



Advocacy strategy

PREPARED project



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COLOPHON

Title

Advocacy Strategy

Report number

PREPARED 2014.020

Deliverable number

D7.3.1

Author(s)

Minni Hildebrand (and Raul Glotzbach) (IWA)

Quality Assurance

Katharine Cross (IWA)

Document history

Version	Team member	Status	Date update	Comments
		final		

This report is:

PU = Public

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1 Questions informing the Problem Statement

*I keep six honest serving men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and
When
And How and Where and Who
(Rudyard Kipling)*

To what extent are European cities and utilities technologically prepared to adapt to the expected impacts that climate change will have on their water supply and sanitation systems? How will the cities' water supply and sanitation systems and their water catchments adapt and be resilient to the challenges of climate change? To what extent will the participating PREPARED cities adapt their technologies, management and policy environments to climate change and remain cost effective and carbon efficient? Will the adaptation strategies of the participating PREPARED be exportable to other cities?

2 Problem Statement

Climate change is one of the most critical and challenging issues that the world faces: it impacts on every level of human existence. It manifests in either too much or too little water; too high or too low temperatures; and in new diseases, rising sea levels, loss of biodiversity, etc. While climate change is a global problem which requires globally acceptable solutions, these solutions need to originate from and hinge on local action and response.

Adaptation is one vital response to the challenges brought about by climate change. Global adaptation strategies include commitment from the world to adjust economic activity in vulnerable sectors and support sustainable development. The objective of adaptation is to reduce vulnerability to climate change, thereby reducing negative impacts. Hence adaptation, together with mitigation, is a critical response strategy.

The solutions that emerge from the final outputs of the PREPARED project will be used by other cities of the world to form the basis to adapt their infrastructure, management, policy and technical investment programmes to buffer them against the possible impact of climate change.

3 Overall Aim

The 35 PREPARED partners¹, including 14 cities, utilities, research organisations and technology suppliers in Europe, Australia and the USA all have advanced strategies to meet the anticipated challenges for water supply and sanitation brought about by climate change and the PREPARED project will provide them with a framework that will link research, technology, management and policy with their existing climate change. This connection will provide synergistic opportunities that the utilities can make use of to improve their preparedness for the ongoing changes due to climate change, related to the provision of water supply and sanitation. The cities will then use the project outcomes as input for their planning and rehabilitation programmes.

The experiences gained from the project outputs – including success or difficulties or drawbacks – will be shared with other cities, utilities, research organisations, researchers and professionals in the water sector. These solutions can then be used to form the basis to inform their infrastructure, management, policy and technical investment programmes.

¹ Of the 35 PREPARED partners, there are only 20 research partners directly involved in the project activities.

4 Specific Objectives

The outcomes of PREPARED that need to be conveyed are:

- a. Prepare the participating cities and utilities for the impact of climate change;
- b. Facilitate the creation of an environment that will enable changes so that the participating cities can adapt to climate change;
- c. Show the participating cities and cities in the rest of the world that water supply and sanitation technologies can be adapted to mitigate climate change;
- d. Show that technological, managerial and policy changes can be implemented in a cost effective and carbon efficient manner;
- e. Develop and make available tools – technological as well as managerial – to enable cities to be prepared for the effects of climate change.

5 Rationale for PREPARED engagement

While climate change is as much a reality as it is unpredictable, the world cannot take chances and cities and utilities need to be prepared and geared up to cope with the possible impact of climate change. Through the active participation of the PREPARED consortium members, the scope of input is varied and focused on specific aspects of climate change. The participating cities all have strategies in place and the PREPARED project will add the framework and substance to these strategies.

The PREPARED project is industry and end-user driven and is framed around water services providers (utilities, cities, municipalities and regions) that need to manage the impacts of climate change and who will be geared up to cope with it. At the end of the project, the participating cities will be held up as example demonstrations.

6 Advocacy Targets

Who are we talking to and what are we talking about?

The framework of the PREPARED project is contemporary and is in a perfect position to contribute to the answers for global climate change solutions. However, because the 12 European, 1 Australian and 1 American cities are geared up with solid and executable climate change adaptation strategies, it does not necessarily mean that the rest of the world will look to these cities for advice, to replicate their achievements, or even know about them. The information has to be disseminated to let the world know that what will come out of the PREPARED project are state of the art solutions that needs to be made available globally.

