

Protocol on Water and Health

Thomas Kistemann & Christian Timm

IHPH-Institute für Hygiene und Public Health, WHO CC for Health Promoting Water Management and Risk Communication, Medical Geography and Public Health Research Group, University of Bonn, Sigmund-Freud-Straße 25, 53105 Bonn, Germany



The Protocol on Water and Health to the 1992 Water Convention aims to protect human health and well-being through better water management, including the protection of water ecosystems, and by preventing, controlling and reducing water-related diseases in Europe.

The Protocol is the first international legally binding agreement of its kind adopted specifically to attain an

adequate supply of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation for everyone, and effectively protect water used as a source of drinking water.

The Protocol was adopted in 1999 and entered into force in 2005, becoming legally binding for the ratifying countries. So far, 36 countries have signed and 24 ratified it.

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes Helsinki, 17 March 1992

Objective: Strengthen national measures for the protection and ecologically sound management of transboundary surface waters and groundwaters

Protocol on Water and Health

London, June 1999

Objective: attain an adequate supply of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation for everyone, and effectively protect water used as a source of drinking water

Meeting of the Parties (MoP)

(Geneva 2007, Bucharest 2010)

Parties exchange information on their progress in setting targets and target dates and decide plan of work

Joint Secretariat
provided by the
WHO European
Centre for
Environment &
Health (ECEH)
and the
United Nations
Economic
Commission for
Europe (UNECE),
coordinating
implementation
activities

**Working Group
on Water and Health**
prepares MoP, reviews
progress, proposes
modifications to the
work programme and
reports to the Meeting
of the Parties

Bureau

Compliance Committee
Reviews compliance with
the Protocol

**Project Facilitation
Mechanism**
Identifies priority activities of
non-infrastructure intervention

**Task force on Indicators
and Reporting**

**Task force on Extreme
Weather Events**

**Task force on
Surveillance**

Links between the Protocol on Water and Health & the terms of reference of the WHO CC are manifold:

Surveillance of disease burden: harmonized assessment of water related disease burden and surveillance including GIS-based approaches.

Risk assessment: assessment of environmental exposure and further development of GIS methods for health risk assessment.

