

# The evolution of water governance in France from the 60's: disputes as major drivers for drastic changes within a consensual frame

Marine Colon, Sophie Richard, Agroparistech  
Pierre-Alain Roche, ASTEE, Hon. President

# Overview of major laws

## IWRM

1964 : POLLUTION, BASIN COMMITTEES and AGENCIES

→ 1992 : WATER = COMMON NATION INHERITAGE,  
WATER MASTERPLANS

→ 2003 : WFD = RESTORING GOOD STATUS

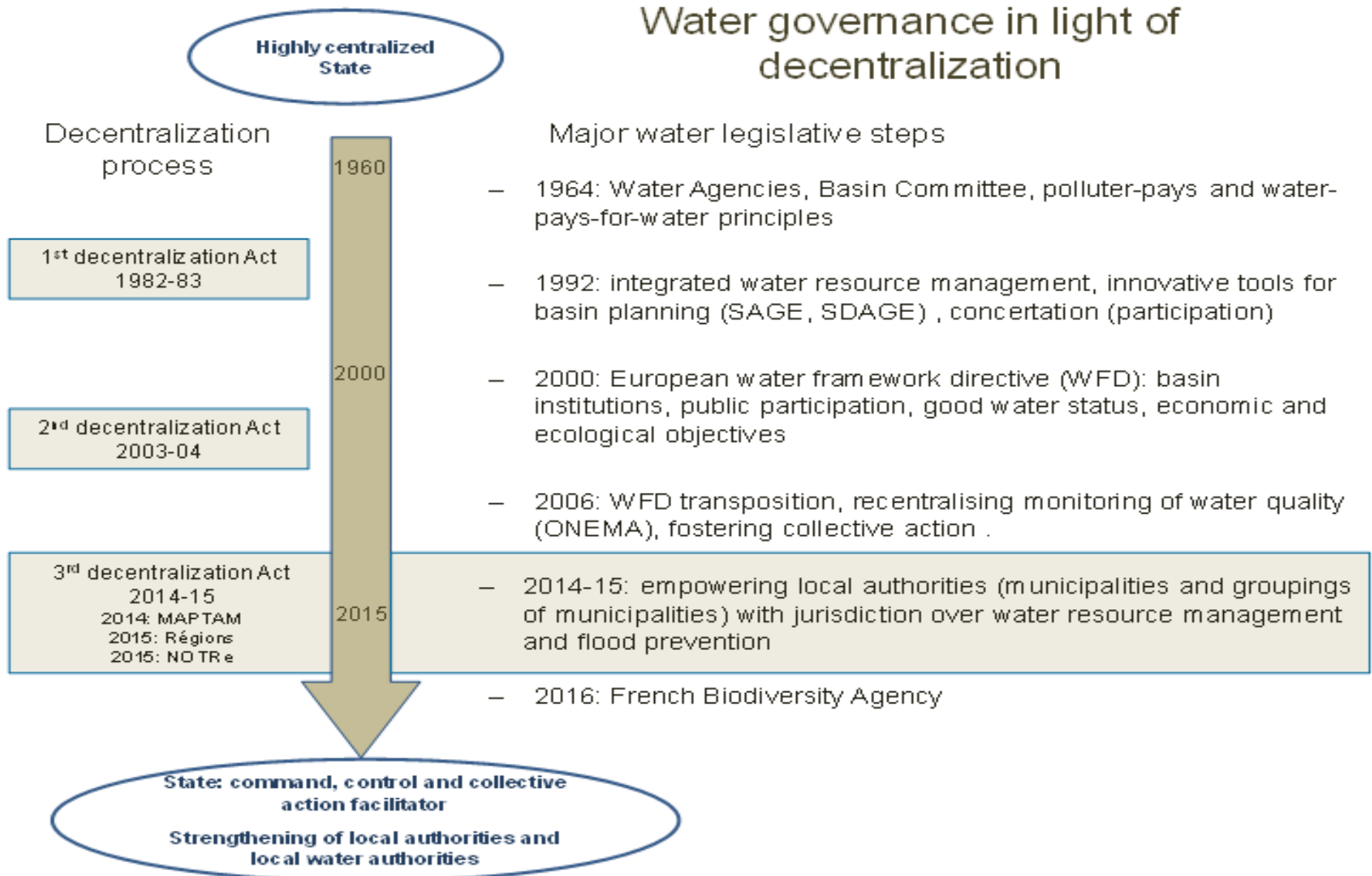
→ 2016 : INTEGRATION IN BIODIVERSITY

## WSSS

1993 -1995-2002 : RULES FOR COMPETITION,  
TRANSPARENCY, PUBLIC REPORTS, USER COMMITTEES

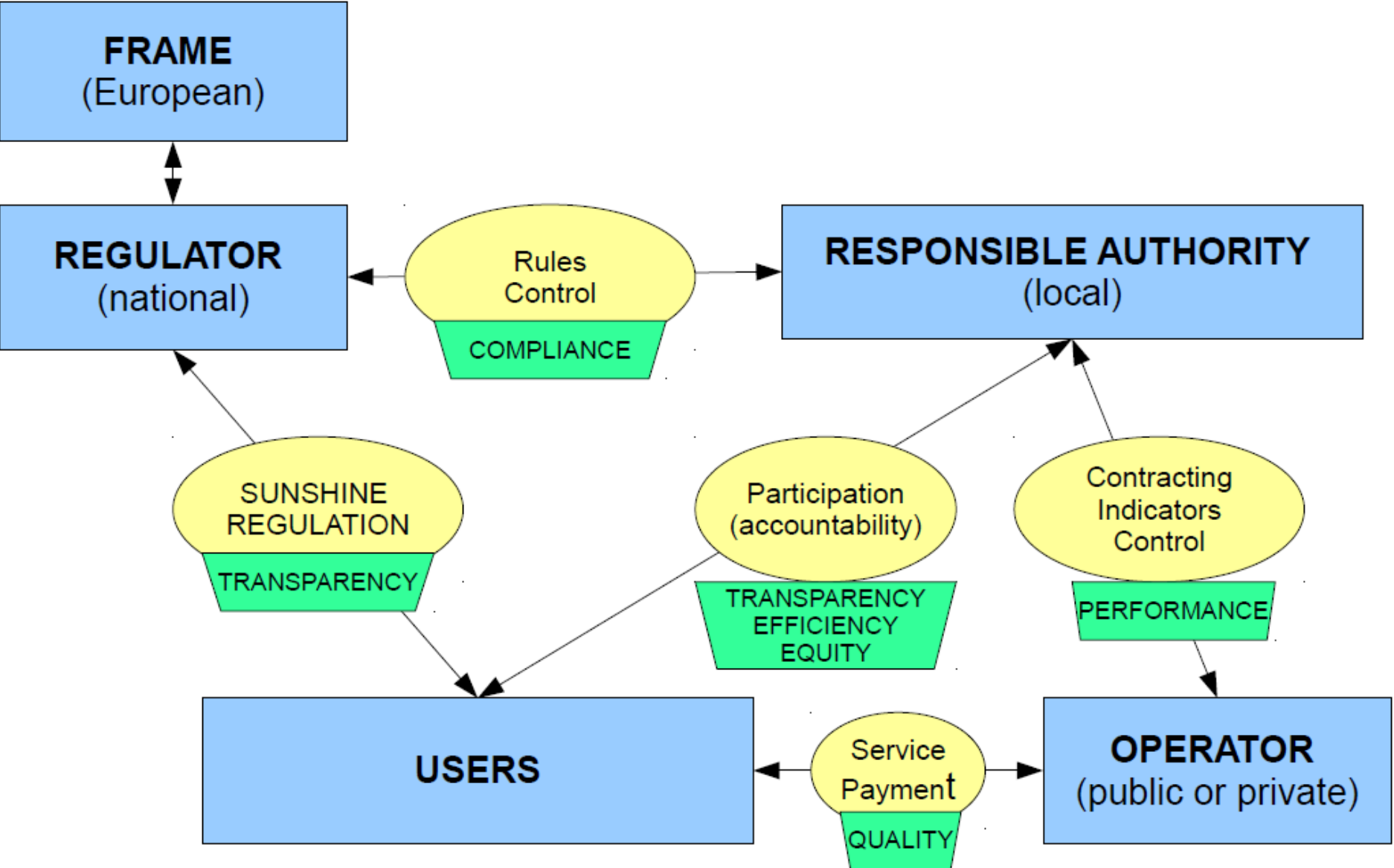
→ 2016-2017 : RESHAPING LOCAL  
AUTHORITIES

# Water policies and decentralization



# New paradigms in water service regulation

# Regulation of WSSS



# Many models of operators

Part of the population served by public operators:

sanitation  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  stable

water supply  
 $\frac{1}{4} \nearrow \frac{1}{3}$

Public management

- direct management by local authority's governance structure
- specific budget (funded by water bills)
- headed by a civil servant
- employment contracts under private law

Public local enterprise

- financial autonomy
- legal existence
- headed by a civil servant accountable to local authority
- employees under private law
- under contract without bidding and no deadline
- may have private shareholders

Private enterprise

- majority of private shareholders
- legal existence
- head and employees under private law
- under contract through bidding and time limit

