



Council of the  
European Union

068296/EU XXV. GP  
Eingelangt am 08/06/15

Brussels, 8 June 2015  
(OR. en)

9323/15

ENV 373  
SAN 162

#### NOTE

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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	The Lisbon Charter - A guide for public policy and regulation of drinking water supply, sanitation and wastewater management services - Information from the Portuguese delegation, supported by the Austrian delegation

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Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Portuguese delegation, supported by the Austrian delegation, on the above subject, which will be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Environment Council meeting on 15 June 2015.

**The Lisbon Charter – a guide for public policy and regulation of drinking water supply,  
sanitation and wastewater management services**

**- Information from the Portuguese delegation, supported by the Austrian delegation -**

Developed by ERSAR (the Portuguese national regulator), water regulators from around the world and the International Water Association (IWA), the Lisbon Charter is an international framework of good practice for public policy and regulation in drinking water supply, sanitation and wastewater management services. After being adopted by the Board of the IWA, the Lisbon Charter was adopted by Ministers attending the 7th World Water Forum in Daegu, Korea, last April, with a reference to this document in the Ministerial Declaration of the Forum.

The principles embedded in the Charter form an important stimulus for innovation in the water sector.

It is increasingly recognized around the world the importance of an enabling environment for the performance of water services through the formulation of good public policy and the establishment of effective regulation.

The number of countries with a regulatory framework for water services is on the rise and so is the number of regulators.

The satisfactory delivery of water services depends on contributions from all stakeholders, the principles for good public policy and effective regulation.

The Lisbon Charter relies on the following fundamental elements:

- Water services are fundamental to public health.
- Water services are essential to the sustainable socioeconomic development of the society.
- Water services have been recognised as human rights.
- Governments must ensure water services provision in compliance with their international commitments, as well as the commitments to their own people.
- With that goal, governments should foster good public policy and effective regulation.

The Lisbon Charter recognizes the following principles for good public policy and effective regulation:

- Effective water services make a positive contribution to sustainable development of modern societies.
- Accountability and transparency should be enshrined in the provision of water services.
- The economics of service provision should be framed by long-term infrastructure investments and cost recovery instruments.
- Service provision should take into account the economic, social and environmental aspects of all water resources.
- Effective service provision relies upon the collective actions of interdependent stakeholders.

When we are about to agree on a new post-2015 development agenda, where water and sanitation will continue to play a relevant role, we believe this Charter can be an excellent tool for all those who contribute to the definition of new and innovative water and sanitation policies. Therefore, Portugal would like to take this opportunity to present to other Member States the results of this work and to disseminate the best practices and lessons contained in this instrumental document, since we believe it can be useful to improve the EU performance on water supply, sanitation and wastewater management services.