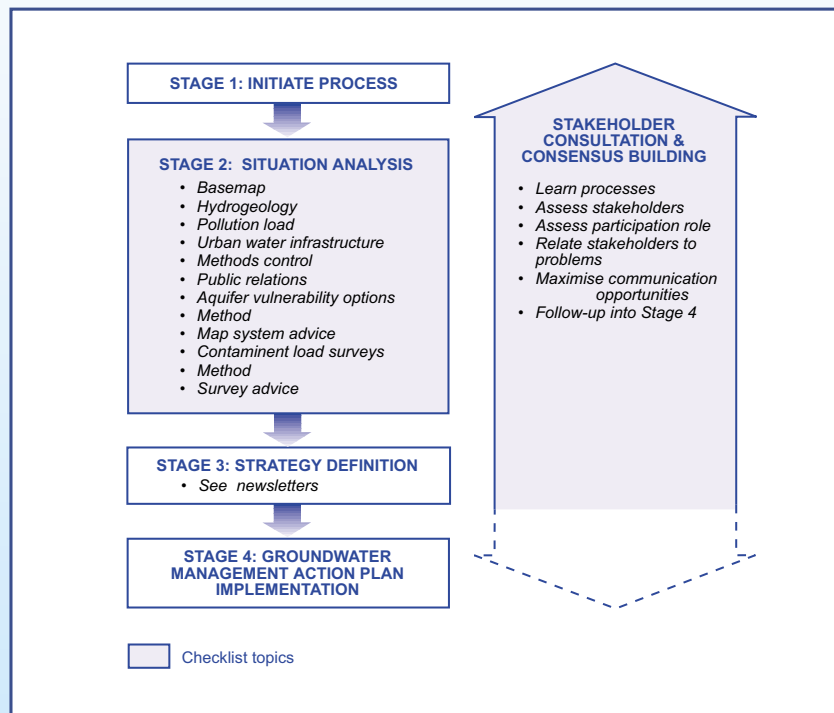


Stakeholder Consultation



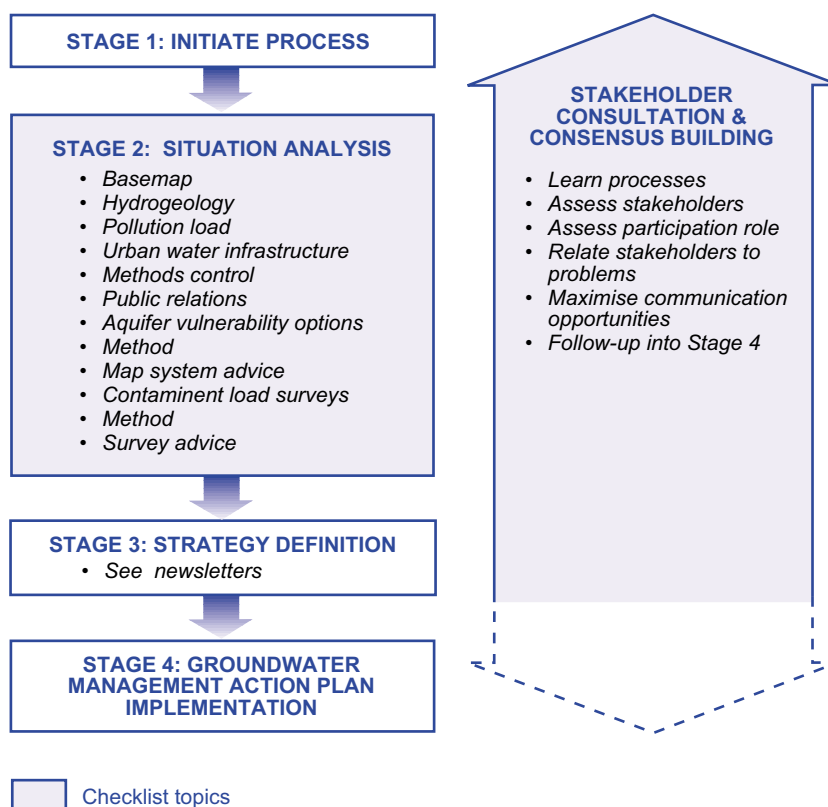
IDENTIFYING AND MOBILISING STAKEHOLDERS



Checklists

Overview

This section provides checklists for Stakeholder Consultation and consensus building as part of a Groundwater Management Action Plan for a city that utilises aquifers below or close to the city (in the periurban fringe). The checklists are ordered in the typical sequence of an Action Plan work programme.



Learn about process:

- Consult Chapter 5 of Calow *et al* (1999) of these guidelines for background on stakeholder participation issues of information on stakeholder analysis, procedures and task checklist.