This Advocacy Strategy is focused on taking best practice one step up and to be more intelligent about solutions. The PREPARED project is well placed to have a significant impact in the global climate change debate because the decisions and solutions emanating from this project are based on the outputs of Europe's best research agencies. As a demonstration project, the information that will be disseminated is tried and tested and the project is demonstrating what works.

The purpose of the strategy is therefore to outline the communications interventions that will need to take place to:

1. Ensure that the participating cities remain well-informed on innovation through sharing information and experiences;
2. Ensure that the rest of the world knows what works and what does not work regarding the climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies in the demonstration cities;
3. Ensure that collaboration through forums or operating partnerships are formed to continue sharing the best practice emanating from the demonstration cities.

The three broad target audiencesⁱ are important for PREPARED messages to be disseminated to and include:

1. **General audiences:** General population (PREPARED cities), local government officials and bureaucrats, utilities, NGOs working in the fields of water, sanitation and climate change.
2. **Specifically targeted local government and climate change audiences:** Eurocitiesⁱⁱ, Major Cities of Europeⁱⁱⁱ, LG Improvement and Development^{iv}, CEMR (Council of European Municipalities and Regions)^v, ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability)^{vi}, C40Cities (Climate Change Leadership Group)^{vii}, Mayors in Europe^{viii}, Central and Eastern European Network^{ix}, Network of South East European National Municipal Associations^x, Black Sea Euroregion^{xi}.

3. **Technical, and political audiences:** Local Government officials and professionals, City Mayors for policy influence, utility CEOs for operational decisions, City Managers, Planning Engineers and City Planners for new tools and technologies and innovative management approaches.

The sole purpose of this Advocacy Strategy is to lay the foundation for the way in which information will be disseminated, and to whom.

The sole purpose of this Advocacy Strategy is to lay the foundation for the way in which information will be disseminated, and to whom. The aim is to influence our target audience by providing them with information and direction. The information disseminated will show the target audience that the PREPARED project has solutions to help cities cope with climate change or conversely point out general pitfalls.

The collaborating cities, utilities, research organisations and technology suppliers own the strategy and need to use it for their benefit. The dissemination of information – technical, political or general - therefore operates through the PREPARED partners. It is up to the collaborating partners to use the information dissemination tools made available to them.

7 Communicating our Messages

This Advocacy Strategy encompasses the way in which PREPARED will use communications avenues to get the messages about water, sanitation and climate change to the identified target audiences. While the focus of this document is on the people who communicate the messages, the mode of the communication and the various avenues to communicate, the overall message is that communication should be integrated so that all promotional tools and messages work together in harmony.

This integrated approach ensures that messages are communicated in a uniform manner, always backed up by solid and empirically sound information. It encompasses all PREPARED's promotional materials, presentation materials, internet marketing messages, articles and all print and media messages. It means that there is a common thread that runs through all PREPARED messages that builds the PREPARED brand. Non-integrated communication sends a disjointed message which dilutes the impact of the message. It is thus critical that all the PREPARED communication has the same common thread: whether it emanates from the IWA or is adjusted for local media conditions.

8 Messages

- Three or four messages will be drafted to convey the critical messages that the PREPARED project wishes to convey to our targets. One way to draft the key messages is to imagine that we have a minute on the radio and want to get three points across. At least one should be a call to act or participate – something that will make the listener sit up and listen. These messages will be repeated in all communications, written and oral. While these are general messages, it is important to draft similar messages that we only want to convey to decision-makers in private. In situations where one-to-one messages are being conveyed, it is important to look for win-win solutions and where the decision-maker also stands to gain from our proposals.
- Situations will arise where partners are contacted by the media or vice versa for input outside of the pre-drafted messages. In these cases, partners need to ensure that:
 1. The PREPARED logo is displayed, and
 2. The EU logo is displayed.
- Ideally, a copy of the release, as well as where it was sent to, should be sent to the IWA for archiving.

9 Communication Tool: Media

Some areas will require specific strategies while simultaneously form an integral part of the broader strategy. Communicating the PREPARED outputs to other cities globally, to policy makers, and the general public is an essential element of the project. And one of the most effective ways of reaching the target audiences, influencing policy and practice and changing public opinion is to make use of the media.

