



**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAMME (SAP) OF THE
DINARIC KARST AQUIFER SYSTEM: IMPROVING GROUNDWATER
GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY OF RELATED ECOSYSTEMS**

OUTPUT 1.4.

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT PLAN

NOVEMBER 2025



Content

1.	Executive Summary	3
2.	purpose, Scope and Methodology	5
2.1	Purpose and Objectives of the Stakeholder Involvement Plan	5
2.2	Scope (Countries, Aquifers, Target Groups)	5
2.3	Methodology Used (Sources, Process, Tools)	6
3.	Legal framework.....	7
4.	Strategic Context	7
4.1	DIKTAS II Overview	7
4.2	Link to DIKTAS I (TDA and SAP).....	8
4.3	Stakeholder Engagement within Transboundary Aquifer Governance.....	8
4.4	Alignment with GEF, UNESCO, UNECE and SDG Frameworks.....	8
5.	Stakeholder Engagement Principles and Strategic Objectives.....	9
5.1	Guiding Principles	9
5.2	Objectives of Stakeholder Involvement	10
5.3	Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy	11
5.4	Conflict Sensitivity and Risk Reduction.....	12
5.5	Adaptive Management and Feedback Mechanisms	13
6.	Stakeholder Mapping and Analysis	14
6.1	Identification Methodology (SPPS, TDA, National Inputs)	14
6.2	Stakeholder Categories and Roles.....	16
6.3	Power–Interest–Influence Matrix (per Country).....	17
6.4	Country-Specific Stakeholder Landscape	18
6.5	Underrepresented Groups (Tourism, Agriculture, etc.)	19
7.	Country Stakeholder Profiles	20
7.1	Albania	20
7.1	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2
7.1	Montenegro.....	3
7.1	Croatia	3
8.	Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.....	2
8.1	Tiered Participation: Inform–Consult–Involve–Empower (SPPS Matrix)	3
8.2	Stakeholder Involvement per Project Phase	4
8.3	Engagement Tools & Channels	6

9.	Institutional Mechanisms and Governance	7
9.1	Transboundary Coordination Function (under DICTAS II Steering/Coordination)	8
9.2	National Stakeholder Platforms	8
9.3	Cross-sector Coordination	9
9.4	Local-level Engagement (Municipalities, User Associations)	9
10.	Information Disclosure and Transparency.....	10
10.1	Public Portal, Helpdesk, and Data Access.....	10
10.2	Communication Materials & Languages.....	11
10.3	Knowledge Sharing and Regional Learning	11
11.	Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)	12
11.1	Channels & Roles	12
11.2	Logging, Tracking and Reporting	13
11.3	Interface with Project-Level PCFM	14
12.	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL)	14
12.1	Indicators for Engagement Quality and Reach	14
12.2	Governance Indicators (based on GFA).....	14
12.3	Tools for Monitoring (Logs, Surveys, Event Reports)	15
12.4	Feedback Integration Loop.....	15
13.	Implementation Roadmap.....	16
13.1	Timeline and Milestones	16
13.2	Annual Re-Mapping and Plan Updates.....	18
14.	Resources and Responsibilities	18
14.1	Roles (UNESCO, National Institutions, focal points, etc.)	18
14.2	Budget Categories (Events, Travel, Digital, Inclusion Support)	19
14.3	Capacity Building Needs	19
15.	Risk Matrix and Mitigation.....	20
15.1	Stakeholder Risks (Non-participation, Opposition, Burnout).....	1
15.2	Political/Institutional Risks	2
15.3	Mitigation and Response Measures	1

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Stakeholders Interest – Influence Matrix Albania.....	1
Table 2: Stakeholders Interest–Influence Matrix Bosnia and Herzegovina.....	1
Table 3: Stakeholders Interest–Influence Matrix Montenegro	1
Table 4: Stakeholders Interest–Influence Matrix Croatia	1
Table 5: SPPS Matrix	3
Table 6: Transboundary Coordination	8

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Principles	10
Figure 2: Identification Methodology	15
Figure 3: Stakeholder Mapping Albania	1
Figure 4: Stakeholder Mapping Bosnia and Herzegovina	2
Figure 5: Stakeholder Mapping Montenegro	1
Figure 6: Stakeholder Mapping Croatia	1
Figure 7: Workflow.....	13
Figure 8: Four-step loop (90-day cycle)	16

LIST OF ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Engagement Log Template	1
ANNEX 2: Attendance Sheet (Gender-Disaggregated)	2
ANNEX 3: Grievance Template.....	3
ANNEX 4: Grievance Log Template	5
ANNEX 5: Grievance Log Template.....	6

ACRONYMS (a selection)

DIKTAS II – Protection and Sustainable Use of the Dinaric Karst Transboundary Aquifer System – Phase II
 DIKTAS I – Dinaric Karst Transboundary Aquifer System – Phase I (2010–2014)
 TDA – Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis
 SAP – Strategic Action Programme
 SIP – Stakeholder Involvement Plan
 SEP – Stakeholder Engagement Plan
 SPPS – Stakeholder Participation Strategy
 GFA – Governance Framework Assessment
 MEL – Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
 PCFM – Project Complaints and Feedback Mechanism
 GRM – Grievance Redress Mechanism
 RtC – Response-to-Comments
 TWG – Technical Working Group
 SOP – Standard Operating Procedure
 KPI – Key Performance Indicator
 MoU – Memorandum of Understanding
 ToR – Terms of Reference
 EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment
 SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment
 WFD – Water Framework Directive
 GW – Groundwater
 GWS – Groundwater System
 GIS – Geographic Information System
 CSV – Comma-Separated Values (data format)
 XLSX – Excel Spreadsheet format
 SHP – Shapefile (spatial data format)
 GeoJSON – Geographic JavaScript Object Notation (spatial data format)
 UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
 UNESCO-IHP – UNESCO International Hydrological Programme
 UNECE – United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
 UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
 GEF – Global Environment Facility
 FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
 IAH – International Association of Hydrogeologists

WB – World Bank
 IW – International Waters (GEF thematic area)
 SDG – Sustainable Development Goal
 SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals
 UN – United Nations
 GWD – Groundwater Directive (2006/118/EC)
 DWD – Drinking Water Directive (2020/2184/EU)
 ND – Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)
 HD – Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)
 BD – Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)
 Aarhus Convention – Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (1998)
 Espoo Convention – Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (1991)
 SEA Protocol – Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (to the Espoo Convention)
 UNECE Water Convention – Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (1992)
 LWU – Local Water Utility
 NFP – National Focal Point
 NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
 CBO – Community-Based Organization
 CSO – Civil Society Organization
 PR – Public Relations
 FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions
 Q&A – Questions and Answers
 SLA – Service-Level Agreement
 EPA – Environmental Protection Agency (Montenegro)
 NEA – National Environmental Agency (Albania)
 ERRU – Water Supply and Sewerage Regulatory Authority (Albania)
 AMBU – National Agency of Water Resources Management (Albania)
 AKPT – National Territorial Planning Agency (Albania)
 NAPA – National Agency of Protected Areas (Albania)

MoFTER – Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
EPBiH – Elektroprivreda Bosne i Hercegovine (Power Utility of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina)
ERS – Elektroprivreda Republike Srpske (Power Utility of Republika Srpska)
EP HZHB – Elektroprivreda Hrvatske Zajednice Herceg-Bosne (Power Utility of Herzeg-Bosnia)
AVP – Agencija za Vodno Područje (River Basin Agency, Bosnia and Herzegovina)
Vode Srpske – Public Water Management Enterprise (Republika Srpska)
EPCG – Elektroprivreda Crne Gore (Power Utility of Montenegro)
HEP – Hrvatska Elektroprivreda (Power Utility of Croatia)
UT – University of Tirana
PUT – Polytechnic University of Tirana
AIDA – Albanian Investment Development Agency
MTM – Ministry of Tourism and Environment (Albania)
MEE – Ministry of Economy and Sustainable

Development (Croatia)
HV – Hrvatske Vode (Croatian Waters – National Water Management Authority)
MoESD – Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development (Croatia)
MESP – Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism (Montenegro)
MAFWM – Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (Montenegro)
IHMS – Institute for Hydrometeorology and Seismology (Montenegro)
NPM – National Parks of Montenegro
IPA – Institute of Public Health (generic)
UTI – Universities and Technical Institutes (generic term)
MoF – Ministry of Finance
MoE – Ministry of Energy or Economy
MoT – Ministry of Transport or Transport and Maritime Affairs
MoA – Ministry of Agriculture
MoH – Ministry of Health
MoP – Ministry of Planning or Spatial Planning
EA – Environmental Agency (generic)



PREPARED BY DIKTAS II PROJECT TEAM

Romario Zoga, Ing., MBA Candidate
International Stakeholder Involvement Expert

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The DIKTAS II project, titled Protection and Sustainable Use of the Dinaric Karst Transboundary Aquifer System, is a regional initiative coordinated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO-IHP) and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The project aims to enhance regional cooperation in the sustainable management of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System, one of Europe's most ecologically significant and hydro geologically vulnerable transboundary groundwater bodies.

The aquifer system spans the territories of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Croatia. It plays a critical role in providing drinking water, sustaining ecosystems, and supporting agriculture, tourism, and other economic activities. Due to its high permeability and complex underground connectivity, the system is highly sensitive to anthropogenic pressures and requires coordinated, cross-border governance frameworks to ensure its long-term protection and equitable use.

DIKTAS II builds on the achievements of the first phase of the project (DIKTAS I, implemented from 2010 to 2014), which produced the first Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) for the Dinaric Karst region and facilitated the initial establishment of regional cooperation mechanisms. In this second phase, the project focuses on updating the TDA, preparing a Strategic Action Program (SAP), and strengthening institutional arrangements for inclusive, science-based groundwater governance.

The Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP) is a core output of DIKTAS II and provides the strategic and operational framework for structured, inclusive, and long-term stakeholder participation across all phases of the project. It was developed through an evidence-based and collaborative process, involving close coordination with the project's Socio-Economy and Legal-Policy Working Group, the Gender Group, national focal institutions, local experts, and international advisors. **The development of this Plan was informed by a consultative process involving the different thematic working groups established under DIKTAS II, including those focused on socio-economy and legal-policy, gender, technical coordination, and transboundary aquifer management.**

The SIP defines the approach for identifying, categorizing, and engaging a wide range of stakeholders, including national and subnational authorities, basin management institutions, academic and research institutions, civil society organizations, private sector actors, and local communities. Stakeholder engagement under this plan is not treated as a parallel activity but as a central pillar of groundwater governance, supporting joint decision-making, risk management, and the development of shared ownership for project outcomes.

Key features of the Stakeholder Involvement Plan include:

- A remapped and updated stakeholder landscape across the four participating countries, informed by national diagnostics and institutional developments.
- A tiered participation model based on stakeholder influence, interest, and role.
- The establishment of national stakeholder platforms and a transboundary stakeholder council to support ongoing dialogue and cooperation.
- Tailored strategies for gender equality, social inclusion, and engagement of underrepresented groups, including those in the tourism and agricultural sectors.
- Integration of a formal grievance redress mechanism to ensure accountability and responsiveness.
- A monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework with specific indicators to assess engagement quality, inclusiveness, and institutional effectiveness.
- Flexibility to adapt tools and methods over time, based on stakeholder input and contextual changes.

This SIP is not a static document. It reflects the project's commitment to continuous dialogue, learning, and adaptation. Stakeholder involvement is envisioned not as a one-time obligation but as a permanent governance function embedded in the institutional structures that will guide long-term cooperation in the Dinaric Karst region. The plan will be reviewed and updated periodically through official channels, including public notices, annexes, and documented addenda, in line with monitoring results and evolving project needs.

By fostering collaboration across borders and sectors, the Stakeholder Involvement Plan seeks to build transparency, trust, and joint problem-solving capacity. It contributes to the development of a regional culture of cooperation for the sustainable management of groundwater resources. The plan is fully aligned with internationally recognized frameworks, including the UNECE Water Convention, the GEF International Waters strategy, the UNESCO-IHP approach to groundwater governance, and Sustainable Development Goal 6.5, which calls for enhanced transboundary water cooperation.

Through this Stakeholder Involvement Plan, the DICTAS II project positions itself not only as a technical initiative, but as a platform for building long-term partnerships, institutional coordination, and collective responsibility for the protection and sustainable use of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System.

2. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Stakeholder Involvement Plan

The Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP) has been developed to guide structured, inclusive, and meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the DICTAS II project. It defines how relevant stakeholders will be identified, consulted, and involved during the updating of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA), the preparation and validation of the Strategic Action Program (SAP), and the implementation of project activities at both national and regional levels.

The Plan aims to ensure that diverse actors from all four participating countries, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Croatia, can participate effectively in decision-making processes and contribute to project outcomes. It also supports the creation of permanent stakeholder platforms that can sustain dialogue, promote shared ownership, and strengthen long-term cooperation in transboundary groundwater governance.

The main objectives of the Stakeholder Involvement Plan are as follows:

- To promote transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability in project design and implementation.
- To build trust and enable joint identification of risks, priorities, and solutions.
- To support gender equality and the active inclusion of marginalized or underrepresented groups.
- To institutionalize stakeholder engagement as a core element of groundwater governance.
- To enable adaptive management and continuous learning based on stakeholder input.
- To align national and regional efforts with international standards and good practices on public participation and transboundary water cooperation.

2.2 Scope (Countries, Aquifers, Target Groups)

This Plan applies to all activities conducted under the DICTAS II project that require stakeholder engagement. It covers the full geographic and institutional scope of the project, including:

- All four participating countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Croatia.
- All stakeholder levels: national, regional, local, and community based.

- All phases of the project: inception, data collection and analysis, planning, implementation, and review.
- All categories of stakeholders: government institutions, water management agencies, academic and research institutions, civil society organizations, private sector actors, local authorities, water users, and communities.

The Plan is relevant to all components of the project, particularly those focused on governance, legal and policy alignment, institutional capacity development, knowledge generation, and cross-border coordination.

