

SDG 6.5.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report

Azerbaijan

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Prepared by:

SDG 6.5.1 Facilitator

Reviewed by National Focal Point on SDG 6.5.1

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Executive Summary

With financial support from the "SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme" a consultation workshop was organized with the different stakeholders from the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan and other state agencies, NGOs, regional projects, such as EU4Environment and coordinated by Global Water Partnership (GWP) in collaboration with the GWP country representative.

The stakeholder consultation meeting was coordinated by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan. To ensure the meeting's effective facilitation, the National Focal Point had received online, self-paced, specifically for 6.5.1 reporting, facilitation training under, a program designed and made available by GWPO via Cap-Net's Virtual Campus in order to understand the specifics of the mentioned survey and the peculiarities of presenting the questionnaire to the audience. Appropriate calculation methodology and practical advice for the meeting within the framework of monitoring. Prior to the workshop, significant efforts were made to ensure that attendees engaged in a thorough and constructive ways. The preliminary 6.5.1 Indicator report was translated into Azerbaijani language from its original English version. As a result, this translated report was widely shared among the intended participants, allowing them to critically examine its contents. Participants were urged to provide their views, comments, and remarks ahead of time in order to facilitate a comprehensive and well-informed discussion. Furthermore, participants were given fact sheets (Visual Summary of progress, which was translated into Azerbaijani language before the meeting), outlining Azerbaijan's reportings from previous years, which provided relevant context and insights into previous outcomes and findings.

The facilitator provided guidance on the procedures and protocols related to capturing and disseminating photos prior to the meeting, and this guidance was received without any objections from the participants.

The proceedings of the stakeholders' consultation workshop began with a welcome from the representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as their counterparts from GWP Azerbaijan. The Ministry delegates expressed profound gratitude to the Global Water Partnership Organization (GWPO) and GWP Azerbaijan for their significant assistance and support throughout the reporting process.

The 6.5.1 Indicator focus point took on the role of workshop facilitator, conducting the deliberations with accuracy. Each topic, along with its accompanying score, was thoroughly examined and discussed, with participants exploring thoroughly into the criteria and reasoning behind the issued scores. Notably, a consensus-driven process arose in which certain preliminary scores, as indicated in the draft report, were appropriate to change. These changes comprised score raises and score decreases, as well as remaining the same based on participant consensus and perception.

At the start of the meeting, the Focal Point emphasized the questionnaire's role as a self-assessment tool. This mandatory explanation served as a crucial reminder to all participants of the inherent importance of equal and active engagement. The Focal Point underlined the need of each participant's equal participation in order to ensure a

thorough and meticulous assessment process, prohibiting the removal of any critical details or insights. This instruction reiterated the group's unanimous responsibility and commitment to a comprehensive and inclusive review process. It is important to emphasize that stakeholders contributed significantly to the discussion by providing additional information and insights, particularly when they felt that additional details should be included under specific questions, thus enriching the overall content and depth of the deliberations.

Focal Point's presentation was preceded by months of preparation and consultation with numerous public and private organizations. Online *Feedback Survey for Participant* has been sent to the meeting participants by E-mail after the Consultation.

The Stakeholder Consultation Workshop, held with 31 participants, demonstrated a diverse and inclusive engagement. Gender representation was balanced, with 45% female participants and 55% male participants. Age-wise, the majority of participants fell within the 18-35 age bracket, comprising 56% of the total attendees. The 36-65 age group represented 22% of the participants, while individuals aged 66 years or older also constituted 22% of the attendees.

In the assessment of the stakeholder consultation workshop, participants were queried on various aspects of the event:

Meeting Objectives:

50% of participants affirmed that the consultation process very much met its objectives, while 44% expressed satisfaction, and 6% found it only partially met its goals.

Organizational Effectiveness:

Concerning the organization of the consultation process, a substantial majority, 67%, deemed it very well organized, with an additional 33% expressing satisfaction with the overall organization.

Expression of Opinions:

When evaluating the opportunity to express opinions during the consultation process, 39% felt they could do so very effectively, 44% expressed satisfaction, 11% felt only partially able to express their views, and 6% indicated not being able to express their opinions at all.

In summary, these results indicate a generally positive reception of the consultation process among participants, with a significant majority acknowledging the effective meeting of objectives and commendable organizational effectiveness. The feedback on the expression of opinions also suggests a largely positive experience

Within the assessment of the stakeholder consultation, particular attention was directed towards inquiries regarding the **"Final country response of the SDG 6.5.1."** Discernible insights were garnered from a select group of participants.