Identify and assess stakeholders:

- Compile list of stakeholders and key contacts within each group. Insert list into influence/importance matrix to assess who are key stakeholders and those who are more peripheral:

<i>High Importance</i>	Key players-vital to consult	Key players-vital to consult
<i>Low Importance</i>	More peripheral to process	Consultation advisable to avoid marginalisation
	<i>Low Influence</i>	<i>High Influence</i>

- Compile stakeholder analysis table and participation matrix to understand key interests and viewpoints of different groups in order to appreciate where convergences and conflicts might exist.
- Consider best contact level to work with within each stakeholder group. The most senior are important to authorise dialogue but may not have the time to devote to an unasked-for

process, however worthy. Conversely, junior members may be effectively passive, unable to utter even commentary without approval from higher echelons;

- Be prepared for key stakeholders to not participate at all, but establish their motives for non-participation- it might be possible to assuage concerns and bring an organisation into the process at a later date;
- The enthusiasm for participating in a consultation leading to a protection plan will be conditioned by the participants' general experience of successful policy implementation and enforcement in a given city. The resultant confidence (or lack of it) in the exercise is therefore a measure of wider, context-specific political experience over which a project may have no control. Assess realistically in advance how high the project consultation exercise can rise in the spectrum of stakeholder participation (see Figure 17) and plan degree of interaction and medium of communication accordingly. The higher the level of participation, the greater the required investment in time and other resources.

Relate stakeholders to urban water problems:

- 'Unpack' urban water problems from different perspectives (water supply, wastewater/solid waste disposal, urban infrastructure, land use planning, water management etc). Organise observations logically and concisely in tables/checklists using simple devices like Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analyses (see Figure 13 in previous chapter). Keep resultant materials free of hydrogeological, engineering or socio-economic jargon so that they can be used directly at consultation stage to inform and educate stakeholders;
- Empathise with the different stakeholders. Try to understand their perspective on groundwater and subsurface use-some practices which appear reprehensible may be born of necessity, requiring resolution of an underlying problem to allow practice to change;
- Be realistic when formulating policy options and provide a range of policies in terms both of severity, resource requirements and effectiveness. Given the spectrum of interests involved, some conflicting, enacting an urban protection programme is as much a political as a technical process. Be sure to include options that can be implemented relatively easily, even if their effectiveness only ranks as moderate. Agreeing easy measures are investments in that they show stakeholders who may be highly suspicious of each other's motives that it is possible to at least engage in dialogue which produces a result. Three easy, but only moderately effective, groundwater protection measures enacted at the beginning of a protection programme are better than one measure that would be highly effective but cannot be put in place because the stakeholders are too polarised to reach a consensus;
- Consider carefully the resources that might be needed for some measures and compare them with what might be available from the agency/agencies that would be tasked to undertake them. There is for instance little point in promoting including monitoring regimes involving complex suites of sampling and analysis if there are neither trained staff nor laboratory facilities able to carry them out. Better to promote a pilot monitoring programme measuring water levels and a few key indicators that can be supported by modest inputs, and phase in improvements later as resources permit;
- Be aware of current economic/social trends to ensure stakeholder forum is comprehensively identified e.g. In Bishkek, post-Soviet decline in large state military-industrial plants and rise in much smaller enterprises has led to much more dispersed industrial community, much of it informal/grey economy.

Maximise opportunities for communication:

- Start communication process with stakeholders early using locally appropriate medium (meetings, newsletters, presentations, circulars). By all means employ materials from technical phase of project but remember at least part of the audience will be non-technical and require some orientation material on groundwater and the subsurface;
- Keep language clear, concise and simple by ensuring any technical material is explained. Keep stakeholder communications short and use technical material in moderation during a single communication to avoid 'information overload'. Include an easy way to respond in each communication (open forum in meetings, questions session after presentations, returnable comments section in newsletters). Encourage and document such responses- these may help guide policy options towards the possible away from the theoretical;
- Be prepared for very poor feedback and lack of spontaneous response- no response does not mean no participation;
- Consider the likely effects of project 'sponsorship' on the degree and nature of responses. A consultation exercise by a project team under the patronage of a government department is more likely to be able to elicit participation (at least from other institutional stakeholders) but its independence may then be questioned and the exercise labelled as at best a formality and at worst deceptive. Conversely an unsponsored project may be deemed to be well-intentioned but remote from the influence needed to get consensus policies adopted. A strategy to overcome the problem is to promote the selection of municipal/governmental sponsor as a late stage of the consultation, once policies are agreed and advocacy is required to get them adopted.

Follow-up:

- The transfer of policy options into policies, their adoption and then enactment through various legal, regulatory or financial instruments is the next stage of the water management process and the subsequent enforcement of the measures the third stage. These two subsequent stages are beyond the remit of the present project but clearly they should be the next objectives of any urban groundwater protection programme if it is to be effective in sustaining the resource.
- If the stakeholder analysis and consultation process has been diligently undertaken, it will become clear which of the policy options will be feasible and which, although most desirable, are unlikely to command enough support from influential stakeholders to merit being taken up.

Where to find more details

Calow et al (1999) and newsletters