The Stakeholder Involvement Plan is designed to be a flexible and evolving tool. It will be reviewed and updated as needed throughout the implementation of DICTAS II, based on stakeholder input, lessons learned, monitoring results, and changes in institutional or political context.

2.3 Methodology Used (Sources, Process, Tools)

The development of the Stakeholder Involvement Plan followed a participatory and evidence-based approach, building on the foundation established by the DICTAS I project and aligned with international good practices for stakeholder engagement in transboundary water governance.

The preparation of the Plan was informed by the following sources:

- The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA, 2014) prepared under DICTAS I
- The DICTAS Stakeholder Participation Strategy (2012), including country-specific stakeholder lists and prioritization criteria
- National diagnostic reports developed under Output 2.1 of DICTAS II
- Inputs from national focal institutions, socio-economic experts, legal advisors, and gender specialists
- Guidance from the Global Groundwater Governance Framework (GEF, FAO, UNESCO, IAH, World Bank) and UNECE Water Convention
- Experience from previous stakeholder engagement processes at both national and regional level

The Plan was prepared in close coordination with the DICTAS II Socio-Economy and Legal-Policy Working Group, with contributions from the Gender Group, Technical Coordination Group, and other project experts. It was reviewed through national-level consultations held in 2025 across the four participating countries.

The methodology combines international principles with country-specific insights to ensure that stakeholder engagement in DICTAS II is both effective and contextually appropriate.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

DICTAS II will deliver stakeholder involvement in line with a small set of core instruments and each country's applicable laws. This keeps the plan practical while meeting international expectations.

Global / Regional anchors:

- SDGs: SDG 6 (incl. 6.5 on transboundary cooperation, 6.b on community participation) and SDG 16.10 (access to information).
- UN system policies: UNESCO/IHP principles on open knowledge and groundwater governance; UNDP SES on meaningful engagement and grievance handling; GEF policies on stakeholder engagement and disclosure.
- Environmental law (participation & transboundary): Aarhus Convention (information & participation), Espoo + SEA Protocol (EIA/SEA participation/notification), UNECE Water Convention (cooperation and public involvement).

EU acquis (where applicable): WFD/Groundwater, EIA/SEA, Drinking Water, and Nature directives directly binding in EU Member States and used as reference standards elsewhere.

National frameworks (how we align):

Each country's engagement will follow its water law, environment/EIA/SEA provisions, access-to-information rules, public health/drinking-water obligations, and spatial planning/construction requirements (including protection zones and works in karst).

4. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

4.1 DICTAS II Overview

The DICTAS II project is a regionally coordinated initiative aimed at the protection and sustainable use of the Dinaric Karst Transboundary Aquifer System. Implemented under the coordination of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization through its International Hydrological Program and financed by the Global Environment Facility, the project brings together four countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Croatia. These countries share a highly interconnected and vulnerable karst groundwater system that plays a critical role in drinking water supply, environmental protection, agriculture, and economic development.

The objective of DICTAS II is to enhance transboundary groundwater governance by strengthening institutional frameworks, improving knowledge and data sharing, and fostering inclusive participation. The project supports the development of joint management instruments, promotes regional cooperation, and ensures that groundwater management is based on both scientific evidence and stakeholder engagement.

4.2 Link to DIKTAS I (TDA and SAP)

DIKTAS II builds upon the outcomes and recommendations of the first phase of the project, DIKTAS I, which was implemented from 2010 to 2014. During DIKTAS I, the participating countries jointly prepared a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis. This document provided a comprehensive assessment of the aquifer system, identifying key threats, governance gaps, and priority areas for intervention. It highlighted issues such as pollution from untreated wastewater, over-abstraction of groundwater, weak coordination among national institutions, limited monitoring systems, and insufficient stakeholder involvement.

The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis laid the foundation for the future development of a Strategic Action Program. This program is intended to serve as a regionally endorsed roadmap for coordinated policy, legal, and institutional action. DIKTAS II aims to update the TDA, validate the SAP through national and regional dialogue, and initiate early actions toward its implementation. The Stakeholder Involvement Plan supports this process by ensuring that stakeholder voices are incorporated at every stage of decision-making.

4.3 Stakeholder Engagement within Transboundary Aquifer Governance

Stakeholder engagement is a central element of the DIKTAS II project and is considered essential for achieving effective and sustainable management of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System. Because of the transboundary nature of the aquifer, the decisions taken in one country can have direct impacts on groundwater users and ecosystems in neighboring countries. Therefore, coordinated stakeholder involvement across administrative levels, sectors, and borders is critical to ensure transparency, build trust, and facilitate joint action.

DIKTAS II promotes stakeholder engagement as a governance function, not merely as a project activity. It supports the establishment of national stakeholder platforms and the formation of a transboundary stakeholder council. These mechanisms provide opportunities for dialogue among water users, government institutions, technical experts, civil society, and affected communities. By creating space for continuous participation, DIKTAS II helps prevent conflicts, promotes shared ownership, and strengthens the long-term sustainability of groundwater governance structures.

4.4 Alignment with GEF, UNESCO, UNECE and SDG Frameworks

The stakeholder engagement processes under DIKTAS II are aligned with internationally recognized standards and good practices. These include the principles of the Global Environment Facility's International Waters Strategy, which emphasize cooperative management, stakeholder-driven processes, and shared benefits in the governance of transboundary water systems.

The project also follows the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme's guidance on groundwater governance, which promotes the integration of scientific knowledge, policy development, and public participation. Furthermore, it is aligned with the UNECE Water

Convention, which provides a legal framework for cooperation, data sharing, and joint institutions in transboundary water management.

DIKTAS II directly contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Target 6.5, which calls for the implementation of integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation. The Stakeholder Involvement Plan serves as a key instrument to operationalize these principles and commitments within the specific context of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System.

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

5.1 Guiding Principles

The DIKTAS II project is guided by internationally recognized principles of inclusive, transparent, and accountable stakeholder engagement. These principles are grounded in global environmental governance frameworks and have been adapted to the specific context of transboundary groundwater management in Southeast Europe.

The following principles guide all stakeholder engagement activities within the project:

Figure 1: Principles

Inclusiveness and equity: Engagement activities aim to involve a broad and balanced range of stakeholders, including government authorities, academic and scientific institutions, civil society organizations, private sector representatives, and local communities. Special efforts are made to ensure the meaningful participation of women, youth, and marginalized groups.

Transparency and accountability: Information on project objectives, processes, risks, and outcomes is shared in a timely, accessible, and culturally appropriate manner. Clear feedback loops and documentation ensure that stakeholders understand how their inputs are used and how decisions are made.

Mutual respect and trust: Dialogue is conducted in a respectful, open, and constructive manner, recognizing and valuing the knowledge and perspectives of different actors. The project promotes a collaborative spirit based on shared responsibility for sustainable groundwater governance.

Early and continuous engagement: Stakeholder involvement is initiated from the earliest stages of the project and is maintained throughout all phases of planning, implementation, and review. This approach helps anticipate challenges, address concerns, and enhance the relevance of project interventions.

Gender equality and social inclusion: The project mainstreams gender and inclusion across all stakeholder processes. Specific strategies are applied to remove barriers to participation and ensure that vulnerable groups have equal opportunities to influence project decisions.

Adaptability and learning: Stakeholder engagement is treated as a dynamic process. Tools and approaches are continuously adapted based on monitoring results, lessons learned, and evolving stakeholder needs.

5.2 Objectives of Stakeholder Involvement

The Stakeholder Involvement Plan supports the broader goals of DICTAS II by ensuring that stakeholder engagement is structured, coordinated, and impactful. The objectives of

stakeholder involvement are aligned with project outputs, national priorities, and international frameworks.

The key objectives of stakeholder involvement are:

- To ensure that all relevant stakeholders have access to project information and opportunities to contribute meaningfully to decision-making.
- To promote social legitimacy and stakeholder ownership of the TDA and SAP processes.
- To enhance cross-sector and cross-border cooperation among institutions and user groups.
- To support gender-responsive and socially inclusive groundwater governance.
- To strengthen the capacity of national institutions and civil society to engage in transboundary water governance.
- To identify and address concerns early in the process, minimizing risks and building trust.
- To create permanent engagement mechanisms that extend beyond the life of the project.

These objectives are operationalized through the mechanisms outlined in the Stakeholder Involvement Plan, including stakeholder mapping and prioritization, national and regional dialogue platforms, capacity development activities, and grievance redress processes.

5.3 Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy

DICTAS II recognizes that effective groundwater governance must be inclusive and representative of all segments of society. The project places strong emphasis on gender equality and the active involvement of socially and economically marginalized groups in the planning and implementation of activities related to the sustainable use and protection of the Dinaric Karst Transboundary Aquifer System.

Gender and social inclusion considerations are integrated throughout the project's stakeholder engagement strategy. This includes both institutional-level participation and community-level outreach, ensuring that women, youth, minority groups, and vulnerable populations have equitable access to information, consultation processes, and decision-making spaces.

In practice, the project seeks to ensure balanced representation of women and men in stakeholder events, working groups, and decision-making processes. National consultations include targeted outreach to women's organizations, rural communities, and minority groups. Communication materials are adapted to be inclusive and accessible, using clear language and culturally appropriate formats. Facilitation methods are designed to create a safe and welcoming space for open dialogue, particularly for participants who may face barriers to participation.

The Diktas II Gender Group provides ongoing input and technical support for the design and implementation of gender-responsive strategies, tailored to the specific needs and contexts of each participating country. Participation data will be collected and analyzed in a gender-disaggregated manner to assess levels of inclusion and identify areas for improvement.

By mainstreaming gender and social equity into all aspects of stakeholder engagement, Diktas II aims to ensure that groundwater governance is not only effective and science-based, but also fair, inclusive, and socially responsive.

5.4 Conflict Sensitivity and Risk Reduction

In the context of transboundary water governance, particularly in karst systems such as the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System, conflict sensitivity is not only a matter of precaution but a fundamental aspect of effective stakeholder engagement. Differences in water availability, data access, institutional mandates, political priorities, and economic dependencies can all lead to misunderstandings or tensions among stakeholders. These challenges can arise both across borders and within countries, especially between central authorities, local governments, and resource users.

Diktas II adopts a conflict-sensitive approach that aims to anticipate potential sources of disagreement and proactively build mechanisms to manage them. This includes early identification of stakeholder expectations and fears, joint clarification of objectives, and the use of dialogue to align different perceptions. Stakeholder engagement processes are designed to avoid exclusion, overrepresentation, or perceptions of favoritism, which can all undermine trust.

Engagement activities under Diktas II are facilitated in a way that encourages respectful exchange and transparency. Particular attention is given to balancing participation among institutions of different levels and mandates, and to ensuring that affected communities feel that their voices are heard. Language, tone, timing, and setting of events are all considered important factors in creating a safe and constructive space for participation.

To support this, the project incorporates a formal grievance redress mechanism that allows stakeholders to raise concerns in a structured, confidential, and timely manner. The mechanism includes clear roles, timelines, and escalation procedures, and is monitored

regularly as part of the project's performance framework. In addition, informal feedback is also welcomed and treated as a valuable source of learning and adjustment.

By embedding conflict sensitivity in its stakeholder engagement design, DICTAS II contributes not only to smoother project implementation, but also to long-term stability and cooperation among countries and institutions. Managing tensions effectively creates room for innovation, shared learning, and a culture of mutual accountability that can outlast the life of the project itself.

5.5 Adaptive Management and Feedback Mechanisms

Stakeholder engagement in DICTAS II is approached as a dynamic and evolving process that requires continuous reflection, flexibility, and improvement. The transboundary and multi-stakeholder nature of the project means that conditions, priorities, and relationships may change during implementation. The Stakeholder Involvement Plan is therefore not a fixed document but a living tool that is reviewed and adjusted based on evidence and experience.

Adaptive management within the project is supported by clear feedback loops and a commitment to learning from both successes and challenges. Stakeholders are encouraged to share their perspectives through structured consultations, post-event evaluations, satisfaction surveys, and informal exchanges. This input is reviewed and analyzed by the project team, and used to refine engagement strategies, adjust formats, and modify timelines or methods where needed.

The project's monitoring and evaluation system includes indicators that are specifically related to the quality and inclusiveness of stakeholder engagement. These cover participation rates, diversity of representation, accessibility of information, relevance of topics, clarity of facilitation, and responsiveness to stakeholder concerns. Gender-disaggregated data and inclusion metrics are also collected to ensure that adaptive management takes into account the needs of underrepresented groups.

Regular reflection sessions are organized among project implementers and working groups to assess what is working well and where adjustments are needed. Country teams are encouraged to document lessons learned and share experiences across borders, supporting regional learning and continuous improvement.

By embedding adaptive management into the core of stakeholder engagement, DICTAS II ensures that participation is not symbolic but meaningful, and that the project can respond effectively to change. This approach builds resilience into the governance framework and strengthens the legitimacy and ownership of groundwater management outcomes.

6. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the approach used by DIKTAS II to identify, classify, and analyse stakeholders involved in groundwater governance across the four participating countries. It outlines the methodology used for stakeholder mapping, describes the main stakeholder categories and their roles, introduces the influence and interest analysis framework, and highlights country-specific stakeholder landscapes. Special attention is given to underrepresented groups and the need for inclusive engagement across sectors and governance levels.