In response to the question **"To what extent are opinions reflected in the final country response of the SDG 6.5.1 survey?"**, it was found that 28% of participants

noted a significant alignment denoted as "Very much so," while a majority of 61% acknowledged a satisfactory reflection of their opinions, and 11% perceived only a partial alignment.

Regarding the question "**To what extent has the final country response of the SDG 6.5.1 survey identified relevant challenges to IWRM implementation in your country?**", diverse perspectives emerged. Specifically, 28% of participants believed that challenges were identified "Very much so," 56% found the identification of challenges "Satisfactorily," and 17% perceived a partial acknowledgment of challenges.

These nuanced findings underscore the varied opinions within the participant cohort regarding the alignment of perspectives with the final country response.

In response to the question, "**How could the SDG 6.5.1 consultation process in your country be improved in the future?**" participants provided insightful recommendations that reflect a collective desire for enhancement. Several recurring themes emerged:

Continuity of Stakeholder Meetings:

Many participants underscored the importance of holding stakeholder meetings continuously. They believe that ongoing engagement can yield sustainable benefits and contribute significantly to problem-solving.

Public Involvement:

A notable suggestion from participants is to make the event open to the public. This recommendation emphasizes the significance of broadening participation beyond specific stakeholders to encourage inclusivity.

Private Sector Participation:

Some participants highlighted the importance of private sector involvement. They believe that incorporating the private sector can bring diverse perspectives and expertise to the consultation process.

Diverse Representation of Water Users:

Participants recommended expanding the scope of participation to include a wider range of water users. This inclusivity is seen as essential for a comprehensive understanding of water-related challenges.

Acquaintance with Previous Reports:

A participant emphasized the necessity of familiarizing stakeholders with reports from previous years. This suggestion aims to ensure continuity and informed participation in the ongoing SDG 6.5.1 consultation process.

GWP-Azerbaijan in coordination with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR) of the Republic of Azerbaijan planned to repeat the previous experience in accordance with the recommendations of the SDG 6 IWRM support program during 2023,. Consultation process had been organized by the methodology outlined in the Step by Step Monitoring Methodology for SDG Indicator 6.5.1.

At the first stage, the questionnaires were developed by the invited national expert under the supervision of GWP-Azerbaijan in cooperation with the MENR.

At the second stage, the completed questionnaires were sent to all interested parties (the national authorities indicated below) for amendments and comments. During the process of consultation and refinement of the questionnaire, experts of key organizations (stakeholders) involved in the IWRM process, ensured the link between the framework and the survey process.

At the third stage, there was organized a round table for representatives of the ministries and organizations (above mentioned stakeholders), *as well as NGOs and academic institutions to discuss* (face to face) and develop consensus on the IWRM progress in Azerbaijan.

Finally, *national expert under the supervision of GWP-Azerbaijan*, in coordination with the MENR, completed the report and documentation, as well as submitted them to the UNDP and SDG 6 IWRM Support Program.

1. **Conclusions from facilitated discussions**

In conclusion, the stakeholder consultation workshop demonstrated robust engagement and received positive feedback from participants. The evaluation results highlighted a generally favorable reception, emphasizing the effective meeting of objectives and commendable organizational effectiveness. Additionally, participants provided valuable insights into the final country response of the SDG 6.5.1 survey and offered thoughtful suggestions for future improvements. These recommendations, focused on continuity, inclusivity, and informed participation, lay the groundwork for enhancing the effectiveness of future consultation processes.

Key stakeholders related to the SDG 6.5.1 progress in Azerbaijan who took part in discussions:

A) State authorized administrative bodies:

- *Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*
- *State Water Resources Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*
- *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*
- *Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Azerbaijan*
- *Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*
- *Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*
- *Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*
- *Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*
- *Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*

- *Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan;*
- *Ministry of Science and Education - Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences;*
- *National Hydrometeorological Service of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources;*
- *Azerbaijani Research Institute of Amelioration*

B) NGOs and public organizations

C) International and regional organizations

D) media

To ensure a wider implementation of the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in Azerbaijan, work is systematically underway.

In accordance with the conditions of the market economy, since 1997, the republic has switched to phased paid water use. There are currently 370 associations of water users created in the republic. They are engaged in water sharing among water users, as well as their rational use.

Climate change creates serious challenges for countries with arid climates, including Azerbaijan Republic. In summer period, when the need of agricultural crops for irrigation water is very high, the shortage of water resources is very acutely felt in the territory of Kur-Araz lowland, which is the main base of the agricultural production of the republic.

