

# Tracking Commitments and Expectations (SENAT)



Several months



5 to 10  
people



Low

## RESOURCES REQUIRED

### MATERIALS:

- Paper;
- Pencils;
- Tables;
- Chairs; and
- Room.

### HUMAN RESOURCES:

- Several facilitators.

## SUMMARY

The “Suivi des engagements et des attentes” (SENAT) is a project planning, tracking and evaluation tool. Originally developed by Nathalie Beaulieu of the Concert-Eau group to simplify the concepts associated with outcome mapping and to facilitate stakeholder engagement, the Tracking Commitments and Expectations (SENAT) was subsequently adapted to help watershed organizations with the cooperative management of water, and was used for Coastal Communities Challenges—Community-University Research Alliance (CCC-CURA) projects. It was developed for situations in which multiple stakeholders join forces to address common objectives using their own resources. The tool comprises tables in which to record the progress of commitments taken and commitments desired by stakeholders, as well as a log based on the table of commitments taken. This log is used to track action items that have been taken and action items that are desired, as well as outcomes and whether or not the conditions for success were met.

## Strengths

- Methodology is easy to understand;
- Facilitates ownership of decision-making by stakeholders;
- Enhances stakeholder motivation;
- Enhances stakeholder capacity for self-organization;
- Makes it possible to monitor the evolution of governance processes;
- Makes it possible to identify obstacles as soon as actions are taken, and makes stakeholders take ownership of actions;
- Permits the establishment of links with existing planning tools (e.g., the water master plan of watershed organizations) by integrating projects into a series of other projects to remedy problems, taking the issues into account.

## Weaknesses

- Fairly new tool with few examples of use;
- Difficult to apply to groups that are in conflict with each other;
- Outcomes depend on the involvement and collaboration of multiple stakeholders that may not be accustomed to working closely together on a joint project.

Information

Consultation

Involvement

**COLLABORATION**

Empowerment

## OBJECTIVES

In addition to tracking actions and their outcomes, this tool helps stakeholders clarify their commitments. It also makes it possible to set out the expectations that stakeholders have of each other as regards achieving objectives.

## WHEN TO USE

The SENAT tool is useful in that it can rally all the stakeholders associated with a specific issue. It ensures monitoring and accountability for a joint project among the stakeholders rather than by a sole funder. Because it permits reporting on progress made in the area of governance—something that is difficult to analyze with traditional, results-based tracking tools—it is also a useful tool in the context of integrated water management and adaptation to climate change.

## BEFORE THE ACTIVITY

Estimated preparation time: 2 to 3 hours

### 1- Recruiting participants

The first step in using the SENAT tool consists in identifying the stakeholders interested in the stated problem or issue, or in a watershed management project. By means of a telephone call or, better yet, a face-to-face meeting, stakeholders are encouraged to take part and are invited to attend an initial meeting. This method can be used with projects that are already under way.

### 2- Logistics

Organizers should provide copies of the tables and a pencil for each participant. Access to a wall-mounted or portable bulletin board will enable the facilitator to post all of the ideas that emerge during the meetings. Organizers should reserve a room with enough chairs for all the participants. The organizers will act as meeting facilitators.

## ACTIVITY

### 1. Initial meeting

During the initial meeting with stakeholders, a facilitator explains the objective and approach to the participants. Implementing the tool involves two main steps that span several meetings.

#### a) Identifying the commitments taken and desired commitments

During the planning meeting at the start of the project, stakeholders are asked to write down their **commitments taken** and commitments desired (see table below). Commitments taken are planned actions for which financial and/or human resources have already been allocated.

Table of Commitments Taken

Committed stakeholder	Planned actions	Expected outcomes	Conditions for success

## ACTIVITY

**Desired commitments** are actions identified by one or more stakeholders, for which no firm commitment has been taken by the target stakeholder. In this case, the stakeholders already have project ideas in mind, but have made no commitment—often due to lack of knowledge or lack of funding. A brainstorming session is held to identify project ideas (which are noted on a board that everyone can see) using the table of desired commitments, and ways to implement them begin to take shape. This phase spans several meetings.