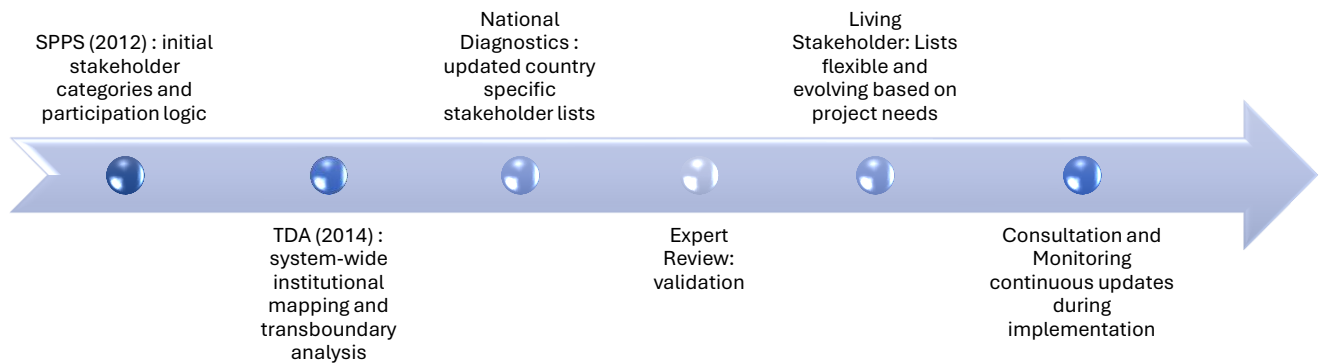
6.1 Identification Methodology (SPPS, TDA, National Inputs)

The identification of stakeholders in DIKTAS II has been based on a structured and layered approach that reflects both the transboundary nature of the Dinaric Karst Aquifer System and the institutional realities within each participating country. The process combines regional frameworks developed under DIKTAS I with updated national-level analyses and validation from country experts involved in DIKTAS II.

The methodology draws on three primary sources: the Stakeholder Participation Strategy (SPPS) developed in 2012, the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) prepared in 2014, and new national inputs prepared under Output 2.1 of DIKTAS II. Together, these provide a consistent yet adaptable foundation for identifying and classifying stakeholders relevant to groundwater governance, management, and use.

The SPPS introduced a structured model for identifying stakeholders according to their level of interest, influence, and the type of engagement required. It provided the initial typology of actors, ranging from national institutions and regulatory bodies to non-governmental organizations, user groups, and local communities. The TDA complemented this approach by offering a system-level view of institutional arrangements, highlighting governance gaps, policy overlaps, and transboundary coordination needs. These two documents served as the baseline for DIKTAS II.

Figure 2: Identification Methodology



The stakeholder landscape was then updated through national diagnostics prepared by country experts in 2024 and 2025. These diagnostics reviewed current institutional mandates, sectoral linkages, and recent policy reforms, and introduced new actors that have emerged in the last decade. National focal institutions and socio-economic experts validated the stakeholder lists to ensure their relevance and completeness.

The identification process considered a broad range of stakeholders, including government agencies at central, regional, and municipal levels; water management authorities and basin agencies; academic and research institutions; civil society organizations and community groups; private sector entities involved in groundwater-related sectors; and development partners or donors with an interest in regional water governance.

Special attention was also given to stakeholders operating in transboundary hotspot areas, such as shared river basins and karst fields, where cooperation between countries is critical. The process also recognized informal actors and networks, such as research platforms, thematic working groups, and professional associations that, although not formally mandated, influence groundwater discourse and practice.

The stakeholder identification methodology is iterative by design. Initial mappings are considered living documents and will be updated throughout the project lifecycle based on stakeholder feedback, new institutional developments, and engagement outcomes. This flexibility ensures that no key actor is overlooked and that the Stakeholder Involvement Plan remains aligned with evolving governance structures and stakeholder dynamics across the four participating countries.

Source Document	Examples of Stakeholders Identified
SPPS (2012)	National institutions, NGOs, civil society groups, municipalities

TDA (2014)	Basin authorities, research bodies, environmental agencies
National Diagnostics	Local communities, informal water users, private sector actors
DIKTAS II Expert Inputs	Gender platforms, emerging sectoral networks (e.g., tourism, farming)

6.2 Stakeholder Categories and Roles

Stakeholders involved in groundwater governance in the Dinaric Karst region represent a wide spectrum of institutions, user groups, and interest communities. For the purposes of DIKTAS II, stakeholders have been categorized to reflect both their functional roles and their relevance to the governance of the transboundary aquifer system. This classification enables a more targeted and structured approach to engagement, ensuring that all relevant actors are considered during project implementation.

The stakeholder categories used in DIKTAS II are based on the typology developed in the Stakeholder Participation Strategy and refined through national diagnostics under Output 2.1. They include public sector institutions, resource users, knowledge and research entities, civil society organizations, and cross-cutting actors such as donor agencies and media. Within each category, further distinctions are made based on level of operation (national, regional, local), mandate, decision-making power, and degree of impact on or from groundwater-related issues.

Public authorities include ministries, agencies, and regulatory bodies responsible for water, environment, health, agriculture, spatial planning, and transboundary cooperation. These institutions typically play a central role in policy development, regulatory oversight, investment planning, and inter-institutional coordination.

Water management bodies and utilities, such as river basin agencies, hydro-meteorological institutes, and public or private operators of water supply and sanitation services, are directly involved in the technical management, monitoring, and protection of groundwater resources.

Academic and research institutions contribute expertise, data, and long-term analysis of groundwater systems, and serve as key partners in science–policy integration. Their role is particularly important in karst environments, where hydrogeological complexity requires advanced knowledge and modeling.

Civil society organizations, including environmental NGOs, advocacy groups, and community-based organizations, provide a critical link to public awareness, accountability, and bottom-up engagement. In many cases, they also play a watchdog role in monitoring policy implementation and compliance.

Private sector actors vary from large industrial water users to small businesses involved in agriculture, tourism, or bottled water production. Their practices have direct implications for groundwater quality and quantity, and they are key partners in promoting sustainable use through innovation and compliance with environmental standards.

Local governments and municipalities are central to the implementation of groundwater protection measures on the ground. Their proximity to communities and land-use decisions makes them essential actors in linking national policy with local realities.

In addition to these core groups, DICTAS II recognizes the importance of cross-cutting stakeholders such as international organizations, donor agencies, media platforms, and informal networks. These actors support knowledge dissemination, financing, visibility, and policy dialogue across national boundaries.

The classification of stakeholders into these categories allows for tailored engagement strategies that reflect the specific role and influence of each group. It also supports the development of communication tools, capacity building activities, and participatory processes that are relevant and effective for different stakeholder types.

6.3 Power–Interest–Influence Matrix (per Country)

To guide the level and type of stakeholder engagement under DICTAS II, a power–interest–influence analysis was conducted for each participating country. This framework helps to prioritize stakeholders based on their ability to affect project outcomes, their level of interest in groundwater governance, and the degree to which they are influenced by groundwater-related decisions and policies. The matrix provides a strategic basis for allocating resources, customizing engagement methods, and ensuring that key actors are involved appropriately throughout the project lifecycle.

The analysis builds on the methodology introduced in the Stakeholder Participation Strategy and refined by national experts during the preparation of the stakeholder diagnostics. For each stakeholder group, three dimensions were considered:

- **Power:** the stakeholder’s ability to influence decisions, policies, or resource allocations related to groundwater. This includes legal authority, political leverage, or control over budgets and infrastructure.
- **Interest:** the stakeholder’s level of concern or investment in groundwater governance, based on their role, dependency on groundwater, or mandate.
- **Influence:** the stakeholder’s visibility and potential to shape opinions, mobilize support, or affect implementation through direct or indirect means.

Based on this assessment, stakeholders were placed into four broad engagement zones:

1. **High power – high interest:** These are strategic partners such as water ministries, basin authorities, and national regulatory bodies. They should be actively involved in decision-making and coordination platforms.

2. **High power – low interest:** These stakeholders may hold formal authority but show limited engagement. Targeted efforts should be made to increase their awareness and buy-in.
3. **Low power – high interest:** Often represented by local communities, user groups, or civil society organizations, these actors require support and capacity building to ensure meaningful participation.
4. **Low power – low interest:** These stakeholders may be indirectly affected but have limited influence or engagement. They should be kept informed but do not require intensive involvement unless their status changes.

Country-specific matrices have been developed under Output 2.1, taking into account national governance structures, stakeholder capacities, and the political context. These matrices will be used to inform the design of national engagement strategies, ensuring that high-priority stakeholders are consulted and empowered appropriately, while also recognizing the need to involve and strengthen lower-capacity actors.

The matrix is also a living tool that will be updated throughout the project, especially as new actors emerge, relationships evolve, and engagement patterns shift. By applying this framework, DICTAS II promotes efficient and inclusive participation that supports both project effectiveness and broader governance objectives.

6.4 Country-Specific Stakeholder Landscape

The governance landscape for groundwater in the Dinaric Karst region varies significantly across the four participating countries, reflecting different institutional arrangements, legal frameworks, and decentralization models. As part of DICTAS II, country-specific diagnostics were conducted to provide an updated understanding of stakeholder roles, mandates, and levels of engagement in each national context. These findings form the basis for tailoring engagement strategies that are responsive to national realities while aligned with regional objectives.

In **Albania**, groundwater governance is led by national authorities including the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, the National Agency of Water Resources Management, and the Water Supply and Sewerage Regulatory Authority. Local government units, municipalities, and water supply operators play a key role in implementing water-related services and protection measures. However, coordination across levels remains a challenge, and engagement with user groups and civil society is still limited.

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, the governance structure is complex due to its decentralized political system. Competencies related to groundwater are divided between entities, cantons, and the state level. River basin agencies, ministries of agriculture and environment, hydrometeorological institutes, and environmental protection funds are among the key actors. Cooperation across jurisdictions and consistency in data and monitoring remain areas for improvement. The mapping identified several active NGOs and academic institutions engaged in karst water issues.

In **Montenegro**, the main institutions include the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Institute for Hydrometeorology and Seismology. Municipalities are responsible for land use and certain environmental permits, and they often serve as the frontline for engaging local water users. The mapping also highlighted strong engagement from research institutions with a focus on karst ecosystems.

In **Croatia**, groundwater management is relatively centralized under the authority of Hrvatske Vode (Croatian Waters), supported by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development. There is a strong technical capacity in water monitoring and regulation. Universities and research institutes play an active role in karst water research. However, outreach to non-institutional stakeholders such as private sector actors and local associations could be strengthened.

These national stakeholder landscapes reflect both shared challenges and unique institutional features. In all countries, efforts are needed to improve cross-sector coordination, enhance the participation of local actors, and integrate non-state voices in decision-making. The country-specific mappings developed under DICTAS II serve as a foundation for building inclusive engagement strategies and targeted capacity support.

6.5 Underrepresented Groups (Tourism, Agriculture, etc.)

While the stakeholder mapping under DICTAS II has aimed to be comprehensive, particular attention has been given to sectors and groups that are traditionally underrepresented in formal groundwater governance processes, despite their significant influence or vulnerability. These include actors from the tourism and agriculture sectors, local community-based users, small-scale private operators, women, youth, and marginalized groups.

Tourism plays a growing role in the Dinaric Karst region, particularly in areas with karst springs, lakes, and cave systems. The sector depends heavily on groundwater quality and ecosystem integrity but is often excluded from planning and decision-making related to water resources. Tourism operators, destination managers, and eco-tourism associations should be actively engaged to promote sustainable practices and build awareness of groundwater protection.

Agriculture, especially smallholder and subsistence farming, is another key sector dependent on groundwater for irrigation and livestock. Farmers and rural cooperatives may lack formal representation in water governance structures but are among the most directly affected by quantity and quality issues. Their inclusion is critical for ensuring that water management policies are practical and socially acceptable.

Women and youth, particularly in rural areas, often play active roles in water use and environmental stewardship but face structural barriers to participation in official forums. The project seeks to overcome these barriers through inclusive communication methods,

gender-sensitive facilitation, and collaboration with national gender focal points and youth networks.

Local community associations, including informal water user groups and village councils, are often deeply involved in the day-to-day management of wells, springs, and water infrastructure, yet their voices may not be reflected at higher governance levels. Engaging these actors helps bridge the gap between policy and practice.

DICTAS II promotes the active inclusion of underrepresented groups by integrating their perspectives into consultations, ensuring accessible formats and languages, providing space for open dialogue, and identifying opportunities for long-term participation. Their involvement is not only a matter of equity but a condition for effective and resilient groundwater governance in the region.

7. COUNTRY STAKEHOLDER PROFILES

This chapter presents stakeholder profiles for each of the four DICTAS II countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Croatia. The profiles are based on national diagnostics and reflect each country's institutional setup, key actors involved in groundwater governance, and context-specific engagement considerations. They are intended to support tailored engagement approaches at the national level while contributing to the overall transboundary cooperation objectives of the project.

7.1 Albania

In Albania, groundwater governance is shaped by a combination of central institutional mandates, local implementation responsibilities, and emerging non-state actors. The national framework for water resource management is primarily coordinated by the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, which oversees environmental protection and sustainable development policies. The National Agency of Water Resources Management (AMBU) plays a central role in water planning, permitting, and monitoring, including the management of groundwater quantity and quality.

The Water Supply and Sewerage Regulatory Authority (ERRU) is responsible for regulating public water services, while the National Environmental Agency (NEA) is tasked with environmental monitoring and reporting. These institutions operate under a centralized governance model, although their collaboration is still evolving, particularly with respect to data sharing and joint planning.

At the local level, municipalities are responsible for implementing land-use and environmental regulations, issuing construction permits, and responding to local water-related needs. However, their involvement in groundwater management remains limited in practice, partly due to capacity constraints and unclear mandates related to aquifer protection.

River basin agencies and water utilities are present in the institutional landscape but operate with varying degrees of capacity and alignment with national policy objectives. Universities, including the Polytechnic University of Tirana and the Agricultural University of Tirana, play an important role in research and monitoring of karst systems, though their connection to policy processes remains limited.

Stakeholder engagement remains in an early stage of institutionalization. While formal consultation mechanisms exist (e.g., public hearings, EIA/SEA), engagement with NGOs, user associations, and civil society actors is still sporadic. The stakeholder mapping under DICTAS II identified gaps in engaging users from agriculture and tourism, as well as local communities relying on groundwater for domestic supply, livestock, and small-scale irrigation.

