

Project

"Giving direction to CMFs"

Full Project Title

A project aimed at identifying tasks, roles and functions for Catchment Management Forums and Catchment Management Committees in order to sustain active public engagement in IWRM through the development and implementation of catchment management strategies

Implemented by



in conjunction with

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF)

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1. The South African context

Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) with its proposed institutional arrangements as set out in the National Water Act (NWA, 1998) provides the broad context for this project. Once Catchment Management Agencies (CMA) are established they are expected to manage water in collaboration with local stakeholders. The NWA makes provision for a number of stakeholder platforms where Integrated Water Resource Management can be negotiated at the level of a Water Management Area. The complexities surrounding multiple stakeholder involvement present newly established CMAs with a number of challenges. One of the most important challenges is related to focusing the interactions on specific IWRM tasks. As multiple stakeholder environments are potentially conflictual it is essential that tasks are clearly articulated and well presented to such forums. CMFs are intended to be more than platforms where stakeholders defend vested interests in water resources. They are platforms where collaborative actions are designed in order to strategically manage water resources within a WMA. South Africa has yet to implement a comprehensive and functional approach to stakeholder engagement at the level of Water Management Areas. This project aims to contribute to a framework for meaningful and directed engagement of stakeholders in the IWRM process.

2. The CMS – the basis for public engagement

The challenge for DWAF (and if established, the CMA) is to engage stakeholders in strategic planning that recognises the need to plan for water security through the development of Catchment Management Strategies (CMS). The framework for the development of a CMS is provided in Figure 1. The framework is conceptualised as four clusters of strategic plans, Parts A-D, which collectively comprise the CMS. A number of these deal specifically with the 'business' of IWRM whilst others facilitate the operating of the CMA, roll-out and operation of the strategies. The main focus of this project is to understand the nature and level of public engagement for the development and implementation of the sub-strategies. The parts of the CMS are described below.

Part A: Important foundational information

Part A does not involve strategy development *per se* but provides the foundation for strategic action. Prior to developing any strategic intent or action, the current and projected situation in the WMA needs to be described and assessed. **The involvement of the public in this stage of the process is critical in that it is likely to reveal divergent views of the resource as well areas of potential conflict.** The collaborative vision for managing the resource is set at this stage.

Part B: Water Resources Management sub-strategies

Once a vision has been set for a WMA, two key strategic areas have been identified by the NWRS to achieve the vision. Importantly, these two areas, known as Resource Directed Measures (RDM) and Source Directed Controls (SDC), are the overarching strategies for IWRM in South Africa. The RDM is directed at protecting the water resources base whilst SDC constitute regulations for water use. **Public involvement in the RDM and SDC varies according to specific tasks. The project aims to identify and elaborate on the nature of the participation process**

Part C: Facilitating sub-strategies

The facilitating strategies are not directly linked to IWRM. Rather they are the 'oil' that keeps the 'engine' of IWRM going. In other words without strategic plans for stakeholder engagement and communication, information management and monitoring, and finances, the intentions of IWRM cannot be achieved. **Public engagement in the facilitating strategies will be addressed by the project.**

Part D: Integration strategy

As is well recognised by now, IWRM requires collaboration. This is because many institutions are involved with various aspects of water-related activities, either directly or indirectly. Moreover, given our international agreements, the imperative for collaboration extends beyond our national borders. Therefore the CMA must set out strategic plans for ensuring integration and this strategy is effectively the 'glue' that holds together IWRM. **The project aims to identify the nature of integration and specific options for ensuring that obligations (both national and international) are appropriately addressed.**