Taking into account the shortage of water in the country in recent years, with the aim of improving the supply of drinking and irrigation water to consumers and coordinating at the national level various organizations involved in the regulation of water resources, monitoring, exploitation and scientific research, by the decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic dated April 15, 2020, the Water Commission was established, which coordinates the management of water resources and in order to ensure the effective use of the country's water resources by coordinating all the activities of the water sector, and by decree of On July 27, 2020, the order on additional measures to ensure the rational use of water resources was signed, and the "Action Plan to ensure the rational use of water resources for 2020-2022" was approved.

In order to improve management in the spheres of water resources, water management and land reclamation, rational use of water resources, and improve the organization of work on land reclamation and irrigation in accordance with the Decree of the President of Azerbaijan Republic on the improvement of management in the spheres of water resources, water management and land reclamation dated March 30, 2023 State Water Resources Agency of Azerbaijan was established. "Azersu" Open joint-stock company and Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Farm Open joint-stock company are transferred to the subordination of the Agency. Currently, the preparation of the Constitution and structure of the Agency is being completed.

The fundamental and applied basis is the implementation of the principles of CWRM (IWRM). The purpose of the reform of the water sector is to create the basis for the decentralization of the management system and the assignment of part of the functions for operation in the process of dividing the responsibility between the Agency and departments and partially non-governmental organizations. The proposed reform is based on the general regulatory principles of IWRM and special importance is given

to the issues of social, economic interests and the environment through sustainable balanced management and development of water resources.

Thus, water programs are successfully implemented in Azerbaijan. However, the analysis and evaluation of the implementation of the principles of IWRM, the implementation of these programs and their monitoring require special research. Therefore, it is quite possible that based on the results of our assessments and studies are planned to be conducted this year. There were given specific proposals and ideas that had been taken into account and included in the new stage of the development of the national IWRM plan.

To ensure macroeconomic stability and realization of national goals in the field of sustainable development, liquidation of the socio-economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic and qualitatively corresponding indicators presented by the national goals of sustainable development, as well as in the post-pandemic and post-conflict period, the achievement of national goals and objectives in the field of sustainable development. according to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan

"National priorities of social-economic development: Azerbaijan 2030" was approved on February 2, 2021; "Strategy on social-economic development of the Azerbaijan Republic for 2022-2026" has been discussed and came into force upon the order of President of Azerbaijan Republic on of July 22, 2022.

The Strategy establishes the main directions of planning, use and protection of water resources taking into account the social and economic development of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2022-2026.

- Support of economic activity due to the improvement of water resources management
- Evaluation, electronics, improvement of the accounting system and raising awareness of the management of water resources in the country
- Expanding the practice of using alternative sources of water
- Reduction of water loss and increase in water resources
- Expansion of sources of drinking water, construction of a complex of purification facilities and main sewage collectors.

Currently, the preparation of the Water Strategy of Azerbaijan is being completed under the guidance of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources.

GWP-Azerbaijan contributed in the form of logistical support, preparation of a draft agenda; the list of participants; invitation to each participant; coordination of presentation topics with each participant; facilitation of events and other needed services.

In addition, the **Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources** (MENR) made an in-kind *contribution in the form of inviting government organizations to meetings, provide them with information to be used in the preparation of reports, provide necessary assistance in the direction of preparation of reports and other issues.*

The national consultant was hired to drafting the questionnaire and facilitating consultations and the round table as well as preparing the report.

About 30 participants from different institutions responsible for IWRM implementation in Azerbaijan (including governmental bodies, local non-governmental organizations, academia and the media) were involved in the final roundtable.

All activities had been conducted under the supervision of CWP-Azerbaijan in coordination with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENP) of Azerbaijan Republic

Annexes

Annex 1: List of Participants

Annex 2: Agenda

Annex 3: Photos

Annex 1: List of participants

Annex 1: List of Participants

| | Name | Organisation | Position | Contact information |
|----|------------------|--|--|--|
| 1 | Faig Mutallimov | The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources | Head of division | 0507628095 |
| 2 | Aytan Seyidova | The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources | Head of division | 0557058899 |
| 3 | Meltem Ahmadzade | The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources | Senior Specialist | meltem.ahmadzade@eco.gov.az |
| 4 | Leyla Taghizade | Republican Hygiene and Epidemiology Center of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan | National coordinator of the UN Water and Health Protocol | 0503521813 |
| 5 | Sevda Talibova | Republican Hygiene and Epidemiology Center of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Azerbaijan | Doctor, hygienist | 0703305598 |
| 6 | Narmin Jafarova | Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan | Consultant of the Land Use Control Department, Amelioration and Irrigation Regulation Sector | 0515141803 |
| 7 | Rustam Rajabov | "Azerenergy" OJSC | Head of Department of Energy Production | rustam.racabov@azeneji.gov.az 0512059428 |
| 8 | Farid Osmanov | "Azerenergy" OJSC | Senior Specialist of Department of Energy Production | 0515359395 |
| 9 | Elmir Mammadli | Azerbaijan State Water Resources Agency (Azersu OJSC) | Head of the Ecology Department | 0552092705 |
| 10 | Abbas Abbaszade | Azerbaijan State Water Resources Agency (Azersu OJSC) | Head of Department of Geographical Information Systems | 0552240480 |
| 11 | Ramila Soltanova | The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan | Senior consultant of Department of Sustainable | 0703280808 |

