

PROJECT

Water

Environmental and Health-related Indicators in the Benchmarking of Water Suppliers

On behalf of the German Federal Environment Agency (UBA) and in cooperation with Rödl & Partner GbR and Hochschule Ruhr West, Ecologic Institute analyzed measures for the protection of water bodies and human health implemented by German water management companies and how these services are recorded in benchmarking indicators. Moreover, the necessary framework to assure the continuation of these services in the long-term was discussed as well as proposals for the further development of current benchmarking systems. The final project report is available for download.

The draft of the final project report served as an input for the discussion at the workshop "Water Body and Health-related Indicators in the Benchmarking of Water Suppliers" held by UBA on 18. September 2012 in Berlin.

The process of guaranteeing the continued implementation of preventative measures for human health and water body protection that was initiated by this research project served as the basis for an expert discussion with water utility organizations on 13. November 2012 at the BMU offices in Berlin. There, representatives from the VKU, BDEW, and DVGW met with those of the BMU and UBA as well as researchers from Ecologic Institute and Hochschule Ruhr West and employees of Rödl & Partner GbR to discuss the final proposals put forth in this study. On the agenda of this expert discussion were, among other topics, discussions about a catalogue of preventative measures as well as the potential for reporting the implementation of these preventative measures using indicators. During the lively and constructive discussion, the participants were able to agree upon the next steps of the process.

Motivation and Objective

Within the framework of municipal services of general interest,

water supply companies traditionally provide extensive services for preventative environmental protection, in order to ensure reliable health protection to the public.

The persistent public discussion on over-priced water costs in Germany as well as an increasing control concerning restrictive trade practices due to existing cost differences has increased the pressure on water supply companies. This pressure might in long-term endanger the high aims of the German water supply in these areas.



In contrast to the operational tasks as extraction, treatment and supply, services which address environment and resource protection are often difficult to evaluate economically. They are often site-specific and therefore insufficiently comparable; quantifying the benefit for the environment, nature and society is methodologically challenging. As a result, environmental and health-related services have, in the past, been insufficiently considered within price control and by benchmarking approaches.

Federal states and supply companies generally agree that the pressure to increase the cost efficiency of the water supply should not endanger these services. The political will to conserve these services demands for a critical analysis and the further development of current benchmarking approaches in the water sector. This project was dedicated to these tasks.

Methodological Approach

The project included a systematic analysis of established benchmarking systems, their coverage of environmental and health-related services and their suitability to provide an information basis for price control and to comply with reporting requirements according to European water legislation (environment and resource costs, Art. 9 EG.WFD). Suggestions were made for increasing the coverage and communication of environmental and health-related services provided by the water supply companies. Going beyond the discussion of scope, further measures and options to ensure the high level standards of services to protect the environment and resources and to improve transparency were discussed.

Attachments

-  Abschlussbericht Ökologische und hygienische Kennzahlen im Benchmarking der Wasserversorgung
-  Draft: Abschlussbericht Ökologische und hygienische Kennzahlen im Benchmarking der Wasserversorgung

Main Link

[Ökologische und hygienische Kennzahlen im Benchmarking der Wasserversorgung](#)

Further Links

- Publications data base (UBA): Ökologische und hygienische Kennzahlen im Benchmarking der Wasserversorgung - Empfehlungen aus Sicht des Gewässer- und Gesundheitsschutzes

Funding

Federal Environment Agency (UBA), Germany

Partner

Ecologic Institute, Germany

Partner

Rödl & Partner, Germany
Hochschule Ruhr West (HRW), Germany

Team

Marlene Angela Lange

Team

Dr. Darla N. Nickel
R. Andreas Kraemer
Andrew Ayres
Elena von Sperber
Karl Lehmann

Duration

September 2011 to January 2013

Project ID

2360

Keywords

water, benchmarking, potable water, water supply, indicators, Germany

Source URL (modified on 08/22/2018 - 19:00): <https://www.ecologic.eu/4721>