**Table of Desired Commitments**

Target stakeholder	Expected action	Expected outcomes	Obstacles to commitment	Planned activities to secure commitment

### b) Tracking progress of actions and their outcomes

Next, to support partners in carrying out their projects, the facilitator can track project progress using the information recorded in the tables or in a web application (e.g., SENAT-PDE Nicolet). Regular meetings with the stakeholders associated with an issue are held (e.g., annually) to track all projects and achievements, or to reorient actions that were not realized.

## AFTER THE ACTIVITY

Since SENAT is a tracking tool that involves ongoing accountability among the stakeholders, it must be carried out throughout the implementation phase of any collective project.

## PITFALLS TO AVOID

- Going through the SENAT process once at the start of a project and neglecting it thereafter. SENAT is an ongoing process that makes it possible to engage stakeholders throughout the process;
- Listing several desired commitments and then ignoring them. Stakeholders must work on eliminating obstacles to achieving the commitment;
- Assigning responsibility for the SENAT tool to one person. The tool should be completed by and for all stakeholders; it should not be the responsibility of a single individual.

**PRACTICAL EXAMPLE**

**COLLABORATIVE WATER MANAGEMENT BY THE ORGANISME DE CONCERTATION POUR L'EAU DES BASSINS VERSANTS DE LA RIVIÈRE NICOLET (COPERNIC)**

The Organisme de concertation pour l'eau des bassins versants de la rivière Nicolet (COPERNIC), a collaborative body for the Nicolet River watersheds, adapted and implemented SENAT tool in the Nicolet region to track implementation of the water master plan (WMP) developed in 2010. To support collaboration at the level of sub-watersheds deemed to be problematic, COPERNIC decided to act facilitate the coordination of roundtables. The purpose of this initiative was to prioritize WMP actions based on local circumstances. The SENAT tool has been used in the Rosiers river sub-watershed area since October 2012, and a roundtable was established in 2010. Given that actions had already been taken at the sub-watershed level, the organization decided to use a table of commitments taken entitled "Tracking of actions taken" [See "Suivi des actions entreprises" below].

The first step consisted in adapting the tool by creating simple tables with which the stakeholders could track desired actions and actions taken. These tables were presented to the general managers of the municipalities, who were asked to fill them in. The tables were also presented to partners of WMP projects in an agricultural setting. The "Tracking of actions taken" table were subsequently discussed and validated at roundtable meetings.

The stakeholders worked in teams to fill in the table of desired actions. The ultimate goal of all agreements developed in the Rosier river sub watershed was to improve water quality. The above tables are examples of the tracking tables used by the six watershed municipalities.

Date: 10/04/2013

**SUIVI DES ACTIONS SOUHAITÉES**

ACTEURS VISÉS	ACTIONS ATTENDUES	RÉSULTATS ATTENDUS	OBSTACLES À L'ENGAGEMENT	ACTIVITÉS PRÉVUES POUR OBTENIR L'ENGAGEMENT
GCABF Municipalités COPERNIC	Valorisation des MM par la sensibilisation et la concertation volontaire	Concertation volontaire de part des résidents des municipalités de l'EU	Manque d'infos, de l'ÉCO, Absorption des projets	
Muni. de la Grande GCABF COPERNIC	Surveillance de la qualité de l'eau de la rivière des Rosiers	Préhabilitation des 5 stations municipales de traitement de l'eau	Manque de participation des municipalités et du territoire, manque de suivi participatif de GCABF, manque de dialogue	
GCABF Mun. St-Albert	Appareillement d'une branche de la rue des Rosiers	X installation de bar plantés	Absence des propriétaires riverains	
Mun. Ste-Elizabeth de Warwick COPERNIC	Distribution de brochures sur l'écoulement et l'impact de la pluie sur le contrôle des basses températures	Distribution des documents à tous les citoyens (75/2014)		

GCABF  
COPERNIC  
organisme de concertation pour l'eau des bassins versants de la rivière Nicolet  
www.copernic.ca

Projet Pigeons  
Délimitation de propriétés de bar de charger municipalité de bar participative