Figure 3: Stakeholder Mapping Albania

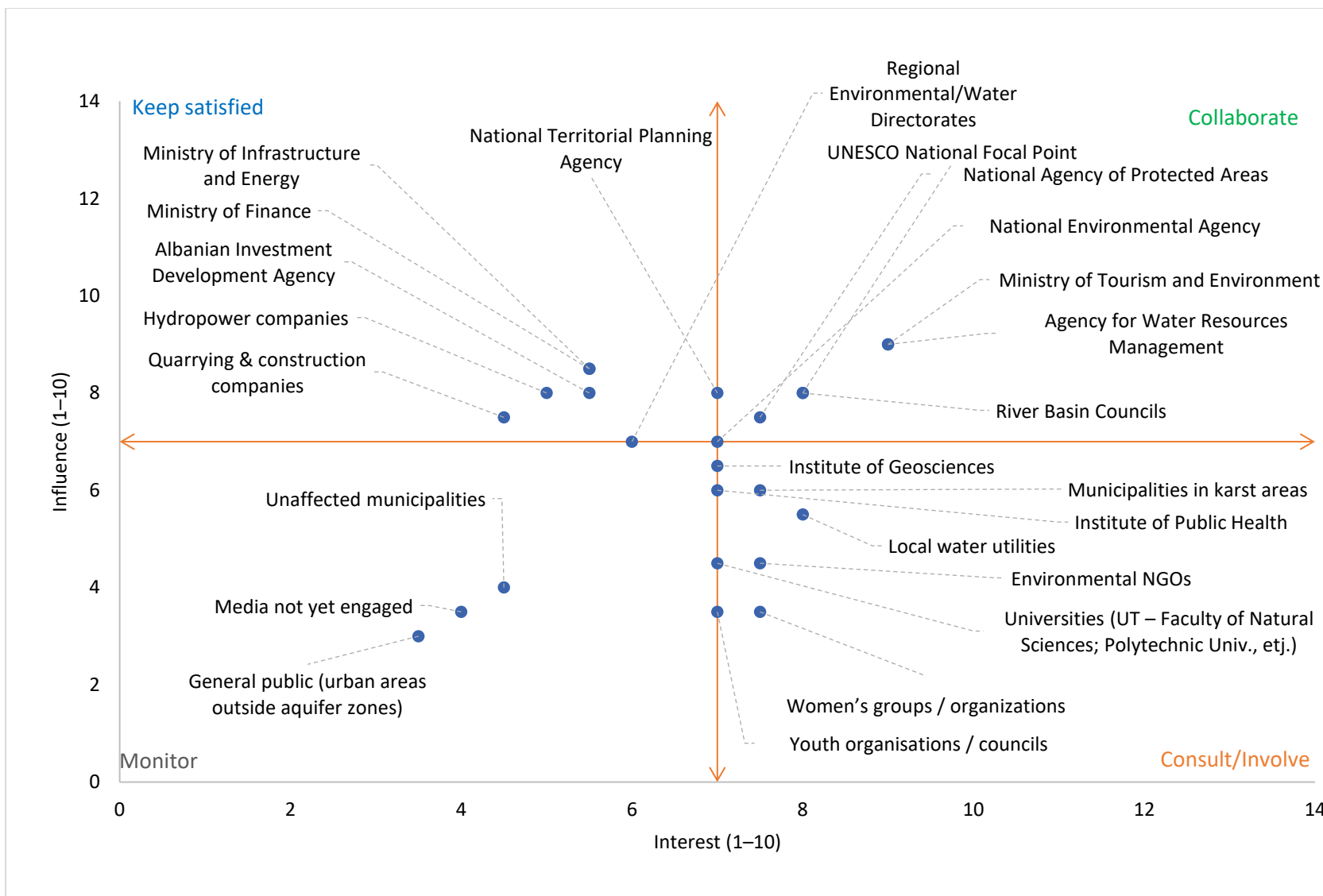


Table 1: Stakeholders Interest – Influence Matrix Albania

Stakeholder (Albania)	Interest	Influence	Quadrant	Role in Groundwater Governance
Ministry of Tourism and Environment	9.0	9.0	Collaborate	Policy lead; environmental legislation; coordination
National Agency of Water Resources Management (AMBU)	9.0	9.0	Collaborate	Water planning, allocation, permits, monitoring
River Basin Councils (Drin–Buna; Mat; Ishëm–Erzen; Shkumbin; Seman; Vjosa)	8.0	8.0	Collaborate	Basin governance; plans & coordination
National Agency of Protected Areas (NAPA)	7.5	7.5	Collaborate	Source protection in protected areas; biodiversity links
National Environmental Agency (NEA)	7.0	7.0	Collaborate	Environmental monitoring & reporting (incl. GW quality)
National Territorial Planning Agency (AKPT)	7.0	8.0	Collaborate	Land-use planning; zoning near recharge areas
Regional Environmental/Water Directorates	7.0	7.0	Collaborate	Regional enforcement; inspections & permits
UNESCO/GEF National Focal Point (within MTM)	8.0	8.0	Collaborate	Project coordination; policy alignment
Ministry of Finance	5.5	8.5	Keep satisfied	Budgeting; financing of water/environment programs
Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy	5.5	8.5	Keep satisfied	Large works; energy/water infrastructure interfaces
Hydropower companies (incl. KESH sh.a & private)	5.0	8.0	Keep satisfied	Operations affecting flows/levels; compliance

Quarrying & construction companies (karst)	4.5	7.5	Keep satisfied	Works in sensitive karst; risk mitigation
Albanian Investment Development Agency (AIDA)	5.5	8.0	Keep satisfied	Investment pipelines; safeguards screening
Local water utilities (water & sewerage companies)	8.0	5.5	Consult/Involve	Abstraction; service quality; leakage control
Municipalities in karst areas	7.5	6.0	Consult/Involve	Local permits; protection zones; community liaison
Environmental NGOs	7.5	4.5	Consult/Involve	Advocacy; awareness; citizen monitoring
Women's groups & youth organizations	7.5	3.5	Consult/Involve	Inclusion; education; feedback channels
Institute of Geosciences / Geological Service	7.0	6.5	Consult/Involve	Hydrogeology data; studies; technical advice
Institute of Public Health / regional laboratories	7.0	6.0	Consult/Involve	Drinking-water quality surveillance
Universities (UT; PUT; others)	7.0	4.5	Consult/Involve	Research; capacity building
General public (urban, outside aquifer)	3.5	3.0	Monitor	Beneficiaries; awareness
Media not yet engaged	4.0	3.5	Monitor	Information dissemination when mobilized
Municipalities outside affected area	4.5	4.0	Monitor	Notification if footprint expands

7.1 Bosnia and Herzegovina

Groundwater governance reflects a multi-level constitutional setup, with responsibilities shared across the state, entity (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska), and Brčko District levels. The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations coordinates environment and water at the international level, while entity ministries lead on policy, permitting and enforcement within their jurisdictions (the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism in the Federation and the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Ecology in Republika Srpska). Water management is implemented through river-basin authorities: the Sava River Basin Agency and the Adriatic Sea River Basin Agency in the Federation, and the public enterprise “Vode Srpske” in Republika Srpska.

Transboundary coordination is advanced in the Sava basin (International Sava River Basin Commission), while platforms around the Drina and Neretva–Trebišnjica systems continue to mature. Power utilities operating hydropower assets have high influence on river regulation and abstractions, though their interest in groundwater is episodic unless linked to licensing, major works or karst risk. Municipalities in karst areas face implementation challenges tied to land-use, wastewater, and source protection, often constrained by staffing and budgets.

Non-state actors environmental NGOs, women’s groups, youth organizations, universities and local water users show sustained interest in groundwater protection and drinking-water quality, but hold lower formal influence. Engagement mechanisms (EIA hearings, water-planning consultations) exist, yet participation and follow-through vary across entities and sectors

Figure 4: Stakeholder Mapping Bosnia and Herzegovina

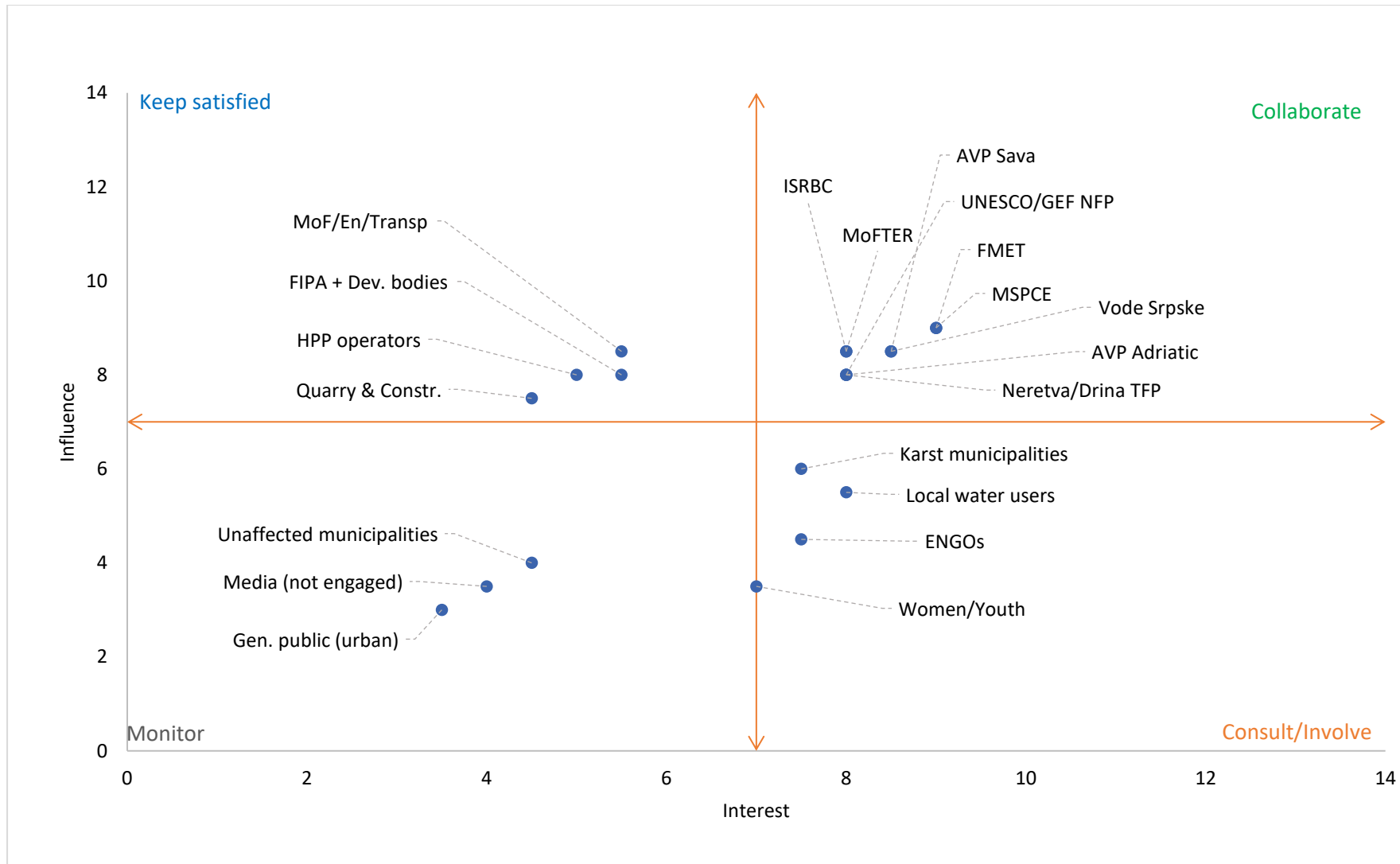


Table 2: Stakeholders Interest–Influence Matrix Bosnia and Herzegovina

Stakeholder (Bosnia & Herzegovina)	Interest (1–10)	Influence (1–10)	Quadrant	Role in Groundwater Governance
Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (state level)	8.0	8.5	Collaborate	State-level coordination; international obligations
Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina)	9.0	9.0	Collaborate	Entity policy; permits; enforcement (Federation)
Ministry of Spatial Planning, Construction and Ecology (Republika Srpska)	9.0	9.0	Collaborate	Entity policy; permits; enforcement (RS)
Sava River Basin Agency (Sarajevo)	8.5	8.5	Collaborate	Basin plans; monitoring (Federation – Sava)
Adriatic Sea River Basin Agency (Mostar)	8.0	8.0	Collaborate	Basin plans; monitoring (Federation – Adriatic)
“Vode Srpske” – Water Authority of Republika Srpska	8.5	8.5	Collaborate	Water management in RS; permits & data
National Focal Points to UNESCO/GEF (within competent ministries)	8.0	8.0	Collaborate	Project coordination; reporting
International Sava River Basin Commission	8.0	8.5	Collaborate	Transboundary coordination & standards
Transboundary coordination platforms for	8.0	8.0	Collaborate	Cross-border alignment;

Neretva–Trebišnjica and Drina basins				knowledge exchange
Ministries of Finance, Energy and Transport/Infrastructure (state & entity)	5.5	8.5	Keep satisfied	Investment & infrastructure oversight
Power utilities and hydropower plant operators (EPBiH; ERS; EP HZHB)	5.0	8.0	Keep satisfied	Hydropower operations; licensing compliance
Quarrying and construction companies operating in karst areas	4.5	7.5	Keep satisfied	Works with karst risks; mitigation duties
Foreign Investment Promotion Agency and entity-level development bodies	5.5	8.0	Keep satisfied	Investment screening; safeguards
Local water users (farmers' associations; small tourism operators)	8.0	5.5	Consult/Involve	Abstraction/use; demand management
Municipalities in karst areas (Trebinje; Stolac; Ljubuški; Neum; Bileća; Čapljina; Ravno)	7.5	6.0	Consult/Involve	Local implementation; source protection
Environmental NGOs (Center for Environment; Eko Akcija; Aarhus Centers)	7.5	4.5	Consult/Involve	Advocacy; transparency; local monitoring
Women's groups and youth organizations (entity & local)	7.0	3.5	Consult/Involve	Inclusion & communication
General public in urban areas outside aquifer zones	3.5	3.0	Monitor	Beneficiaries; awareness
Media outlets not yet engaged	4.0	3.5	Monitor	Information dissemination when mobilized

Municipalities outside the affected aquifer areas	4.5	4.0	Monitor	Notification if footprint expands
---	-----	-----	----------------	-----------------------------------

7.1 Montenegro

Montenegro combines centralized policy direction with specialized agencies and protected-area management. The Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism provides policy leadership, while the Environmental Protection Agency oversees monitoring and reporting. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and its Water Administration carry core mandates for water planning, permitting, and enforcement, including in extensive karst settings. National Parks of Montenegro manage protected areas where groundwater and spring ecosystems are integral to biodiversity and tourism.

