

Chapter 1

Introduction



This guidebook on urban water demand management in ASEAN seeks to document and synthesise good WDM policies, measures, and practices, relevant to ASEAN stakeholders. In particular, the guidebook is expected to be useful to policymakers interested in considering non-structural¹ approaches to water management; to regulators in monitoring and incentivising performance in the water sector; and water service providers in increasing their service efficiency.

The WDM policies, measures, and practices included in this guidebook were drawn from the academic literature and official grey literature from international organisations, governments, and water service providers from the public and private water sectors. Many of these policies, measures, and practices have demonstrated effective outcomes at post-implementation, within and beyond ASEAN contexts. In addition, stakeholder consultations towards the WDM policies, measures, and practices referenced in the guidebook were also sought. Representing these stakeholders were public and private water service providers, policymakers, and public officials from water sectors in ASEAN countries, as well as academics whose expertise lies in water management, policy, and governance. The goal of these consultations was to improve the relevance and accuracy of information presented in the guidebook for use by different stakeholders in ASEAN.

This guidebook is organised into five sections: Section 1 (the present section) introduces readers to the guidebook and its structure. Section 2 defines WDM and the key challenges and potential environmental, economic, and social benefits of its adoption in ASEAN. Section 3 outlines key planning steps for water service providers interested to design, implement, and assess WDM measures. Section 4 presents a typology of key WDM measures that is developed for the purpose of this guidebook. The typology consists of the following measures: (1) water losses; (2) economic

¹ Soft approaches/non-price mechanisms such as public education campaigns and school curricula, water efficiency audits and benchmarking, outreach and communication through utility bills, etc.

instruments; (3) non-price mechanisms; and (4) alternative water supply systems. The first three themes of the typology are discussed further. They are accompanied by selected case studies of good practice implementation in different ASEAN cities. In conclusion, the final section of this guidebook highlights the top three WDM accomplishments in ASEAN and future directions for ASEAN in its WDM implementation.

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