

WATER AND SANITATION MANAGEMENT IN THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

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In France, the law of 30/12/2006 stipulates “the right of every person to have access to drinking water in conditions economically acceptable to all, for food and hygiene purposes”. This provision is not being universally applied in the overseas territories.

411

MILLION EUROS IN AID granted by the government to boost investments by Mayotte's water board

1/4

OF THE POPULATION OF GUADELOUPE

do not have access to water every day, due to the numerous water cuts.



A lack of investment, dilapidated infrastructure, governance issues, pricing and water shortages all lead to inequalities, economic and social development problems, and a high degree of dissatisfaction among users in the overseas territories.

How to improve water and sanitation management in the Overseas Territories



Affected by national and local public policies on land use planning, environmental protection and health, water is a common asset requiring urgent, sustainable and territorial solutions. In order to respect this fundamental right, everyone must be given urgent access to high quality water in all the areas of the Republic, including in particular the Overseas Territories.

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THE EESC'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING WATER AND SANITATION MANAGEMENT IN THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

The 23 recommendations focus on one issue: making the right of access to water effective and equal for all. These include:

- **Initiate a priority action plan for water in Guadeloupe, French Guiana and Mayotte within 3 years, to eliminate service interruptions or “water rotas”** by involving the Region, the Department and the inter-municipal authorities, under the control of the State, including: an increase in investments, the intensification of leakage searches and connection checks, the creation of infrastructure (catchment points, pumping stations, treatment and purification stations, etc.), having recourse to the technical expertise proposed by the State and the requisitioning of the operator if the deadlines are not met.

- **Provide public water taps in informal settlements** to provide access to high quality drinking water, the distribution of which is controlled and secured to avoid trafficking and violence.

- Implement a **“social water tariff”** and **distribute** means-tested **“water vouchers”** based on a flat rate of 400 litres of water per day per household, i.e. 150 m³ per year, allowing access to quality drinking water for all.

- **Table a bill establishing an “enforceable right to drinking water for all”.** The EESC therefore calls on the legislator, the State and the local authorities to embrace and support the right to water in order to reduce the various geographical disparities.

- **Recognise as occupational diseases all ailments suffered by women exposed to chloredecone while working on farms** (in particular breast and uterine cancer and pathologies developed during pregnancy) and conduct a prevention campaign aimed at the entire population, and women in particular.