Transboundary coordination is relevant in the Drin/Skadar–Bojana system and adjacent Adriatic basins. Economic line ministries (finance, energy, transport/maritime) exert leverage over investments and infrastructure that may affect karst aquifers. Power utilities, notably EPCG and its hydropower subsidiaries, shape operations at the surface–groundwater interface, with interest rising when licensing, safety or water-balance issues are at stake.

Local actors municipalities in karst areas, local water utilities, user groups in agriculture and tourism, universities and NGOs show strong interest in groundwater quality and reliability, yet typically have lower formal influence. Capacity needs include updating source-protection zoning, reducing leakage, and improving compliance in construction within vulnerable karst landscapes.

Figure 5: Stakeholder Mapping Montenegro

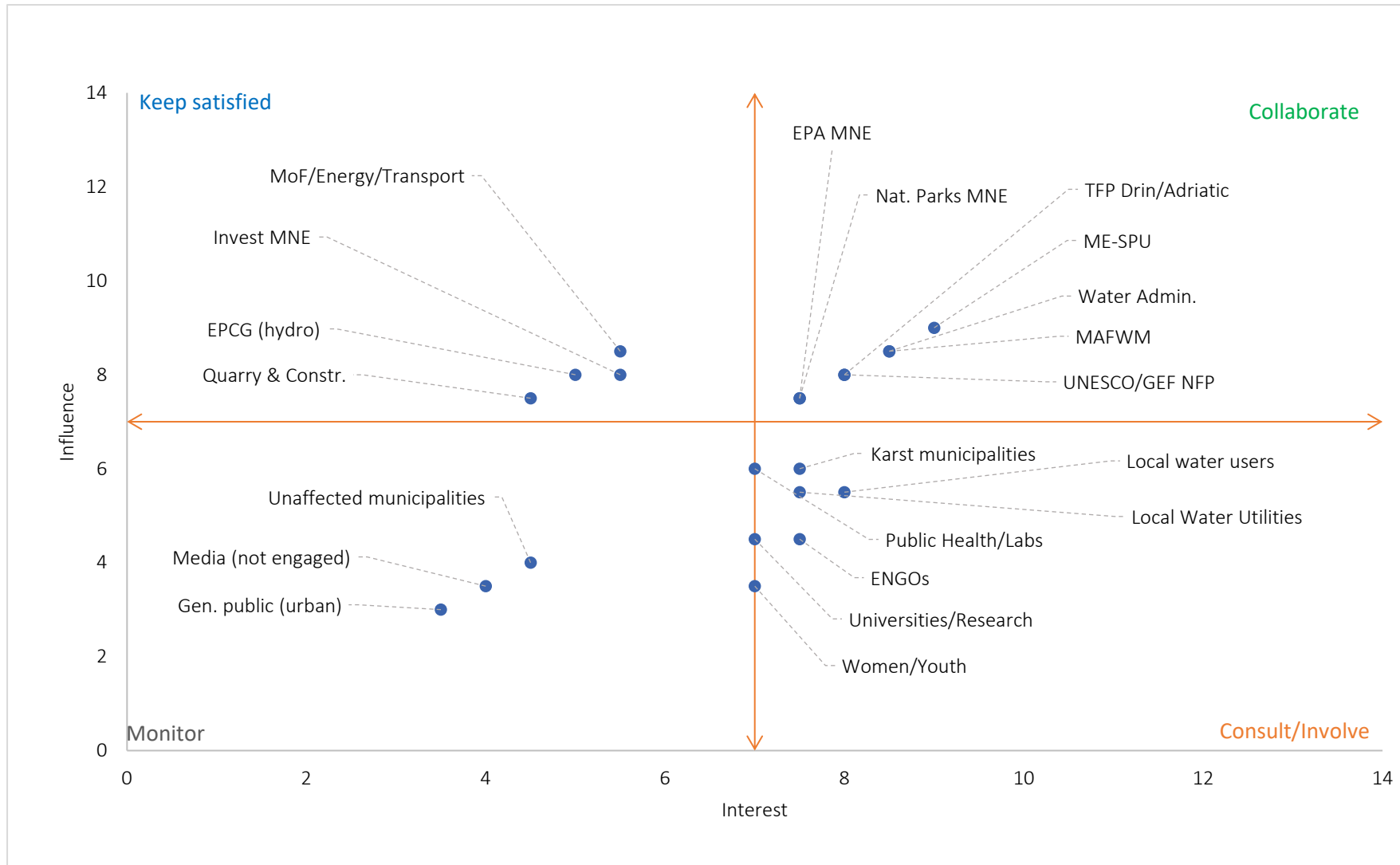


Table 3: Stakeholders Interest–Influence Matrix Montenegro

Stakeholder (Montenegro)	Interest (1–10)	Influence (1–10)	Quadrant	Role in Groundwater Governance
Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism	9.0	9.0	Collaborate	Policy leadership; environmental legislation
Environmental Protection Agency of Montenegro	7.5	7.5	Collaborate	Monitoring & reporting (incl. GW quality)
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	8.5	8.5	Collaborate	Water planning, permits, enforcement
Water Administration (within the competent ministry)	8.5	8.5	Collaborate	Water administration; data & compliance
National Parks of Montenegro (Public Enterprise)	7.5	7.5	Collaborate	Protected areas; spring ecosystems
National Focal Point to UNESCO/GEF	8.0	8.0	Collaborate	Project coordination; policy alignment
Transboundary coordination platforms (Drin/Skadar–Bojana; Buna/Bojana; Tara–Drina)	8.0	8.0	Collaborate	Cross-border alignment; knowledge exchange
Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Energy and Mining; Ministry of Transport and Maritime Affairs	5.5	8.5	Keep satisfied	Investment oversight; major works
Electric Power Company of Montenegro (EPCG) & hydropower subsidiaries	5.0	8.0	Keep satisfied	Hydropower operations;

				licensing compliance
Quarrying & construction companies operating in karst areas	4.5	7.5	Keep satisfied	Works in karst; mitigation duties
Invest Montenegro / national investment & development bodies	5.5	8.0	Keep satisfied	Investment screening; safeguards
Local water users (farmers; small tourism operators)	8.0	5.5	Consult/Involve	Abstraction/use; demand management
Municipalities in karst areas (Nikšić; Cetinje; Danilovgrad; Budva; Kotor; Herceg Novi; Bar; Ulcinj; Pljevlja; Plužine)	7.5	6.0	Consult/Involve	Local implementation; source protection
Environmental NGOs (national & local)	7.5	4.5	Consult/Involve	Advocacy; awareness; citizen monitoring
Women's groups & youth organizations	7.0	3.5	Consult/Involve	Inclusion; education; feedback channels
Universities & research institutes	7.0	4.5	Consult/Involve	Research; capacity building
Institute of Public Health of Montenegro & regional laboratories	7.0	6.0	Consult/Involve	Drinking-water quality surveillance
Local water utilities (water & sewerage companies)	7.5	5.5	Consult/Involve	Service delivery; leakage control
General public in urban areas outside aquifer zones	3.5	3.0	Monitor	Beneficiaries; awareness
Media outlets not yet engaged	4.0	3.5	Monitor	Information dissemination when mobilized

Municipalities outside the affected aquifer areas	4.5	4.0	Monitor	Notification if footprint expands
---	-----	-----	----------------	-----------------------------------

7.1 Croatia

Croatia features a consolidated water-management system anchored by Croatian Waters (Hrvatske vode) and the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development. River-basin district units (Sava; Drava–Danube; Adriatic) provide basin-scale planning, monitoring and implementation, including groundwater status assessment and protection measures. Transboundary cooperation is well institutionalized in the Sava basin (International Sava River Basin Commission) and across Adriatic catchments connected to karst systems.

Economic line ministries (finance; sea, transport and infrastructure) influence investment prioritization and large works with potential karst impacts. Hydropower operators (e.g., HEP subsidiaries) have high influence but variable interest in groundwater unless projects intersect with aquifer protection or abstraction regimes. Local governments in karst areas, public health institutes and laboratories, universities/research institutes, environmental NGOs, and user groups (agriculture/tourism) show sustained interest in groundwater protection, nitrate management, and drinking-water safety while their formal influence is moderate to low.

Figure 6: Stakeholder Mapping Croatia

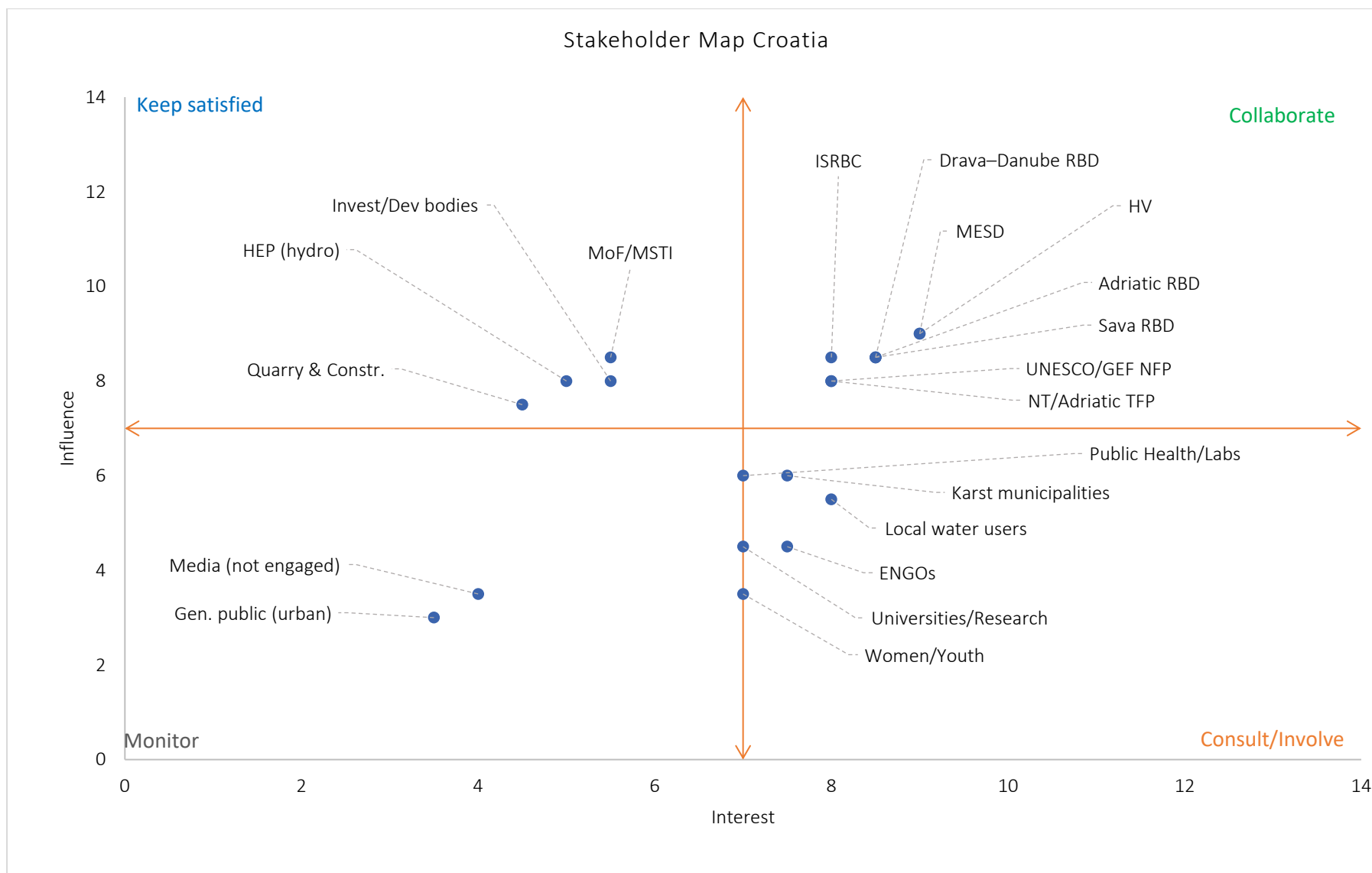


Table 4: Stakeholders Interest–Influence Matrix Croatia

Stakeholder (Croatia)	Interest (1–10)	Influence (1–10)	Quadrant	Role in Groundwater Governance
Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development	9.0	9.0	Collaborate	Policy lead; environmental oversight
Croatian Waters (Hrvatske vode) – national water management authority	9.0	9.0	Collaborate	National water management; permits; monitoring
River Basin Districts within Croatian Waters (Sava; Drava–Danube; Adriatic)	8.5	8.5	Collaborate	Basin planning; GW status assessment
National Focal Point to UNESCO/GEF	8.0	8.0	Collaborate	Project coordination; reporting
International Sava River Basin Commission	8.0	8.5	Collaborate	Transboundary coordination & standards
Transboundary coordination platforms for Neretva–Trebišnjica and adjacent Adriatic basins	8.0	8.0	Collaborate	Cross-border alignment; knowledge exchange
Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Sea, Transport and Infrastructure	5.5	8.5	Keep satisfied	Investment and major works oversight
Hydropower companies (Hrvatska elektroprivreda and subsidiaries)	5.0	8.0	Keep satisfied	Hydropower operations; licensing compliance
Quarrying and construction companies operating in karst areas	4.5	7.5	Keep satisfied	Works in karst; mitigation duties

Investment and development bodies (national agencies)	5.5	8.0	Keep satisfied	Investment screening; safeguards
Local water users (farmers' associations; small tourism operators)	8.0	5.5	Consult/Involve	Abstraction/use; demand management
Municipalities in karst areas (Gospić; Knin; Drniš; Imotski; Sinj; Vrgorac; Pazin; Buzet; Metković; Opuzen)	7.5	6.0	Consult/Involve	Local implementation; source protection
Environmental NGOs (national and local)	7.5	4.5	Consult/Involve	Advocacy; awareness; citizen monitoring
Women's groups and youth organizations (local/regional)	7.0	3.5	Consult/Involve	Inclusion; education; feedback channels
Universities and research institutes (hydrogeology; environment)	7.0	4.5	Consult/Involve	Research; capacity building
Public health institutes and regional laboratories	7.0	6.0	Consult/Involve	Drinking-water quality surveillance
General public in urban areas outside aquifer zones	3.5	3.0	Monitor	Beneficiaries; awareness
Media outlets not yet engaged	4.0	3.5	Monitor	Information dissemination when mobilized
Municipalities outside the affected aquifer areas	4.5	4.0	Monitor	Notification if footprint expands

8. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Stakeholder Engagement Strategy combines a lean online presence with focused outreach to key institutions. A dedicated project website (Stakeholder Hub) will host core materials briefs, guidance notes on karst protection, country stakeholder maps and tables,

consultation records, and a rolling calendar of events published in accessible HTML/PDF formats. Updates will follow a simple cadence: short news posts monthly and concise “milestone briefs” at decision points (e.g., draft guidance released, monitoring results, forum outcomes). Each publication will be circulated through national Focal Points and competent institutions for onward distribution via their internal channels and websites, ensuring visibility in all four countries.