9.1 Press officer/Spokesperson

At the heart of the PREPARED Advocacy Strategy is the media strategy that allows all collaborating partners to manage relationships with the media. This component of the Advocacy Strategy defines the most effective way to reach the target audiences through the media. The media component of the strategy addresses how the media can best be used to publicise the PREPARED outputs and influence debate.

Journalists generally want to talk to the expert

- Dealing with the media can absorb an enormous amount of time and each city, utility, research organisation and technology supplier needs to decide on one person in the organisation that will act as press officer.
- The diversity – geography, social and political norms, language, cultural habits – of the 35 consortium partners demand that each region has to develop their own relations with the media in their area. This cascading of information will generate economies of scale, giving a focus to the general media strategy.
- It will help to build relationships with key journalists and developing the PREPARED ‘brand’.
- PREPARED partners will need to differentiate between the person who builds up the media relations (press officer) and the spokesperson. This is not the same as the spokesperson and journalists generally want to talk to the expert, which will be the PREPARED spokesperson for the region, rather than the person who issues the press releases.

9.2 Media Strategy

There are many different publics (target audiences) to be ear-marked for the PREPARED outputs, but the electronic, press and broadcast media form the most visible route to reach them, being the conduits to the users of the PREPARED outputs – policymakers, water, sanitation and climate change professionals, technology companies, non-profit organisations and the general public. And successful engagement with the media requires a deliberate consideration of strategy and resources.

As the media strategy forms an integral part of the Advocacy Strategy, the target audiences remain the same, being, 1. general audiences, 2. specifically-targeted local government and climate change audiences and 3. technical and political audiences.

- Each of these audiences can be reached through the general media as well as specific, specialist media. It stands to reason that the media targets need to be prioritised to identify those in each region that will have the greatest impact and/or the greatest number of readers and viewers. This depends on the specifics of the media message.
- In deciding on the target media, there needs to be a clear distinction between those where there is a real shortage of space – the quality press and top TV and radio programmes – and those with space to fill – rolling news, start-up TV channels and most electronic media. With the former, the PREPARED message will be in competition to get coverage while with the latter, it may be considerably easier although the audiences are smaller.
- Each regional press officer should aim to build a database of media contacts. The media database need to consist of names of journalists that can be contacted on a personal level and who deal with niche as well as general stories, media conduits that make use of press releases only and specialist media that require articles of substance. At the core of the database will be a handful of journalists whose interests align very closely with that of the PREPARED project.

9.3 Issuing press releases

At the heart of the media strategy is a steady stream of press releases that are sent to the press database. The press releases are divided into general and specific release and will focus on results, not what PREPARED is planning to do. The IWA will write and disseminate these press releases to the collaborating partners in the regions who will then translate them and put the regional flavour to the press release.

Press officers from collaborating partners will alert the IWA of news stories or relevant happenings in their area(s) so that the press releases can be drafted and disseminated.

A central part of this activity will be to establish some 'branding' for the releases so that journalists expect a certain high-quality output that is reliable and empirically sound and that links to topics of current interest to turn PREPARED into a hub for comment on matters in which the project has proven expertise.

The PREPARED identity and branding will involve the logo and a specific press release format. It is important that the collaborating partners understand that individual branding of a company or city or utility is not in the interest of branding the PREPARED project.

10 Communication Tool: Internet

A pivotal component of the Advocacy Strategy is making use of the internet to disseminate information about the PREPARED project and the outcomes. The internet is unimaginably large and using this tool needs careful consideration of who to market it to and how to attract people to the PREPARED website or whatever tool is being used.

The strategy to deal with the internet includes

- The PREPARED website
- Specialist sites such as IWA Water Wiki or the UNDP Water Wiki
- Social Media websites: a. to help with SEO and b. to harness the networking leverage of these platforms. Platforms to consider but not limited to are: LinkedIn, Facebook, Wikipedia and Twitter^{xii}
- Announcements, press releases and targeted E-mails – L-Lists^{xiii}
- To establish PREPARED as the authority to speak to

The internet strategy, like media, is a critical component of the overall Advocacy Strategy. It is important to know the tenets of this enormous information dissemination avenue in order to maximise the exposure for PREPARED.

