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The Process of Preparing a National IWRM and Water Efficiency Plan for Kazakhstan

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Description / Abstract

Foreword Kazakhstan is in the midst of its water reform. The country's National Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Efficiency Plan has come a long way and is now being gradually implemented. Through the work with the UNDP Water Governance Facility at SIWI (WGF) it has become apparent that there are many useful national water reform experiences which are not shared on a systematic basis. The ambition with this paper is to display and disseminate key-experiences of doing water reform in Kazakhstan, particularly with regard to process issues. Many countries around the world are currently undergoing water reform and this paper provides additional insights to avoid reform pit-falls and to apply measures for consensus-building and to mediate conflicting views on the content and process of water reform. In many countries there are many times initial uncertainties about implementing IWRM due to concern that the changes will not be positive for the individuals involved. Many stakeholders fear being taken out of their comfort zone and the IWRM context is no exception to this. Issues of increasing capacities and changing attitudes are a matter of information and knowledge building to expand their comfort zones to encompass integrated water resources management (IWRM). The paper suggests in addition to set in place vital national processes and institutions that facilitate the development of reform content and implementation. For example, simultaneous public awareness campaign is vital to developing a broad understanding of IWRM and broad support for the preparation and implementation of the National Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Efficiency Plan. In the case of Kazakhstan it was also seen as critical to set in place an Inter-ministerial Working Group for the approval and adoption process as it forms a conduit of information between the water management authority and their respective ministers.

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