Targeted engagement will complement the online stream. Lead ministries, basin/water authorities, national parks, and transboundary bodies will be engaged through brief bilateral meetings or technical working groups aligned to the project timeline, while municipalities, local utilities, and user groups will be invited to practical clinics and consultations. A light feedback mechanism (web form and dedicated email) will log comments and responses, with quarterly summaries posted on the website. Basic analytics page views, downloads, meeting participation, and issues resolved—will track reach and effectiveness, informing adjustments over the course of implementation.

Support from each country will be necessary to make this strategy work in practice. This includes: (i) content and clearance support from lead ministries and Focal Points (sharing documents, approving postings); (ii) data and technical inputs from basin/water authorities and laboratories (maps, indicators, monitoring results); (iii) communication and translation support from government PR units to localize key materials; and (iv) distribution support through institutional mailing lists and webpages. Illustratively: Albania (Ministry of Tourism and Environment; AMBU), Bosnia and Herzegovina (MoFTER; entity environment ministries; AVP Sava/Adriatic; Vode Srpske), Montenegro (Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism; EPA; Water Administration), and Croatia (Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development; Croatian Waters) will each nominate a focal contact to coordinate inputs, ensure timely posting, and channel materials to municipalities, utilities, NGOs, and user groups in their jurisdictions.

8.1 Tiered Participation: Inform–Consult–Involve–Empower (SPPS Matrix)

Table 5: SPPS Matrix

Tier	Objective	Typical Stakeholders	When to Use	Core Activities / Tools	Outputs
Inform	Provide clear, timely information on plans, risks, and decisions.	General public, media, unaffected municipalities.	Project launch; milestones; results releases.	Website news/briefs (HTML/PDF), factsheets, social snippets, press notes, FAQs.	Public briefs; web updates; media coverage.

Consult	Collect views to refine designs and identify local risks/opportunities.	Municipalities in karst, local water utilities, user groups (farmers/tourism), NGOs, universities.	Diagnostics & design; EIA/SEA; early implementation.	Public consultations, municipal/basin clinics, focus groups, surveys, comment log, grievance channel.	Consultation report; response-to-comments; updated designs.
Involve	Co-create guidance and build capacity for implementation.	Collaborate-quadrant agencies, labs, planning/parks authorities, transboundary bodies.	Design; implementation; monitoring.	Technical Working Groups (TWGs), co-drafted guidance, joint field visits, training/e-learning, data-sharing protocols.	Guidance notes; SOPs; MoUs; field reports.
Empower	Share ownership over key decisions and oversight.	Lead ministries, basin/water authorities, national parks, NFPs, regional commissions.	Policy choices; cross-border alignment; monitoring frameworks.	Joint approvals, co-signed communiqués, performance dashboards, escalated decision rights.	Endorsed plans/standards; dashboards; communiqués.

8.2 Stakeholder Involvement per Project Phase

Phase	Purpose	Collaborate	Keep Satisfied	Consult / Involve	Monitor
Initiation	Common vision, scope, roles, calendar.	Kick-off with lead ministries, basin authorities, NFPs; confirm TWGs & ToR.	One-page brief to finance/energy/infrastructure.	National launch sessions; open feedback channel.	Public announcement; website live.
Diagnostics	Baselines, risks, gaps.	Data access, joint site visits, shared indicator list.	Short issue notes linked to licensing/investments.	Municipal/basin clinics; user-group focus groups; lab/university inputs.	Factsheets; periodic web updates.
Design	Options, safeguards, guidance.	Co-draft guidance (karst construction; protection zones); agree KPIs.	Targeted briefings pre-milestones.	Consultations (EIA/SEA); response-to-comments.	“Why this option” explainer; revised docs.
Implementation	Execute plans & training.	TWG chairing; supervision; data-sharing.	Decision memos at gates.	Training for inspectors/LWUs; community dialogues; grievance handling.	Progress notes; updated dashboards.
Monitoring & Learning	Verify results; adapt.	Joint reviews; adaptive KPIs; publish dashboards.	Annual policy note.	Participatory monitoring; satisfaction pulse checks.	Lessons learned; course corrections.

Closure / Scale-up	Handover; replication.	Endorse scale-up roadmap; institutionalize SOPs.	High-level debriefs.	Local debriefs; next-steps workshops.	Closure brief; archive and handover.
---------------------------	------------------------	--	----------------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

8.3 Engagement Tools & Channels

Engagement will be coordinated by one Focal Point in each country, supported by a light regional coordinator. We will work mostly online and through existing meetings, keeping new events to a minimum. The project website will be the single place for updates, documents, and how to participate.

↻ **Publish and notify, simply.**

Whenever a draft or decision is ready, we will post a short news item and the document (HTML/PDF), then send a concise notice to a small, targeted list of institutions. Each notice will say what is new, how to comment, and by when.

↻ **Consultations that fit people's time.**

Most consultations will run for 10–15 working days via a web form or dedicated email. Where useful, we will add one 60-minute online call to walk through the draft ideally piggybacking on an existing sector meeting.

↻ **Direct outreach where it matters.**

For high-influence counterparts (planning/land, energy, infrastructure), the Focal Point will schedule two to three short calls and share a 2–4 page brief in advance. Notes from these calls become part of the consultation record.

↻ **"Clinics" only when needed.**

If a local issue requires hands-on support (e.g., permits in karst), we will hold one 90-minute online clinic with the relevant municipality/utility and the basin authority. A two-page "what changed" note will follow.

↻ **Clear feedback path.**

Questions and grievances will come through a simple helpdesk (web form + email). We will acknowledge within 5 working days, provide a first response or routing within 10, and aim to close within 30. A short, anonymized quarterly summary will be published.

↻ **Light records, visible results.**

For each consultation or clinic, we will post a one-page summary of issues and decisions, an attendance count (no personal data), and a brief Response-to-Comments note. Every file will carry a version, date, and contact.

⇒ **A predictable rhythm.**

We will publish one news post each month, run consultations per draft, and issue a two-page quarterly update that explains what changed and what comes next.

⇒ **Inclusion without heavy cost.**

Public-facing items will include a short national-language summary. We will offer interpretation on request for the rare live call, and all PDFs will be accessible (clear layout, tagged, alt-text for figures). Where internet access is limited, summaries can be shared as printable flyers via municipal channels.

⇒ **Measure what we use.**

We will track three signals: items posted on time, participation (attendance and comments), and adoption (e.g., municipalities using model clauses). These will guide small, practical adjustments each quarter.

⇒ **Escalate only when necessary.**

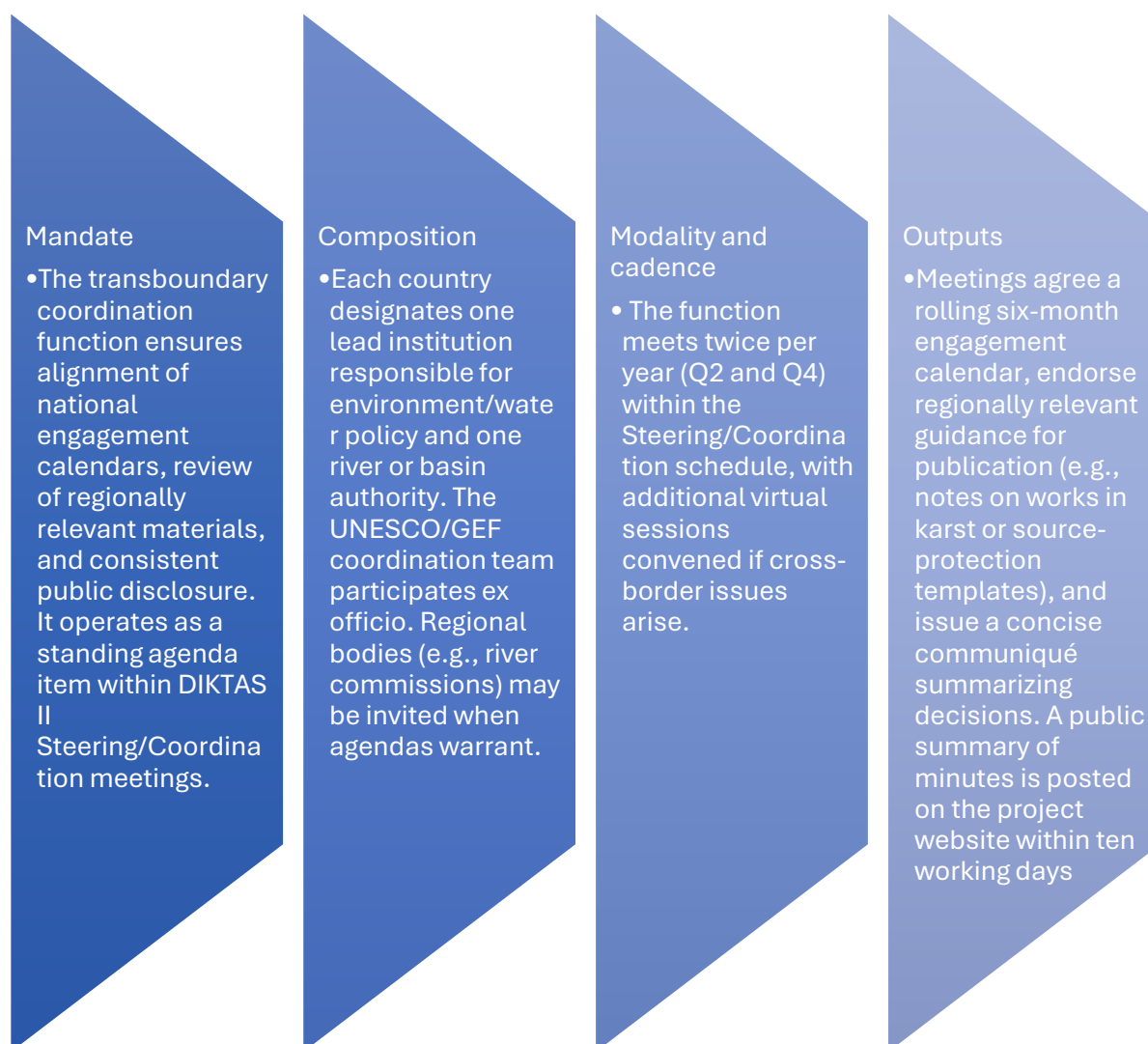
Sensitive or cross-border issues will be elevated by the Focal Point to the regional coordinator for a quick, written decision and a public note in the quarterly summary.

9. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS AND GOVERNANCE

This chapter describes how stakeholder engagement under DICTAS II will be coordinated across the four participating countries, using existing institutional arrangements. It sets out mandates, composition, cadence of meetings, and the minimum standards for transparency and record-keeping. The approach is intentionally light and fit-for-purpose, avoiding the establishment of new legal entities while ensuring clear responsibilities and predictable outputs.

9.1 Transboundary Coordination Function (under DICTAS II Steering/Coordination)

Table 6: Transboundary Coordination



9.2 National Stakeholder Platforms

Purpose and scope. At country level, engagement is planned and implemented through existing inter-agency arrangements (e.g., water/environment coordination groups or basin fora). DICTAS II is integrated into these formats by adding agenda items and standardized documentation, not by creating parallel structures.

Core responsibilities. National Platforms (i) approve a country engagement calendar for the forthcoming quarter; (ii) convene stakeholder consultations and municipal/basin clinics; (iii) keep formal records, including participant lists and response-to-comments notes; and (iv) nominate experts to time-bound technical working groups when a specific product requires co-drafting (e.g., model permit conditions for works in karst).

Participation. The chair is held by the competent lead ministry. Membership typically includes the national water/basin authority, environmental and health agencies,

planning/land authorities, associations of municipalities and utilities, protected areas administrations, academia, and one to two civil society representatives. A communications focal point is identified to interface with the project website.

Cadence and standards. Platforms meet quarterly, with additional meetings scheduled around major milestones. Notice of meetings is issued at least ten working days in advance; materials are circulated five working days prior; minutes and action items are published within ten working days. Public-facing materials (briefs, guidance, consultation records) are provided in HTML/PDF formats on the project website and, where appropriate, in short national-language summaries.

9.3 Cross-sector Coordination

Principle. Coordination with non-water sectors is conducted through existing planning, permitting, and EIA/SEA procedures. The objective is to ensure that groundwater considerations, particularly in karst are addressed early, efficiently, and transparently.

Process. Prior to key decisions with potential groundwater implications (e.g., rezoning near recharge or protection zones, licensing of major works and hydropower, siting of wastewater treatment plants), the competent water/environment authority prepares a brief note (“Gate Brief”, 2–4 pages) summarizing sensitivities, applicable protection measures, and data/monitoring requirements. A concise screening checklist is attached to the EIA or permit documentation and becomes part of the decision file.