Date: 20 avril 2013

**SUIVI DES ACTIONS ENTREPRISES**

ENTENTE N° 13 - Titre: Distribution de barils récupérateurs d'eau de pluie aux citoyens de bassin versant de la rivière des Rosiers

1 : ACTIONS RÉALISÉES	2 : RÉSULTATS OBTENUS
Nombre de barils distribués dans la municipalité 2011: 4 barils 2012: 15 barils	Nombre de résidences dont les gouttières sont raccordées à un baril récupérateur d'eau de pluie 15 + 4 = 19 (théoriquement)
Date de distribution 2011: 18 mai 2012: 21 juillet et le rest	Diminution du volume d'eau potable consommée se référant au volume d'eau récupéré dans les barils ≈ 700 L d'eau / mois / baril raccordé d'économie 19 barils * 7 mois * 700 L = 93 100 L ou 93,1 m³ en 2013
Commentaires ou suggestions pour améliorer l'action	Demander aux récipiendaires de baril de rapporter leur acquisition et raccordement à sa municipalité

3 : RENCONTRE DES CONDITIONS DE SUCCÈS	4 : PROCHAINES ÉTAPES	ÉCHÉANCIER
Obstacles rencontrés? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OUI <input type="checkbox"/> NON	Assurer un suivi annuel: Nombre de citoyens récipiendaires d'un baril	Automne 2013 par un sondage
Si oui, lesquels? Le suivi pour connaître le nb de barils raccordés aux gouttières est difficile à faire	Volume d'eau récupéré dans les barils	Automne 2013

GCABF  
COPERNIC  
organisme de concertation pour l'eau des bassins versants de la rivière Nicolet  
www.copernic.ca

Summary tables were prepared to give COPERNIC an overview of the Rosiers river watershed agreements. An evaluation of all ongoing activities identified a need for action by stakeholders who were not involved in the initial plan. These stakeholders were invited to participate. The table of desired actions, which was filled in as a group during roundtable meetings, made it possible to establish an action plan for the coming year.

In this example, the second step consisted in promoting the web-based version of the tool.

PRACTICAL  
EXAMPLE

## CONTINUATION

**Taking it one step further**

A web-based version of the tool (SENAT-PDE Nicolet) was developed. This web tool makes it easier for the COPERNIC watershed organizations to manage implementation of the water master plan. It allows the coordinators of the various projects to describe the actions and steps and to define the expected results. Coordinators will then be able to invite individuals or organizations to take part in the project, and to invite new stakeholders that could contribute to a project via a specific action. If the invitees accept, action-related tasks can be defined and the progress achieved, problems and opportunities encountered, and results achieved can all be tracked. These stakeholders, in turn, could invite other stakeholders to lend their support or perform actions that are necessary in order to achieve project objectives. Stakeholders who want to participate in the WMP can propose and create projects and solicit the support of other individuals or organizations. Invitees can decline the invitation to participate by providing reasons or by identifying conditions that must be met in order for them to participate. Contact COPERNIC to obtain and adapt this tool.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

CCC-CURA: <http://www.defisdescommunautescotieres.org/>.

Beaulieu, N., 2012. L'Outil "Visions, Actions, Partenariat" (VAP) pour la planification dans la gestion concertée de l'eau, Concert-Eau. Available online in French only at <http://www.concert-eau.org/planification-suivi-et-evaluation-pour-la-mobilisation-concertee/visions-actions-partenariats-vap>.

Regroupement des Organismes de Bassins Versants du Québec (ROBVQ), 2013. "Méthode du suivi des engagements et des attentes (SENAT)". Available online in French only at <https://www.robvq.qc.ca/guides/pde/senat>.

The Coastal Communities Challenges—Community-University Research Alliance (CCC-CURA) comprises a group of partners and researchers concerned with issues pertaining to resilience and governance for coastal and riverside communities in the context of climate change.

The Regroupement des organismes de bassins versants du Québec (ROBVQ) comprises some 40 watershed organizations operating in Quebec. It is a key partner of the Quebec government in the development of watershed management measures.



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