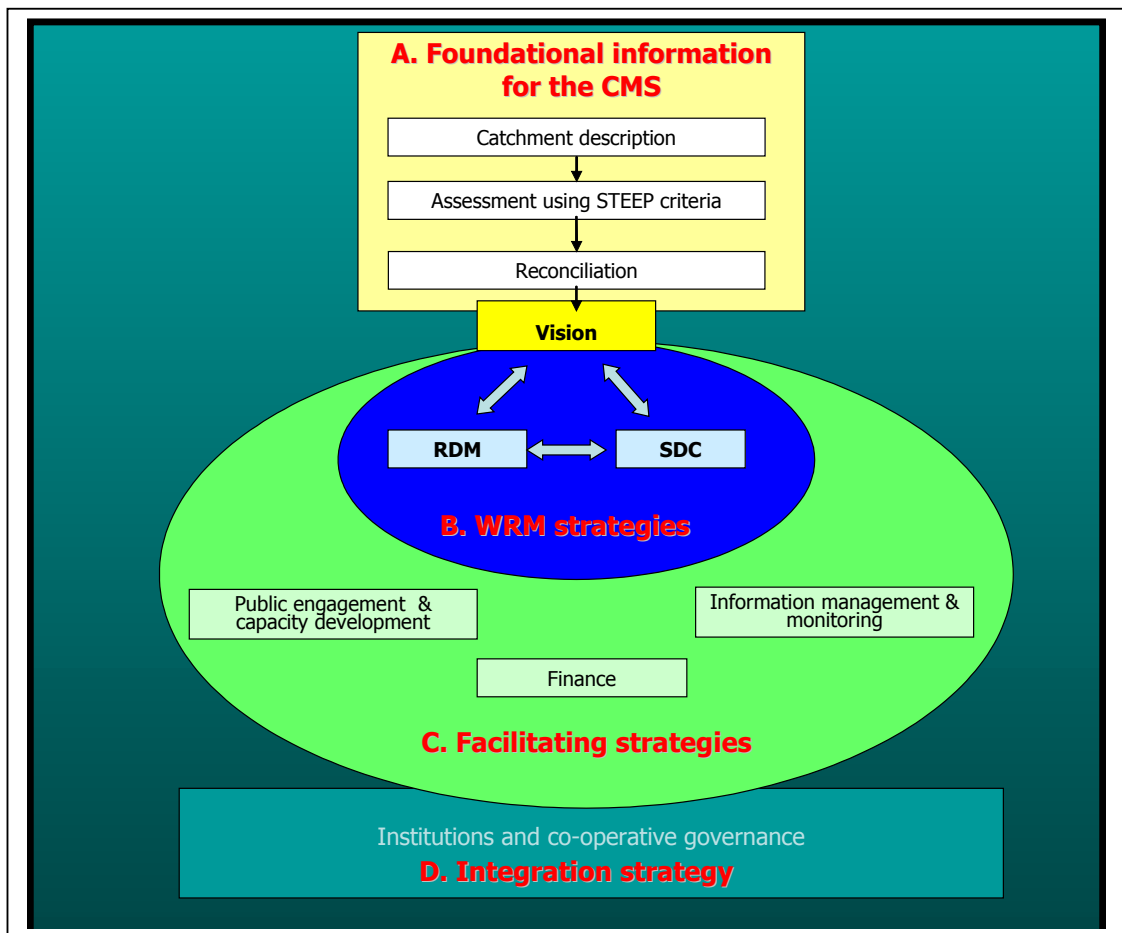



Figure 1. The framework for IWRM and hence the CMS in South Africa (adapted from DWAF 1999). Clusters of contextual information and sub-strategies for the CMS fall into four parts: A, B, C & D.

3. The public participation spectrum: Establishing the 'right' type of public participation at the 'right' time

Democratic systems require that persons potentially affected by a decision be given the opportunity to be part of decision-making processes. This provides a huge challenge for a CMA to design a process that facilitates appropriate engagement, at the appropriate times. **This project aims to guide such a process.**

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP²) has identified different types of public participation (Table 1) which they call a **spectrum**¹. We see that the level of involvement increases towards the right of the table and there is a general trend from *provision of information* to *collaborative decision-making*. This does not imply that one is better than the other. The challenge is to select the appropriate level of participation for a particular task. **This project will identify the tasks and provide a framework for the 'right' type of participation to be supported.**

Table 1. The Public Participation Spectrum. Understanding the table contents helps with developing the plans for participatory practice and provides the basis for the 'how' and 'why' of public engagement² (adapted from the International Association for Public Participation IAP2. <http://www.iap2.org/spectrum.html>; All rights reserved).

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE
Public participation goal:	Public participation goal:	Public participation goal:	Public participation goal:
To provide the public with balanced information to assist them in understanding the problem, opportunities, solutions and alternatives	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and decisions	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns are consistently understood and considered	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making process including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions
Promise to the public: <i>We will keep you informed</i>	Promise to the public: <i>We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision</i>	Promise to the public: <i>We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how the public input influenced the decisions</i>	Promise to the public: <i>We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible</i>
Example techniques			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact Sheets • Web sites • Open-forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen advisory committees • Forums • Consensus building • Participatory decision-making
			

¹ The IAP² lists "Empower" as an autonomous decision making process as part of the Participation Spectrum. However, this option does not exist within the South African legal context. The public is provided with the opportunity to participate in a collaborative manner but not to take autonomous decisions that the CMA must implement. The 'empower' column has been omitted.

Since **public participation can take a number of forms**, it is unrealistic to demand the highest form of engagement in every IWRM task as some tasks are performed largely by the custodians and regulators whilst only some need to draw on public input. Importantly, all participatory processes need to be transparent and that feedback to stakeholders is essential (as per the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (PAJA, No 3 of 2000). **This project will draw out details for public engagement.**

Very clear reasons underlie the need to involve the public in the development and implementation of a CMS. In summary these include the need to:

- serve as broad a range of interests as possible;
- improve data or information gathering, identify gaps in data or information and identify sources of data or information in the future;
- provide transparency and accountability regarding both decisions taken and the process by which decisions were taken in developing the CMS;
- build a broad base of commitment to options by creating an environment in which there is meaningful discussion of benefits, risks, and costs of options, and that consequently provides a basis for informed consent to recommendations;
- ensure greater sustainability of implementation by involving affected parties in a positive manner.