Liaison and feedback. Named contact points in planning/land, energy, infrastructure/transport, agriculture, tourism and health receive Gate Briefs and provide written comments through the existing inter-ministerial channels. Where risk is high, joint site reviews may be convened. Once decisions are taken, final Gate Briefs and screening checklists are disclosed on the project website; draft versions may also be posted when subject to public consultation.

9.4 Local-level Engagement (Municipalities, User Associations)

Objective. Local engagement translates guidance into practice at the point of implementation. Activities focus on municipalities in karst areas, local utilities, and user associations in agriculture and tourism.

Instruments. Each country organizes two to three municipal/basin clinics per year, rotating geographically. Sessions address practical matters such as permit conditions for construction in karst, enforcement of protection zones, leakage reduction, incident protocols, and communication of nitrate or seasonal demand risks. Short, seasonal dialogues may be convened with utilities and user associations to agree demand-management and public information measures.

Support package. Standard templates are provided, including model permit conditions for works in karst, contractor “do’s and don’ts”, notices for protection zones, and a simple

grievance/feedback form (paper and online). A local liaison point is designated in each participating municipality or utility to receive notices, share materials, and track follow-up.

Records and transparency. For each clinic or dialogue, organizers publish an attendance list (disaggregated by stakeholder type and, where feasible, by gender and youth participation), a log of issues with assigned actions and deadlines, and a short “what changed” note when measures are adopted. Summaries are posted on the project website within ten working days.

10. INFORMATION DISCLOSURE AND TRANSPARENCY

This chapter establishes DICTAS II’s framework for timely, accessible, and accountable disclosure. It defines (i) how information will be made publicly available via the Public Portal, (ii) how enquiries and submissions will be processed through a Helpdesk, (iii) how data and knowledge products will be curated for reuse, and (iv) how multilingual communication will be delivered across countries. The approach relies on existing project governance and national arrangements, minimizing administrative burden while ensuring compliance with applicable regulations.

10.1 Public Portal, Helpdesk, and Data Access

The Public Portal serves as the single authoritative access point for public information across the four countries.

Content and cadence

- News & milestones: short updates at least monthly and at key decision points (e.g., consultation launch/closure, guidance release, forum outcomes).
- Public documents (HTML/PDF): stakeholder maps/tables, guidance notes, consultation packs, forum minutes, response-to-comments, annual plans and reviews.
- Consultations: dedicated pages per consultation with scope, timeline, submission channels, final decisions, and archives.
- Data & maps: curated datasets (CSV/XLSX/GeoJSON/SHP) with full metadata and versioning; static map PDFs/PNGs where relevant.
- Calendar: national and regional events with agendas and materials.

Editorial workflow

1. Draft prepared using approved templates.
2. Technical review by the relevant working group or National Platform focal point.
3. Clearance by the National Platform or transboundary coordination function (regional items).
4. Publication by the Secretariat with date and version ID, followed by circulation via national Focal Points.

Minimum service standards

- Forum minutes/decisions posted within 10 working days.
- Consultation materials online at least 10 working days before closing.
- Response-to-comments posted within 20 working days after closure.
- All PDFs are generated from source files (not scans), tagged for accessibility, and include alt-text for figures.

Helpdesk

A simple web form and dedicated email manage enquiries, consultation submissions, and grievances (linked to Chapter 12).

- Acknowledgement: ≤ 5 working days.
- Substantive response or routing: ≤ 10 working days (with interim notice if more time is needed).
- Quarterly synthesis: anonymized log of requests, response times, and unresolved issues published on the Portal.
- Privacy: personal data are minimized and anonymized in public logs.

Data Access

DICTAS II applies an open-by-default approach: datasets and maps are public unless restricted by law, security, or privacy. We publish clean CSV/XLSX (tabular) and GeoJSON/SHP (spatial) with a short metadata note (title, description, owner/contact, coverage, methods, key fields/units, license, version/date). Where sensitive details cannot be shared, we release summaries or generalized layers and explain the limitation. Unless noted otherwise, reuse is allowed under CC BY 4.0 with citation. Each release shows a version and date, and earlier versions remain available. Additional data requests can be submitted through the Helpdesk, which responds or routes within 10 working days.

10.2 Communication Materials & Languages

Communication will support stakeholder involvement by making information clear, timely, and usable. Core materials briefs, consultation packs, guidance notes, and municipal “how-to” tools will be published on the Public Portal in accessible HTML/PDF. English will serve as the master language; for country consultations and local implementation, short national-language summaries (and full translations where required by law) will be provided so stakeholders can participate meaningfully. Each item will state how and when stakeholders can engage.

10.3 Knowledge Sharing and Regional Learning

Knowledge sharing will turn participation into practice. DICTAS II will capture lessons from consultations, clinics, and working groups and will post brief learning notes and reusable tools (e.g., model clauses, checklists) on the Portal. Semi-annual regional exchanges will consolidate insights across countries, and a light feedback loop (comments and Helpdesk

queries) will guide updates to guidance. This engage → learn → adapt cycle will show stakeholders how their input shapes outputs and will drive continuous improvement.

11. GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM (GRM)

The GRM provides a predictable, transparent way for stakeholders to submit enquiries, complaints, and suggestions related to DICTAS II activities and disclosures. It complements, not replaces statutory complaint avenues in each country and interfaces with the project-level Project Complaints and Feedback Mechanism (PCFM).

11.1 Channels & Roles

Channels (multiple, low barrier).

- Web form & dedicated email (primary) linked from the Public Portal.
- In-person capture at consultations, municipal/basin clinics, and forums (paper form; staff enter cases into the system).
- Mail/phone options for stakeholders without internet access.
- Language & accessibility. Submissions may be made in national languages; anonymity is accepted. Materials and forms will be readable and available in print at in-person events.

Service standards.

- Acknowledgement: within 5 working days.
- Initial assessment/routing: within 10 working days.
- Target resolution: within 30 working days (complex cases may require up to 60; the complainant is informed).

Roles.

- Secretariat (Intake & Coordination): logs cases, issues acknowledgements, assigns owners, maintains the register, ensures publication of quarterly summaries.
- National Platform Focal Points (Investigation/Response): lead fact-finding and draft responses for country-specific issues; coordinate with competent institutions.
- Technical Working Groups (Advice): provide technical input when cases concern guidance, monitoring, or protection measures.
- Project Leadership (Escalation): adjudicates unresolved or cross-border cases; confirms final responses.
- Data Protection Lead: ensures confidentiality and compliant handling of personal data.

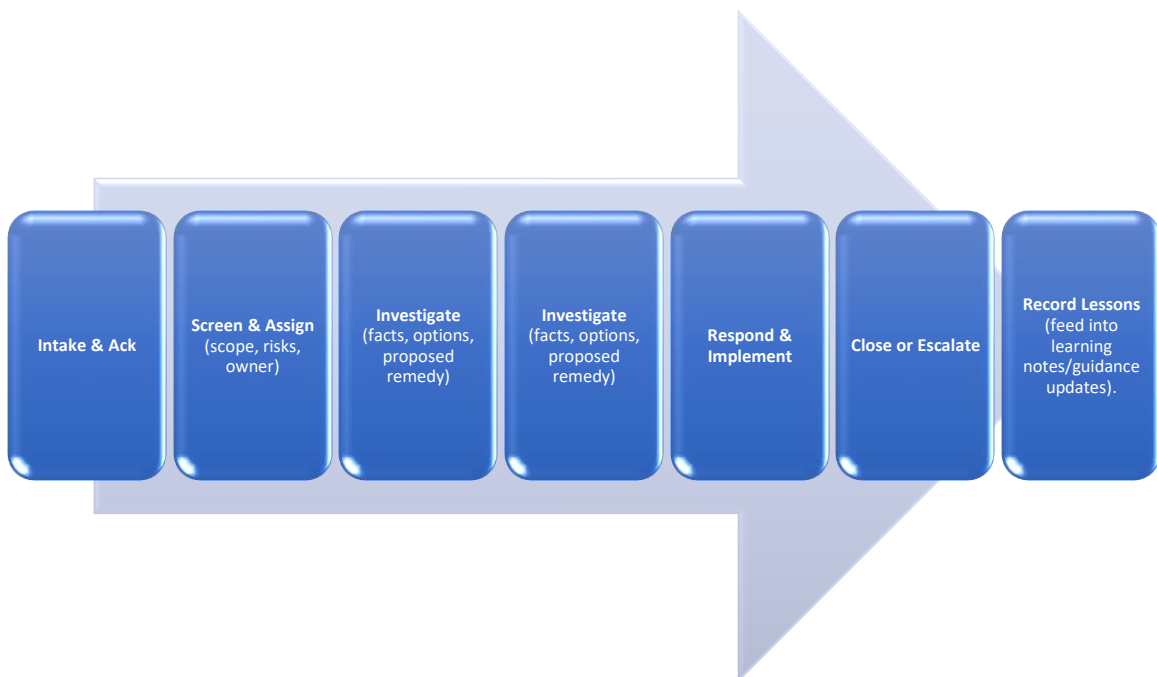
Principles. No retaliation; confidentiality on request; good-faith treatment of all submissions; referrals to appropriate authorities for matters outside the project scope

11.2 Logging, Tracking and Reporting

Case register (minimum fields).

Unique ID; date received; country/location; stakeholder type (self-declared); channel; summary; category (information request / consultation input / grievance / suggestion); owner; deadlines; status (open/under review/resolved/closed); actions taken; outcome; date closed; satisfaction (if provided).

Figure 7: Workflow



Tracking & performance

Internal dashboard monitors: average time to acknowledge/respond/close; % cases; distribution by category/country; reopen rate.

Reporting & transparency.

- Quarterly public summary on the Portal (anonymized): number and type of cases, average processing times, share resolved cases, examples of corrective actions (“what changed”).
- Annual synthesis in the engagement report with trends and improvements.
- Retention. Records are retained for the project duration; personal data are minimized and anonymized before publication.

11.3 Interface with Project-Level PCFM

The GRM operates as the front-end for country and activity-level issues, while the PCFM provides the umbrella mechanism for project-wide complaints, appeals, or matters that implicate policy compliance.

12. MONITORING, EVALUATION & LEARNING (MEL)

This chapter sets out how DIKTAS II will measure engagement quality and reach, track governance improvements, and convert evidence into timely adjustments. MEL focuses on (i) concise indicators, (ii) simple tools that teams can maintain, and (iii) a short feedback loop that closes the gap between participation and decisions.

12.1 Indicators for Engagement Quality and Reach

Purpose: Gauge how inclusive, timely, and useful stakeholder engagement is across the four countries and transboundary activities.

Dimension	Indicator (definition)	Source	Frequency
Reach	Portal page views & unique downloads per item	Web analytics	Quarterly
	Distribution coverage (institutions reached via Focal Points)	Mailing logs	Quarterly
Participation	# events held; attendance by stakeholder type	Event registers	Quarterly
	Inclusion rate (% women / % youth where feasible)	Event registers	Quarterly
Quality & timeliness	% consultations with RtC posted \leq 20 working days after close	Disclosure log	Quarterly
	Helpdesk mean days to first response / to closure	Helpdesk log	Quarterly
Usefulness	Participant satisfaction (1–5) and “would reuse materials” (%)	Short post-event pulse	Per event
Adoption	# municipalities/utilities applying templates or clauses	Event follow-ups; TWG reports	Semi-annual

12.2 Governance Indicators (based on GFA)

Purpose: Track progress against a light Governance Framework Assessment (GFA) focusing on karst groundwater management.

GFA Area	Indicator (definition)	Scale	Source	Frequency
Institutions & Roles	Clarity of mandates for GW/karst (score: documented, applied, gaps)	0–3	Document review; interviews	Annual
Coordination	Functioning of national platform (meetings held to standard)	% to standard	Minutes audit	Quarterly
Transparency	Share of required items published on time (minutes, RtC, data)	%	Disclosure log	Quarterly
Data & Monitoring	Data-sharing MoUs active; datasets updated per schedule	# / %	Data TWG; Portal	Semi-annual
Safeguards in Practice	Permits including karst conditions / major works screened	# / %	Permit sample; Gate Briefs	Semi-annual
Learning & Adaptation	Guidance updated with documented “what changed” rationale	# updates	Changelog	Annual

The GFA is a light scorecard (Annex template) updated annually, with narrative notes on challenges and actions.

12.3 Tools for Monitoring (Logs, Surveys, Event Reports)

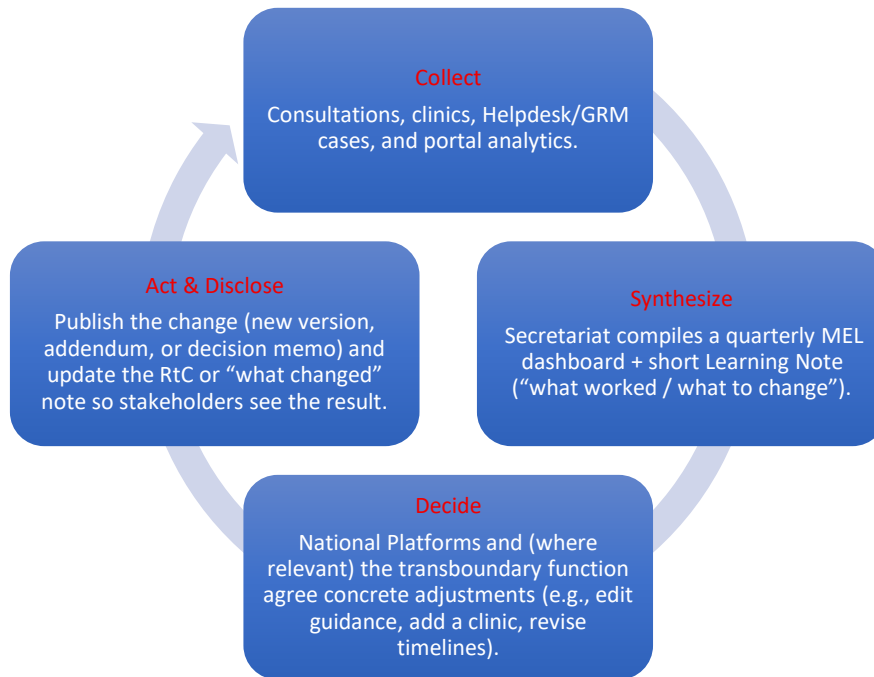
Core, light-touch tools (standardized templates):

- Disclosure Log: auto list of items published (date, version, language, accessibility check).
- Helpdesk/GRM Log: unique ID, category, SLA timers, outcome (linked to Ch. 10).
- Event Register & Brief Report (≤2 pages): agenda, attendees (by type, gender/youth where feasible), 3–5 key points, decisions/actions with owners & deadlines, satisfaction pulse (1–5), and “what changes next.”
- Consultation Package: submission ledger + Response-to-Comments (RtC) table.
- Adoption Tracker: simple spreadsheet of municipalities/utilities that applied templates/clauses, with evidence links.
- GFA Scorecard: annual update with short justification per indicator.