- **Online research:** It is important that PREPARED knows who the main competitors are for visits to the website and to understand what other project do online that detracts visitors. It is more important that PREPARED looks for ways to collaborate with them by sharing website links and information.
- **Data analysis:** When the decision is made whether PREPARED offers better ‘advice’ on the website it is important that that decision hinges on reality and that proof exists that what visitors get from the PREPARED website is better than other climate change websites.
- **Search engine optimisation (SEO):** As SEO is the process to improve the visibility of the PREPARED website, it is important that this aspect is looked at. However, for PREPARED, SEO is not necessarily an appropriate strategy as visits to the website hinges on organic traffic rather than paid advertisers. (Organic search results are listings on search engine results pages that appear because of their relevance to the search terms, as opposed to their being advertisements^{xiv}). A twitter account is set up and used to disseminate statements backed by sound evidence from demonstration sites. This communication medium should be used to also keep followers informed on climate change related issues within the water sector. A LinkedIn group will be set up to establish a tailor made portfolio for utilities outside PREPARED to access outputs and learn from demonstration cities on best practices with regards to adaptation and mitigation. IWA will work with consortium partners to enable regular updates and discussions on deliverables during and post PREPARED via the LinkedIn group (more information can be found [here](#)).

- **Monitoring performance:** Clicks through to the website is one set of statistics that PREPARED has access to. What is important is that the monitoring is expanded to include information as to which keywords people type into the search engines to find the PREPARED website. Once this is ascertained, the copy on the website will be rewritten to include more of the 'searchable' words. One such useful tool is Google Analytics.
- **Effective CMS:** Updating and keeping in touch with visitors to the website is important. And Content Management System is a useful tool for maintaining updated content as well as acknowledging newsletter registrations, etc.
- **Specialist sites such as IWA Water Wiki:** The IWA WaterWiki^{xv} provides a platform for the PREPARED partners to interact and share knowledge online and PREPARED will make use of this as the Extranet. It will provides on-line collaboration platform for partners worldwide to share their experience and lessons learned improving coordination and inter-agency cooperation.
- **Announcements, press releases and targeted E-mails:** Spamming is always a problem in email marketing and for that reason PREPARED makes use of announcements through registered sites that deal with the specific target audience of water, sanitation, climate change and sustainable development.

10.1 Allies

After the stakeholder mapping is completed, a power analysis will identify some broad 'allies' of the PREPARED-type project and it will identify who supports the general aims. The objective is to detail potential allies including those with whom the project already has a working relationship; those that PREPARED can collaborate with on an *ad hoc* basis, or those that the project can stimulate into action. The allies may include other organisations, journalists, academics, think-tanks, utilities, etc. The list of 'allies' will be linked to specific interventions and actions.

11 Opportunities and Events

Representing PREPARED in the international networking arena is very important for the visibility and credibility of the project. Such events include congresses, key climate change meetings, decision-making processes and events, and events that can affect, or be used to promote the PREPARED objectives.

While two international congresses are a major output of the PREPARED project, it is important that the members of the 35 consortium partners attend as many events as possible to show-case the project and their achievements. A list of events where PREPARED can be show-cased follows:

IWA Events	Non IWA Events ^{xvi}
WWC Montreal (September 2010)	Amsterdam International Water Week (November 2013)
Cities of the Future Stockholm (May 2011)	
Cities of the Future Xi'an (November 2011)	
World Dev Congress Kuala L (November 2011)	
Water Climate Dublin (May 2012)	
Cities of the Future USA (May 2012)	
WWC Busan (September 2013)	
Cities of the Future Istanbul (September 2013)	
Award Entries	

To continue to support the dissemination and exploitation of the project outputs; and to a wider network as well, beyond the timeframe of PREPARED, follow up meetings or workshops can be organized around future IWA events or as side events. Some of the proposed event venues are listed below (meetings or workshops can also be arranged irrespective of upcoming IWA events).

IWA Events
European Utility Management Conference, Oslo (May 2014)
Water, Energy and Climate Conference, Mexico (May 2014)
WWC Lisbon (September 2014)

12 Human and Financial Resources

Advocacy is a whole project activity and it is not confined to the IWA or one or two main players. Every one of the collaborating organisations needs to own the Advocacy Strategy^{xvii}. If this strategy is not 'owned' by all, it will not be used to by all. It is for that reason that it will go through numerous draft stages and will be update as a living document throughout the lifespan of the PREPARED project.

