

Contacting authorities from another country



Writing a letter to the authorities of your partner team will enable you to show solidarity with people in other countries, who depend on bodies of water, just like you. This approach may have a strong effect on the authorities as it exhibits international awareness of the implementation of the WFD and its status in the region in question.

Session I: Preparing the cooperation

Note: you may want to do this session a few weeks before session II on letter writing.

Introduction by the group coordinator (5 min):

What is going to be the content of this module? How is it going to take place?

Hand out three pieces of paper to each participant with the three questions below.

Afterwards, collect and discuss the answers all together; or alternatively, brainstorm together (10 min):

- What information do we want to obtain from our authority?
- What further benefits can come from contacting the authorities?
- What are the possible benefits of international letter writing?

Presentation by the teacher (2 min):

Success stories of international letter writing from Amnesty International
(Information see below*)

Group work (20 min): Enable your partner-team to successfully write a letter to your authorities by presenting them your river. The following tasks will be distributed to small groups:

- Name of your river
- Picture of your river
- Group picture
- Why do you jump?
- Fun facts about your river
- What is your perception of the situation of your river?
- Do you know of any actions undertaken in order to meet the requirements of the EU-WFD in your region?
- Do you know of any successes in the implementation?
- Have you already contacted your local authorities?
- Do you have any specific questions that your partner team should ask your local authorities?
- Do you have any ideas on how the situation of your river could be improved?
- Further remarks

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Everybody together (8 min):

Join the points the individual groups have worked out to one profile of your river that will be sent to your partner team.

Material:

Amnesty International: Exposing and preventing human rights abuses

For more information on Amnesty International, see www.amnesty.org

Amnesty International helps individuals at risk and affects policy for groups of individuals through letter-writing campaigns. Individuals' letters to governments, public officials etc. have saved and changed lives all over the world. We would like to show you how to do it too in the context of the Big Jump and the Water Framework Directive. You can also affect change in a positive way just by writing a letter.

What kind of people does Amnesty International help?

Individuals:

Tural Abbasli (Azerbaijan) - blogger imprisoned for speaking out

Jean Claude-Roger Mbede (Cameroon) - prisoner of conscience imprisoned for homosexuality

Liu Xiaobo (China) - Nobel Peace Prize laureate imprisoned for inciting subversion of state power

And many more...

Policy for groups:

VAWA (Violence Against Women Action) was passed into law in the United States to protect and defend "All women" under United States Law, including formerly excluded or marginalized communities of women, i.e. Native American, Alaskan, Immigrant, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and trafficking victims.

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