



# What territorial strategies for water management in Europe ?

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To implement the WFD and especially its River Basin Management Plans and Programs of Measures, France has a strategy based on a consistent hydrographic unit, the sub-basin, in promoting the development of Water Development and Management Plans (SAGE) at this level.

Is the French "SAGE" unique in Europe ? In eight European countries, IOWater analyzed the tools for sub-basin water resources management that meet the characteristics of the French "SAGE" :

- Planning at the level of a sub-basin or a consistent hydrographic unit ;
- Approach to sound and sustainable water resources management ;
- A multi-stakeholder consultation framework ;
- A document having a regulatory scope and defining enforceable rules.

The observation of the eight European countries, Belgium (Walloon Region), Germany (Lander of Lower Saxony), Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom, shows that these countries have mainly developed plans for managing water resources at regional level, depending on their institutional, historical and cultural context.

Spain is organizing water management on the scale of major river basins, but Luxembourg keeps water resource planning at national level.

England has recently developed an approach to planning at the level of consistent hydrographic units.

If the Programs of Measures of the River Basin Management Plans are usually developed with regional plans, some countries bordering France have developed tools that draw heavily on river contracts on the sub-basin scale (the Walloon Region, Luxembourg, Italy, Spain occasionally).

The Lander of Lower Saxony, the Netherlands, England, Walloon Region, Luxembourg and Sweden have institutionalized dialogue in multi-stakeholder committees. However, their implementation method, their powers and privileges vary for each country.

The "French SAGE" seems to remain unique in Europe !