This project will clarify the process of public engagement so that the above points can be supported.

4. Collating public participation in all IWRM tasks

Public engagement is an integral part of all components of the CMS. This important integrative function is depicted in Figure 2. This project aims to present a structure for the collation process.

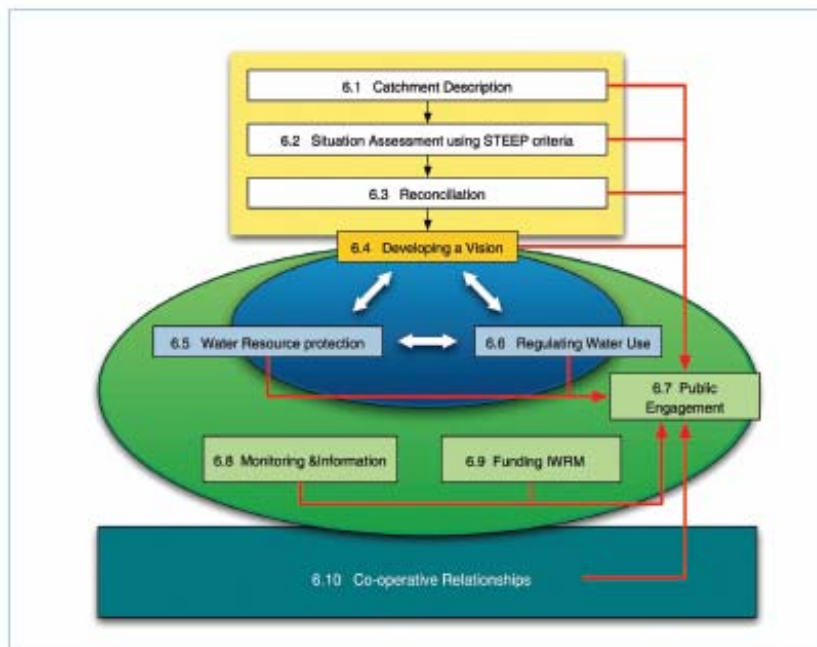


Figure 2. The sub-strategy for public engagement and capacity development (PECD) must draw on and collate the need for PECD in each of the components of the CMS. This figure highlights how the public participation aspects need to be collated in the PECD strategy of the CMS.

5. Sustaining public engagement through capacity development

IWRM can only be realised if there is adequate understanding, skills and competence amongst the CMA members and the public in general. Involvement of role-players in the drafting and implementation of the CMS are ongoing processes that will need to be sustained. Building capacity for continued engagement is an investment that the CMA needs to make.

Special attention needs to be given to effective engagement of previously disadvantaged groups and vulnerable sectors of society. Practical solutions for effective engagement with grassroots communities, women and youth need to be employed. Ways of simplifying concepts and ensuring that poor people can find their way to meetings are crucial for the functioning of IWRM. This project hopes to provide some clarity for the appropriate development of capacity development and communication by providing a schedule of tasks, concepts and basic skills required for engagement with IWRM. The project will follow the structure provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2 The *Why, What, Who, When, Where, and How*, of a participatory process. Such a table will be prepared for each part of the CMS (A, B, C & D) with specific details for tasks to be performed in the preparation of each sub-strategy.

Question	Detail
Why?	A fundamental question that must be answered is for people to know why they are being involved in a particular activity. Answering this question will help focus a participatory process and provide the necessary information required to proceed.
What?	IWRM is not a single step process – meaning the public will be engaged in a number of activities, over a number of months. It is important that participants understand that each step of the process requires specific, and sometimes different, concepts and therefore different responses.
Who?	Each WMA will have a range of stakeholders and institutions depending on the particular WMA. Not everyone can be present at meetings so some form of representation is likely to be necessary. Moreover, not all groups need to be present for every decision or step. How can the CMA ensure inclusivity in the participation process especially from marginal groups?
When?	It is important that the public is engaged at the appropriate point in time so that inputs are available to the decision-making process. The issue of sequence is important for the process to run smoothly and for the correct information to be available at the right time.
Where?	This refers to the physical location of where the meetings will take place. It is important to choose a location that is accessible to all stakeholders. Marginalised groups often have to travel the furthest to venues and so carry the highest costs of travel to such points.
How?	This is a question of process – how will it be carried out? Do people need to be consulted or do they need to collaborate in some way, for example, developing an allocation plan requires collaboration not consultation. Costs, feedback, facilitation, provision of learning support materials, orientation, frameworks, etc. are also all part of the <i>how</i> question.