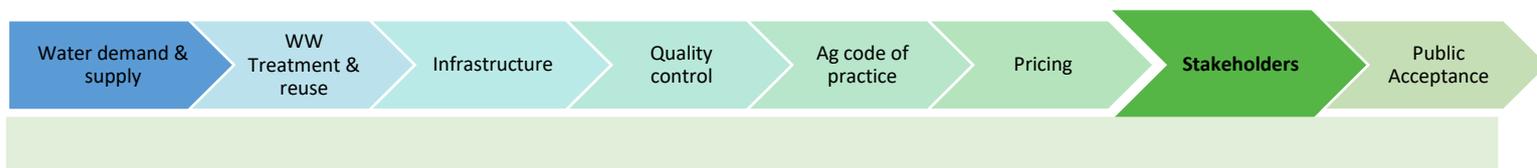




## The Success Story of Israel Fact Sheet 7 - Stakeholder involvement



### KEYS FOR SUCCESS – Lessons learned from the success stories of Cyprus and Israel

SUWANU EUROPE is a H2020 project aiming to promote the effective exchange of knowledge, experience and skills among practitioners and relevant actors on the use of reclaimed water in agriculture. This factsheet is part of a total of 17 factsheets that describe the successful reclamation practices of Israel and Cyprus in order to learn and boost implementation of solutions adapted to the European context. Our ultimate goal is to enhance acceptance and awareness to an alternative source of an increasingly scarce resource, water.

#### National level management of the water sector

The management of water resources in Israel is governed by the Water Law, enacted in 1959. According to this Law, there is no private ownership of water in Israel as all water resources are considered public property. This includes springs, streams, rivers, lakes, and all other surface and sub-surface water resources, including drainage and sewage. Water allocation is set at a national level with the main purpose of supplying local demand and enabling development. Property rights exclude the rights to any water resources within that property, yet the right of all persons to receive and use water is stated and protected.

Traditionally, water management in Israel was decentralized and spread among different ministries. The Water Commission, operated under the Ministry of Agriculture, was charged with allocating water from the various available resources for the different customers. Pricing for agriculture use were set by the Ministry of Agriculture and for domestic consumption by the Ministry of the Interior. During that era, water pricing was not considered a mechanism for managing the water sector.

In 2007, a reform in the structure of the water sector established the Israeli Water Authority, a new government authority set as the primary organization responsible for water related planning, regulating, and policy making. The Water Authority is a department within the Ministry of Energy. Its decisions and policy making require subsequent authorization by the Water Authority Council (WAC), a forum chaired by the Water Authority with high level representation of five ministries (Finance, Environment, Interior, Agriculture, Energy), and representatives of public interest groups (Figure 1). Although it does not have an official role in the WAC, the Ministry of Health (MOH) is a key stakeholder in decision making related to the water sector. The MOH has an integral role in the discussions, strategic planning, and subsequent changes that affect different aspects of the water sector, acting as the protector of the public's right to safe water at suitable quality for all uses.

#### Multi-discipline involvement in setting water quality regulations

Drinking water regulation in Israel is set by the Ministry of Health, typically joined by external advisory committees that include members of the academia and institutions related to water supply and treatment such as Mekorot. Regulations for effluent treatment and reuse, published in 1992 and updated in 2010, are also set by the MOH, with additional involvement from the Ministry of Agriculture, Mekorot, and additional stakeholders as mentioned above. Reclaimed effluent produced after Soil Aquifer Treatment of the Shafdan WWTP effluents (serving the greater Tel Aviv area) are excluded from this regulation as, due to their superior quality, they are referred to as potable water for considerations related to irrigation practices.

The regulations for using reclaimed effluents are set by the Ministry of Agriculture which, through an advisory committee led by a former high official in the MOH, created a directive for the safe use of reclaimed effluent that covers all the different applications where such use is permitted. To meet this regulation, each farmer is required to obtain a permit for using reclaimed water. The permit is specific and allows the use of effluent only for the crops requested by the farmer, under the specific irrigation conditions defined in his or her request. This regulation is enforced by the Israeli Nature and Parks Authority, which has the authority to audit farmers and assure they adhere to the letter of their permits.

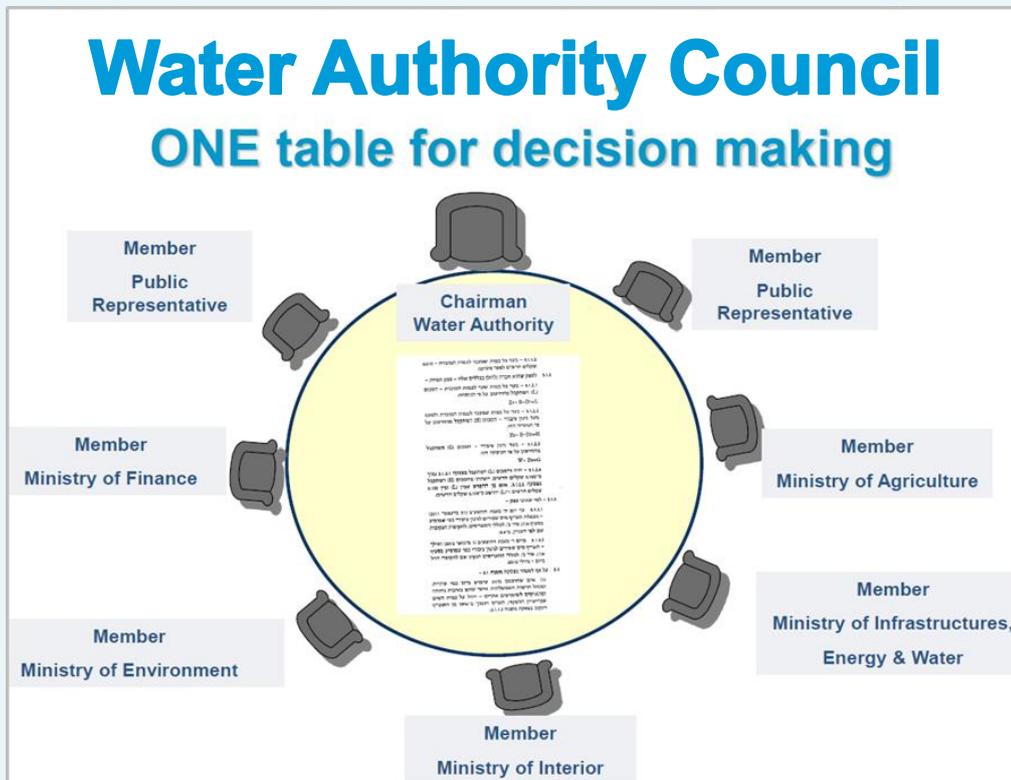


Figure 1 - Structure of the Water Authority Council, responsible for authorising decisions and policies set by the Water Authority and any ministries.

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