The IWA has the overall responsibility for ensuring the delivery of the whole strategy, ensuring that those responsible for tasks carry them out by the agreed time and within the stated boundaries agreed by all partners. As part of this overall responsibility, the IWA will be available to all the partner organisations for guidance and assistance in executing this Advocacy Strategy.

The ideal situation will be for cities, utilities, research organisations and technology companies to appoint a communications / press officer that the IWA can work with. This will ensure that press releases, articles and documents are translated in the local language and adapted to local criteria.

13 Risks

Regard your good name as the richest jewel you can possibly be possessed of – for credit is like fire; when once you have kindled it you may easily preserve it, but if you once extinguish it, you will find it an arduous task to rekindle it again. The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavour to be what you desire to appear.

(Socrates)

In a new world economy, where non-physical assets command awesome value and media is omnipresent, it is imperative that organisations proactively manage reputation through an ongoing, integrated approach to risk management and stakeholder communications. The stakeholder confidence and market credibility that underpins the entire enterprise depends upon it^{xviii}.

There are certain risks involved in executing any Advocacy Strategy, particularly when the collaborating partners are all well-respected actors in their fields. None of the collaborating PREPARED partners can afford to take any reputational risk or expose the European Union or their colleagues to such risk. It is thus important that this strategy contains the basic guidelines for media, internet, lobbying or any event where PREPARED is represented or where the logo is used or where any person participating in the PREPARED project.

The first directive to mitigate reputational risk is in the observance of checks and balances for risk minimisation, such as signing-off procedures for any document that leaves the project and is disseminated to the outside world, be it for general consumption or specialist review. The mitigation of reputation risk resides with the Management of PREPARED through the representative body of the Project Management Team^{xix}.

14 Monitoring, Evaluation, Planning and Learning

The Advocacy Strategy is dynamic and will be reviewed on a regular basis. However, it is known that the most effective strategies are those that work on the principle “plan-and-act” on an ongoing basis. In order to ensure that what this strategy sets out to do, it is important that all communications actions are monitored, evaluated, and lessons are learnt from this process and that the project continues to plan-and-act.

This monitoring and evaluation process is supported by the IWA who will call regular tele-conferences with the cities and their communications departments to ensure that the strategy remains on track and that change or issues that do not work, are identified early and before it becomes a problem.

- The Advocacy Strategy will be formally reviewed on a regular basis.
- A review of the Advocacy Strategy should be built into the Project Management Team meetings.
- A list of all activities will be circulated every six months, together with the website statistics.
- All partners will be requested to scan in press clippings for uploading onto the website.

ⁱ Annexures will be drafted for this section and it will contain details of all the players identified as the target audiences. For instance, the city and utility partners will be expected to supply a list of names from their region that will be recorded in the annexure. The same applies to the other target audiences.

ⁱⁱ <http://www.euocities.eu/main.php> - Mr Paul Bevan, Secretary General, paul.bevan@euocities.eu

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.majorcities.eu/>

^{iv} <http://www.idea.gov.uk>

^v www.ccre.org

^{vi} www.iclei.org

^{vii} www.c40cities.org

^{viii} www.citymayors.com

^{ix} <http://www.maviz.org/english/central-eastern-europe> - Ms. Maria Papp, papp.maria@maviz.org

^x <http://www.nalas.eu> - Ms. Ileana Tiganus, fa1r@fa1r.ro

^{xi} <http://www.bser.eu/membri>

^{xii} Extracts of research conducted (by Clem Peters) on the use of Social Media by the IWA’s Young Water Professionals will be Annexed as support material for choosing the most ‘relevant’ or ‘used’ social media.

^{xiii} www.iisd.ca

^{xiv} http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organic_search

^{xv} www.iwawaterwiki.org

^{xvi} A list of events will be compiled in due course.

^{xvii} Organograms will be drafted and Annexed to indicate the optimal working relationship between collaborating partners as it pertains to the use of all the communication tools outlined in this Advocacy Strategy.

^{xviii} www.reputationinstitute.com

^{xix} The PMT document outlining the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for ensuring risk management will be Annexed.