

iWater Tool sheets / Planning support tools:

Stormwater programmes and guidelines

Stormwater guidelines and strategy papers are documents describing the general stormwater management principles of a governmental body, such as a municipality.

Why: Stormwater guidelines and strategies are prepared to create a general approach and common goals for urban stormwater management. One aim of these papers is to divide and define the responsibilities between several subdivisions and departments of the municipal government that have to collaborate in water issues. Collaboration is crucial for the implementation of more sustainable practices.

How: Most of the guidelines and strategy papers present an order of priority for the different stormwater management practices. The first priority in stormwater management (SWM) is the prevention of run-off (see the tool sheet on Source control). If the on source management is not possible, stormwater should be conducted by a system that allows infiltration and detention in a public green area. In a public area, water is retained and purified, for example, in a wetland system, before entering the receiving watercourse. Conveying stormwater straight to the recipient watercourse through a piping system should be the last option.

In addition, some other issues common to all the guidelines can be identified. The natural water balance should not be essentially negatively affected by urbanization. Furthermore, the stormwater management system should be designed ensuring that most of the pollution in the urban run-off is removed on its way towards the recipient, and sources that contribute to the pollution of storm run-off should be limited.

Good to know: In the Baltic Sea region, the largest cities in Finland and Sweden have already prepared their own stormwater strategy papers following their national guidelines. Several other Baltic cities are also preparing their own strategies.

The implementation of the defined practices must also be executed and monitored. Based on experiences in Finland, the monitoring of the implementation in practical work or planning projects is often lacking. Without a proper implementation plan, it is possible that neither the urban planners nor the decision-makers are aware of the priorities, as a result, it has been ineffective.

POINT 1
URBAN
RESILIENCE

POINT 2
TECHNICAL
OPTIMI-
ZATION

POINT 3
DAY-TO-DAY
VALUES



References / More information

Peer review of the climate policies and stormwater management in Helsinki, Turku and Lahti (in Finnish only):
http://ilmastotyokalut.fi/files/2014/07/ILKKA_raportti_vertaisarviointi.pdf

Examples of stormwater strategies from Sweden (in Swedish only):
Täby: <http://www.taby.se/Bygga-bo-och-miljo/Vatten-och-avlopp/Dagvatten/Dagvattenhandbok/>
Stockholm: http://miljobarometern.stockholm.se/content/docs/vp/Stockholms_dagvattenstrategi_2015-03-09.pdf