12.4 Feedback Integration Loop

Objective. Ensure that participation and evidence lead to visible changes in outputs and decisions.

Figure 8: Four-step loop (90-day cycle)



Service standards for the loop

- Learning Note posted quarterly on the Public Portal.
- Document updates carry a changelog entry (version/date; rationale).
- Adjustments with cross-border implications are tabled at the next regional coordination session.

Linkages: Indicators and logs in this chapter draw from Chapter 11 (Information Disclosure) and Chapter 10 (GRM) and feed back into technical guidance and engagement plans. This ensures a continuous engage → learn → adapt cycle throughout DICTAS II.

13. IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

This chapter sets the sequence, milestones, and update routines for delivering the Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP). It establishes (i) a time-bound roadmap with clear gates, (ii) an annual re-mapping cycle to refresh stakeholders, maps, and tables, and (iii) explicit integration points with the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) development.

13.1 Timeline and Milestones

Cadence: The roadmap follows a quarterly cycle (Q1–Q4) with two regional alignment points (mid-year and year-end). Each milestone lists a primary output and a disclosure requirement (Chapter 11).

Year 1 (illustrative)

Quarter	Core Activities	Primary Outputs	Disclosure / Records
---------	-----------------	-----------------	----------------------

Q1	Stand up National Platforms; confirm focal points; publish SIP calendar; launch Public Portal structure; set up Helpdesk/GRM tools.	Platform ToR & member list; Portal v1 (pages, templates); GRM SOP & forms.	Minutes within 10 working days; Portal pages live; GRM form active.
Q2	Country kick-offs and first municipal/basin clinics; open first consultations (if applicable); initiate TWGs (e.g., works-in-karst guidance); MEL baseline.	Clinic packs; Consultation #1 materials; TWG workplans; MEL Dashboard v0.	Consultation page; RtC template; Quarterly Learning Note #1.
Q3	Draft guidance/briefs for decision gates; run targeted trainings; data-sharing MoU drafting where feasible; first Dashboard v1.	Draft Guidance v1; Training slides; Draft data MoUs; Dashboard v1.	Milestone brief; slides; dataset metadata (if any).
Q4	Close consultations; finalize Guidance v1; National & Regional Forums; annual MEL report; Year-2 SIP calendar agreed.	RtC posted; Guidance v1 (HTML/PDF); Forum minutes; MEL Annual Note; Y2 calendar.	RtC ≤20 working days; communiqué; next-year calendar on Portal.

Years 2–3 (rolling pattern)

- **Q1–Q2:** Implement clinics/trainings; open consultations for updated/expanded guidance; Dashboard updates.
- **Q3:** Consolidate feedback; pilot adoption (permit clauses, protection-zone templates); issue Guidance v2 where needed.
- **Q4:** National/Regional Forums; annual MEL; publish Year-next SIP calendar; agree scale-up or handover steps.

Gates (“go/no-go” checks)

- **G1 – Publication readiness:** accessibility, licensing, and technical review complete (Ch. 11).
- **G2 – Engagement sufficiency:** minimum participation & RtC completeness (Ch. 9 & 11).
- **G3 – Adoption evidence:** at least one pilot municipality/utility applying clauses/templates (Ch. 13).
- **G4 – Risk & grievance check:** open high-risk GRM cases addressed or routed to PCFM (Ch. 10).

13.2 Annual Re-Mapping and Plan Updates

Purpose: Keep stakeholder maps/tables, engagement priorities, and products aligned with real-world changes (institutional shifts, new works, emerging user groups).

When. Annually in Q4, ahead of the next-year SIP calendar, with a light mid-year spot-check if major changes occur.

Scope of update

1. Stakeholder re-mapping: refresh country tables (Interest → Influence) and “Role in Groundwater Governance”; record changes (new ministries, utilities, NGOs).
2. Engagement priorities: update quadrant-based strategies; adjust “Keep satisfied” brief list tied to decision gates.
3. Products & clinics: revise the next-year list of guidelines, clinics, and trainings (timelines and leads).
4. Disclosure plan: update the editorial calendar (news, briefs, consultations) and dataset release plan.

Process & output

- Input sources: MEL dashboard, GRM/Helpdesk synthesis, consultation RtCs, forum minutes.
- Workshop: short National Platform session to validate changes.
- Outputs: (i) Stakeholder Tables, (ii) SIP Calendar, (iii) Change Log summarizing what changed and why.
- Disclosure: post revised tables and calendars on the Portal with version/date; archive previous versions.

14. RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

14.1 Roles (UNESCO, National Institutions, focal points, etc.)

Project Coordinator (regional)

- Provides overall direction for the Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP), approves public releases, and ensures consistency across countries.
- Maintains the SIP calendar, repository, website/portal, and basic analytics.

Country Leads (one per country)

- Coordinate national engagement activities and schedules.
- Validate materials for national use and ensure disclosure follows agreed standards.

Technical Leads / Working Groups (time-bound)

- Produce or update specific deliverables (e.g., guidance notes, checklists, permit clauses).
- Review consultation inputs and recommend revisions.

Sector Focal Points (planning/land, energy, infrastructure, health, agriculture/tourism)

- Receive “gate” briefs tied to permits/EIA and provide written feedback through existing channels.

Local Interfaces (municipalities, utilities, user associations)

- Host or participate in clinics and dialogues; report practical adoption and issues.

Secretariat Function

- Light coordination support: meeting notices/minutes, document formatting, web posting, helpdesk triage, and quarterly summaries.

Note: Specific institutions and names can be inserted later in an annexed “Roles Register”.

14.2 Budget Categories (Events, Travel, Digital, Inclusion Support)

- Events & Facilitation: national platform meetings, clinics, consultations (venue, moderation, materials, interpretation).
- Travel & Per Diem: in-country travel for clinics/site visits; limited regional alignment travel.
- Digital & Disclosure: portal hosting, accessibility checks, layout/graphics, translation of summaries.
- Inclusion Support: interpretation, captioning, accessible formats, and essential participation support for communities.
- Training & Capacity: short courses, e-learning modules, training materials.
- Data & Monitoring: data cleaning/metadata, dashboards, small services directly tied to SIP outputs.
- Contingency: 5–10% for unplanned engagement/disclosure needs.

14.3 Capacity Building Needs

- Works in karst (permitting & inspection): model clauses, site screening, mitigation “do’s & don’ts”.

- Source-protection zoning: updates, municipal enforcement routines, signage/notification.
- Data & disclosure practice: reusable datasets, metadata basics, response-to-comments.
- Consultation & grievance handling: inclusive facilitation, intake/triage, closure and communication.
- Risk communication (health/water safety): clear public messaging on seasonal demand and nitrate risks.
- Municipal/utility operations: quick wins for leakage/demand management; reporting adoption.

Delivery modes: rotating clinics, short, targeted trainings (½–1 day), micro e-learning, and peer exchanges during regional sessions.

15. RISK MATRIX AND MITIGATION

This chapter identifies key risks that could affect delivery of the Stakeholder Involvement Plan and sets practical mitigation and response measures. Ratings use a simple scale: Likelihood (L) and Impact (I) = Low (L), Medium (M), High (H). Residual reflects expected level after mitigation.

15.1 Stakeholder Risks (Non-participation, Opposition, Burnout)

ID	Risk	Description	L	I	Residual	Early signals	Primary owner
S1	Non-participation	Low turnout from municipalities, utilities, user groups; weak feedback	M	M	L–M	Repeated no-shows; late RSVPs; few comments	Country Lead
S2	Opposition	Organized resistance to guidance (e.g., works-in-karst conditions)	M	H	M	Petitioning; media pushback; high conflict in meetings	Project Coordinator
S3	Burnout fatigue /	Same stakeholders over-consulted; loss of goodwill	M	M	L	Declining satisfaction scores; drop in repeat attendance	Secretariat
S4	Exclusion risks	Women/youth/smaller operators can't access or follow process	M	M	L	Skewed attendance; requests for translation/access support	Country Lead
S5	Misinformation	Incorrect claims about project scope/impacts spread online	M	M	L–M	Viral posts; mismatched expectations in Q&A	Secretariat

15.2 Political/Institutional Risks

ID	Risk	Description	L	I	Residual	Early signals	Primary owner
P1	Fragmented mandates	Cross-agency gaps slow decisions or create contradictions	M	H	M	Conflicting letters; stalled clearances	Project Coordinator
P2	Turnover	Staff changes in key roles delay actions and approvals	H	M	M	Out-of-office loops; repeated re-briefings	Country Lead
P3	Policy shifts	New priorities reduce attention to groundwater/karst	M	H	M	Budget re-allocations; cancelled meetings	Project Coordinator
P4	Funding/timing	Disbursement or procurement delays affect engagement schedule	M	M	L-M	Slipped milestones; contracting lags	Secretariat
P5	Data constraints	Incomplete/withheld data hinder guidance or disclosure	M	M	L-M	“Data pending” across releases; inconsistent series	Technical Lead
P6	Legal/permits cycle	EIA/permit calendars don’t align with consultations	M	M	L-M	Decisions announced before consultation	Country Lead

15.3 Mitigation and Response Measures

Prevent (built-in practices)

- Lean scheduling: Quarterly SIP calendar published early; avoid peak periods; rotate venues. (S1, S3)
- Targeted invitations: Segment lists (municipalities, utilities, user groups) and send role-specific briefs. (S1, S4)
- Inclusion supports: Short national-language summaries, interpretation on demand, accessible PDFs; small participation stipends where justified. (S4)
- Consistency rules: Use standard Gate Briefs and checklists tied to EIA/permits to reduce disputes. (S2, P6)
- Continuity files: One-page role handover packs; backup focal named for each key function. (P2)
- Data MoUs & templates: Minimal metadata + update cadence; publish summaries/generalized layers if sensitive. (P5)

Prepare (readiness)

- Opposition playbook: 2–3 key messages; Q&A sheet; spokesperson identified; pre-brief for high-risk meetings. (S2, S5)
- Escalation path: Clear steps from Country Lead → Project Coordinator for mandate conflicts. (P1)
- Budget buffers: 5–10% contingency for extra consultations/translations. (P4)
- Calendar sync: Quarterly check against planning/permit schedules to insert advisory notes in time. (P6)

Respond (when triggered)

- Low turnout: Convert to focused clinics; follow up 1:1 with absentee priority actors; keep record of outreach. (S1)
- High conflict: Use neutral facilitation; separate technical brief; document concerns; agree next steps and timelines. (S2)
- Misinformation: Post a short corrective fact note on the Portal; link in meeting follow-ups and social posts. (S5)
- Turnover: Activate backup focal; schedule a 30-min onboarding using the continuity file. (P2)
- Mandate clashes: Convene a short inter-agency huddle (max 60 min) to agree a written coordination note. (P1)

Recover & learn (close the loop)

- “What changed” notes: Publish one-page addenda after contentious consultations showing adjustments. (S2, P3)

- Quarterly MEL dashboard: Track satisfaction, inclusion, SLA compliance; flag repeat risks. *(All)*
- After-Action Reviews: For major incidents (opposition/derailment) within 10 working days; capture fixes. *(S2, P1)*

Monitoring signals (minimum)

- Event satisfaction (1–5) and inclusion (% women/youth where feasible); Helpdesk response time; % consultations with RtC posted on time; # adoption cases of model clauses/templates.

Role summary (high-level)

- Project Coordinator: Cross-border/institutional issues, opposition at national/regional level.
- Country Leads: Participation, inclusion, alignment with national calendars.
- Technical Leads: Data adequacy, guidance quality.
- Secretariat: Scheduling, records, Helpdesk, public corrections.

ANNEX 3: Grievance Template

1. About You (optional for anonymity)

- Name: _____
- Organization / Community: _____
- Country / Municipality: _____
- Email / Phone (for follow-up): _____
- Preferred contact method: Email Phone None (anonymous)

2. Type of Submission

- Information request
- Comment on consultation
- Grievance / complaint
- Suggestion

3. Topic / Area

- Project activity or document (title, location, date): _____
- Sector (tick any): Planning/Land Energy/Infrastructure Water/Environment Health Other: _____

4. Description of the Issue

- What happened, where, and when?

- Who is affected and how?

5. Evidence / References (optional)

- Attachments or links (photos, letters, permits, coordinates):

6. Desired Outcome (what would resolve this?)

-
-

7. Sensitivity & Consent

Do you want your identity kept confidential? Yes No

May we publish an anonymized summary of your case? Yes No

8. Accessibility (optional)

Language needs / accommodation required: _____

9. Declaration

I confirm the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature (if in person): _____ Date: __ / __ / ____

ANNEX 5: Grievance Log Template

Purpose: 1–2 page, plain-language explainer for communities/municipalities.

Title: DIKTAS II — Groundwater in Karst: What the Project Will Do in Your Area

1. What is karst groundwater? Short paragraph + simple sketch/diagram.
2. What will happen? 4–6 bullets (clinics, consultations, guidance, data sharing).
3. How can you participate? Dates/links, how to submit comments, Helpdesk email & webform.
4. Do's & Don'ts near springs/sinkholes. Five concise tips.
5. Where to find information? Public Portal URL + QR code.
6. Footer: Project contact email • Version/date • Language note.

Design tips: large fonts, high contrast, national-language version for local use; export as accessible PDF + web HTM

