of delivering on programme of work.

17. Whilst most members agree that a sustainable WGI requires sustainable sources of funding, the introduction of a membership fee would jeopardise the day-to-day participation of a remarkable share of members (45%) (Figure 15). The survey revealed that 9% of members are willing to contribute financially with a fee and that 46% would also do it under certain conditions. These conditions include showcasing more concretely the benefits of the OECD WGI for member; progressive membership fees depending on the type of institution; or larger accountability to members on decisions taken by the OECD Secretariat and the Steering Committee.
Figure 15. If a membership fee is introduced, could you continue to participate in the WGI?

[\% of respondents]

Source: WGI Satisfaction Survey, May 2018

1.4. Annex: List of respondents to the Satisfaction Survey

1. Action Contre la Faim (ACF)
2. Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
3. AgroParisTech
4. AquaFed
5. Australian National University
6. Austrian Association of Public Services and Enterprises
7. Austrian Association of Gas and Water
8. Austrian Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism
9. Butterfly Effect
10. Deltares
11. Dutch Water Authorities
12. Eau de Paris
13. Electricité de France (EDF)
14. Environmental Protection Agency – United States
15. Erasmus University Rotterdam
16. EurEau
17. Flanders Knowledge Center Water (Vlakwa/VITO)
18. Foundation for a New Water Culture
19. German Association of Energy and Water Industries
20. Global Institute for Water Environment and Health (GIWEH)
22. Global Water Partnership (GWP)
24. ICATALIST
25. IMDEA Water
26. Institute of Water Policy, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
27. Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau (IME)
29. International Water Association (IWA)
30. International Water Research Association (IWRA)
31. José Frade (Expert)
32. Jucar River Basin Authority - Spain
33. Korea Environment Institute
34. KWR Watercycle Research Institute
35. Ministry for the Environment - New Zealand
36. Ministry of Environment and Energy - Greece
37. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary
38. Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management – Netherlands
39. Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure - Luxembourg
40. Murcia Water Agency
41. National Association of Water Supply and Sanitation Utilities - Mexico (ANEAS)
42. National Water Agency - Brazil
43. National Water Authority - Peru
44. National Water Commission - Mexico
45. Network of Asian River Basin Organizations (NARBO) / Japan Water Agency
46. Norwegian Environment Agency
47. Open University
48. Peter Gammeltoft
49. Portuguese Agency of Environment
50. Portuguese Association of Water Supply and Wastewater Services (APDA)
51. Portuguese Water Partnership
52. Programme Solidarité-Eau (pS-Eau)
53. Regulatory Authority for Energy, Networks and the Environment - Italy
54. Segura River Basin Authority
55. Scottish Government
56. Slovenian Water Agency
57. South Africa - Water Research Commission
58. Spanish Association of Water Supply and Wastewater Services (AEAS)
59. Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)
60. Suez
61. The Center for Water Security and Cooperation
62. Transparency International
63. The Nature Conservancy
64. Turkish Water Institute
65. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) - World Water
Assessment Programme
66. University of Arizona
67. University of Dundee
68. University of Lisbon
69. University of Paris (Pantheon-Sorbonne)
70. Veolia
71. Water Board De Dommel
72. Water Integrity Network
73. Water Policy International
74. Water Youth Network
75. World Health Organisation
76. WWF International