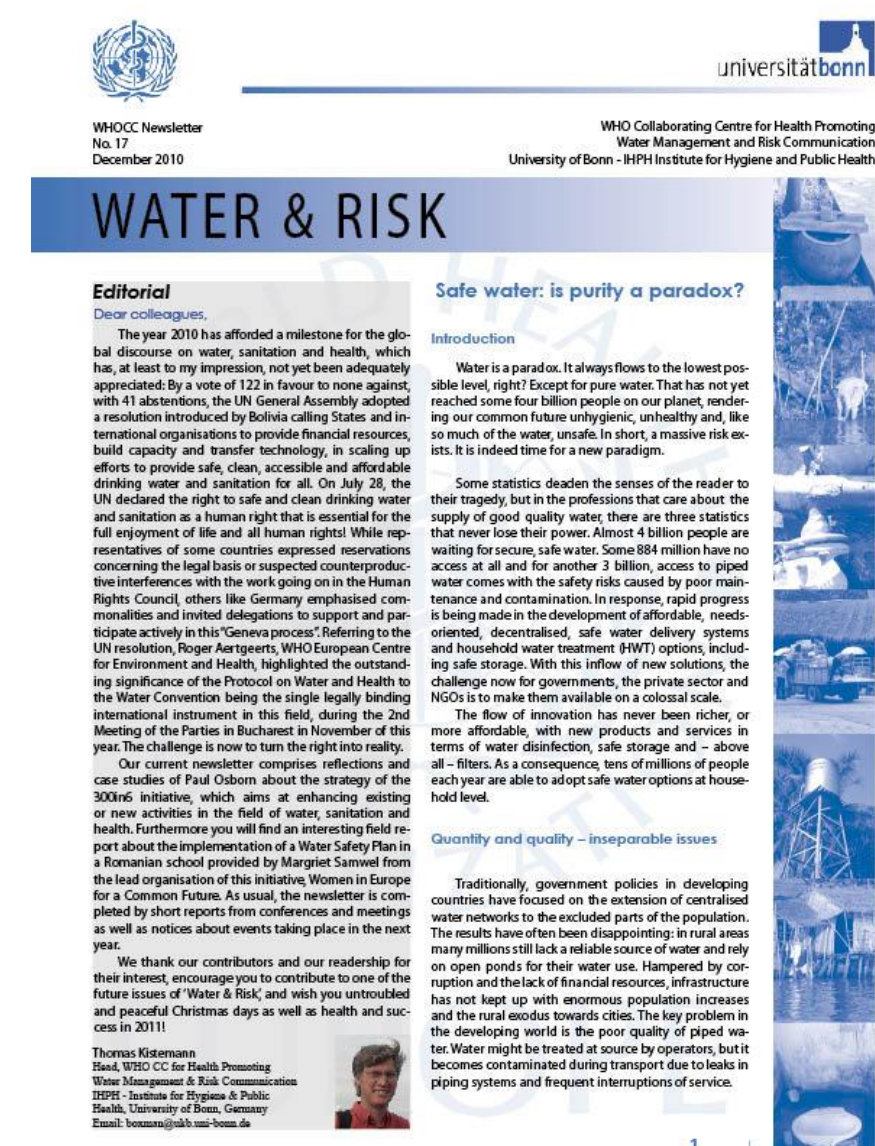
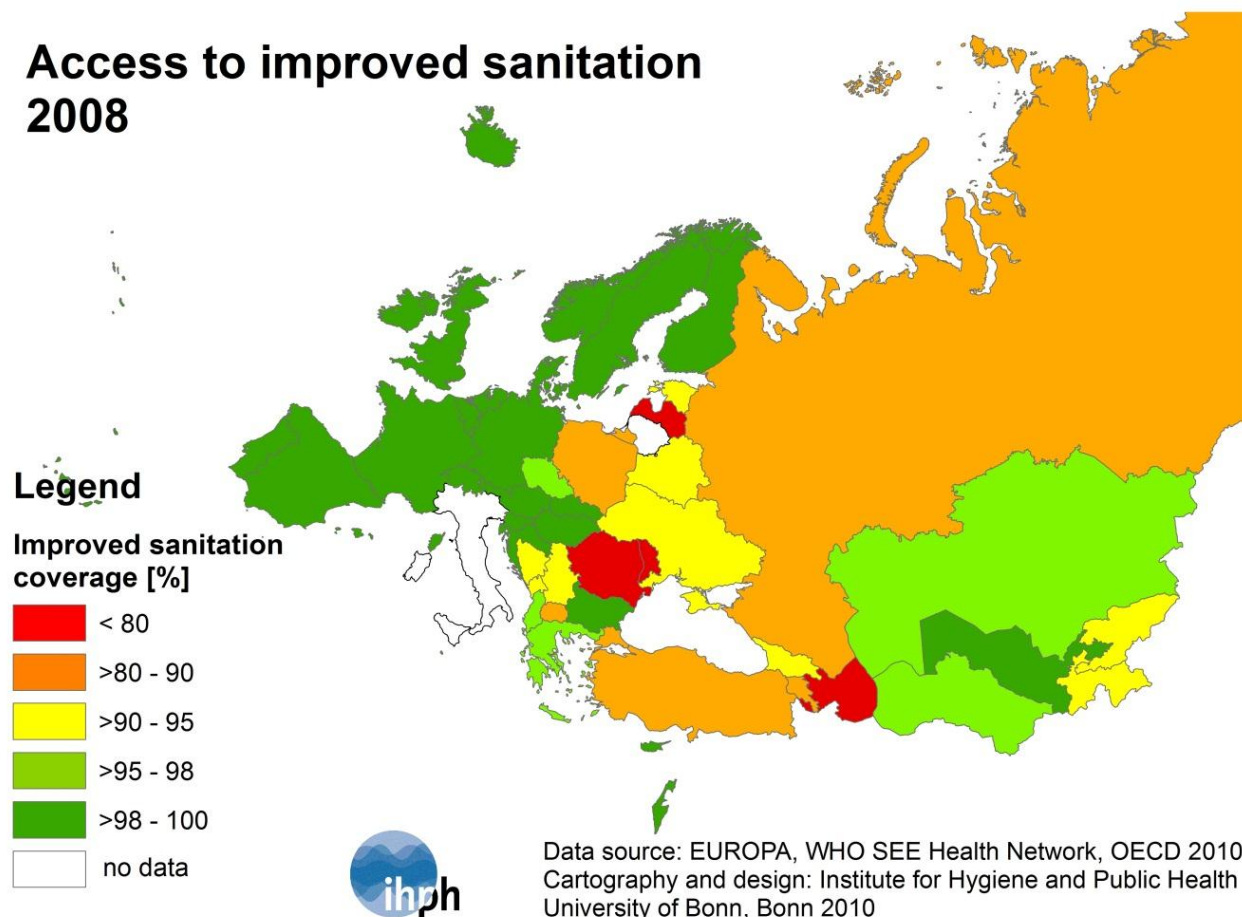
Risk management: further development of holistic water management approaches and incorporation of GIS and Water Safety Plan concept.

Communication of health risks: regular review and compilation of publications, accumulated experiences and recommendations on risk communication concerning the field of water, sanitation and health.

Technical guidance documentation: supervision and coordination in the preparation of technical guidelines on selected topics.

Diffusion of information on health risks: production and diffusion of guidance documents, teaching aids and awareness-raising material on health-significant aspects of water management and risk communication.

Training: organization of group training on health promotion, water management and risk communication.



Diffusion of information on water-related health risks:
Atlas on Water & Health
www.waterandhealth.eu
(2010ff)

Preparing a guidance document on surveillance, outbreak detection and contingency planning
(Bonn, 2003)

Training Russian experts in the implementation of Water Safety Plans
(Moscow, 2007)

Country mission: Communication of health risks, training
(Turkmenistan, 2005)

The WHO CC 'Water & Risk' Newsletter: Diffusion of information on water-related health risks