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|----|---------------------|---|--|--|
| | | | Development Statistics | |
| 12 | Tarana Shahbalayeva | The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan | Senior Consultant of the Department of Energy Statistics | 0554063406 tarana.shahbalayeva@gmail.com |
| 13 | Rashail Ismayilov | "Sukanal" Scientific-Research and Design Institute of "Azersu" OJSC | Deputy director | |
| 14 | Mansur Zarbaliyev | Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction | Docent | 0504245444 |
| 15 | Zulfali Rasulov | Institute of Geography of the Ministry of Science and Education | Researcher | 0703400128 |
| 16 | Elnur Safarov | Institute of Geography of the Ministry of Science and Education | Senior researcher | 0554487668 |
| 17 | Narmin Guliyeva | Institute of Radiation Problems | Head of the Education Department | 0518668787 |
| 18 | Amina Mikayilova | "Ruzgar" NGO | Deputy Chairman | 0503588690 |
| 19 | Narmin Isgandarli | Azerbaijan Amelioration and Water Farm OJSC | Senior Consultant | 0706405759 |
| 20 | Panah Abdullayev | Amelioration Scientific Research Institute | Head of division | 0552737551 |
| 21 | Anar Nuriyev | Baku State University | Teacher | 0557447214 anar_nuri@yahoo.com |
| 22 | Sema Mammadli | Azerbaijan Technical University | Student | 0775219323 |
| 23 | Salatin Aspandizade | Azerbaijan Technical University | Master's student | 0777216221 |
| 24 | Amin Mammadov | «Water Experts Union» Public Union | Deputy chairman | 0503510603 |
| 25 | Mammad Asadov | Azerbaijan National Water Partnership (CWP Azerbaijan) | Chairman | 0503926488 safsu@mail.ru |
| 26 | Ahmadiya Sarkarov | "Family and Environment" Public Union | Volunteer | 0519342320 |
| 27 | Akif Sultanov | "Azdovsuteslayiha" Institute | Senior Project Engineer | 0503780695 |
| 28 | Elnaz Asadova | "Cuvar-E" LLC | Sociologist | 0555325445 |

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|----|------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------|
| 29 | Aynur Asadova | "SAFSU Ecological-Meliorative Monitoring Center" Public Union | Expert | 0552979604 |
| 30 | Sarkhan Bayramov | "Safsu" LLC | Chairman | 0552020939 |
| 31 | Teymur Osmanov | CWP CACENA | Member of the Regional Council | 0556710177 |

Annex 2: Agenda

Sustainable Development Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation 6.5.1 Indicator (Degree of integrated water resources management implementation) consultation meeting

Ganjali Plaza, 48 Uzeyir Hajibayov str, Baku, Azerbaijan
 November 3, 2023

Agenda of the meeting

10:00-10:15
Registration

10:15-10:30
Welcome
 • Official opening of the meeting
 • Purpose of the meeting

10:30-10:45
Information about the National Water Partnership of Azerbaijan

10:45-11:00
Information regarding Azerbaijan's 2022 national report on SDG 6 "Clean Water and Sanitation," and details on the forthcoming 2023 report

11:00-11:15
Priority Directions for Ensuring Water Security in Azerbaijan

11:15-11:30
Coffee break

11:30-11:45

Principles for the Sustainable Utilization of Water Resources and Their Integrated Management

11:45-13:00 Review and discussion

Questions in Part I and II of the Report: "Enabled Environment" and "Institutions and Participation"

- Summary
- Harmonization of Scores
- Discussion

13:00-14:00

Lunch

14:00-14:45 Review and discussion

Questions in parts III and IV of the report: "Management tools" and "Financing"

- Review
- Discussion
- Reconciliation of scores

14:45-15:00

Review of Goals within the UN Water and Health Protocol

15:00-15:30

Coffee break

15:30-16:00

Continuation of the topic

Questions in parts III and IV of the report - "Management tools" and "Financing"

16:00-17:00 Summary and closing of the meeting

- Future steps
- Summary
- Closing the meeting

Annex 3: Photos