# Reduction of the number of local authorities 2015 → 2020

2015	2020		Population
<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>powerfull</b>	<b>&gt; 300 000</b>
<b>200</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>strong</b>	<b>50 000 / 500 000</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>1400</b>	<b>weak</b>	<b>15 000 / 100 000</b>
<b>22 000</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>very weak</b>	<b>&lt; 15 000</b>



Opportunity to :

- reinforce the sunshine regulation (national level)
- Build new contracts and get better productivity

Risk of :

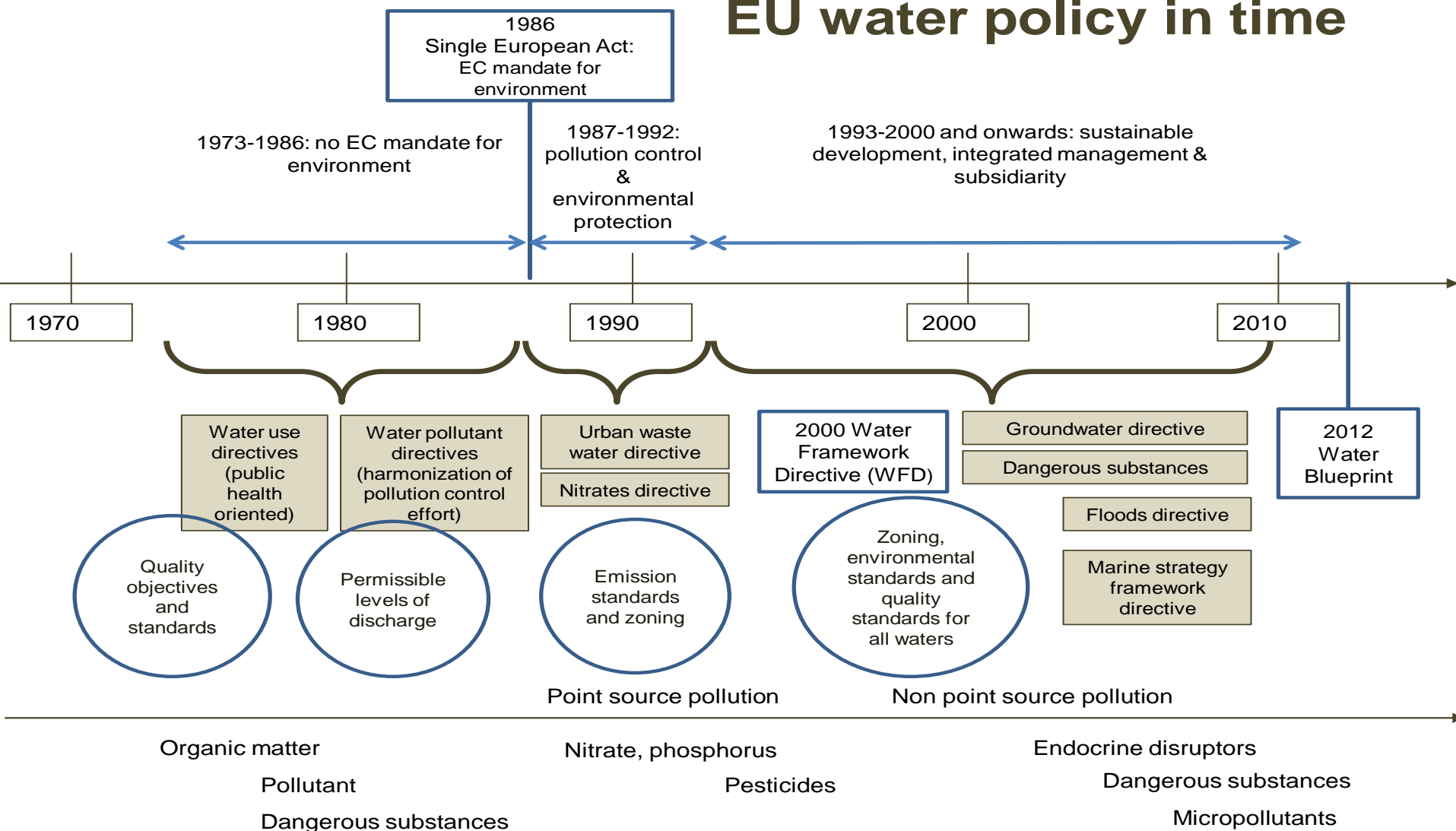
- Lower proximity to users

# IWRM : 40 years of conflicts and negotiations about water inside and outside of the waterbox



# Three steps on Water policies in Europe

## EU water policy in time



# IWRM at basin level with dedicated institutions and financial circuits

National strategies

National water committee

Basin committees and agencies

Sdage : basin masterplan

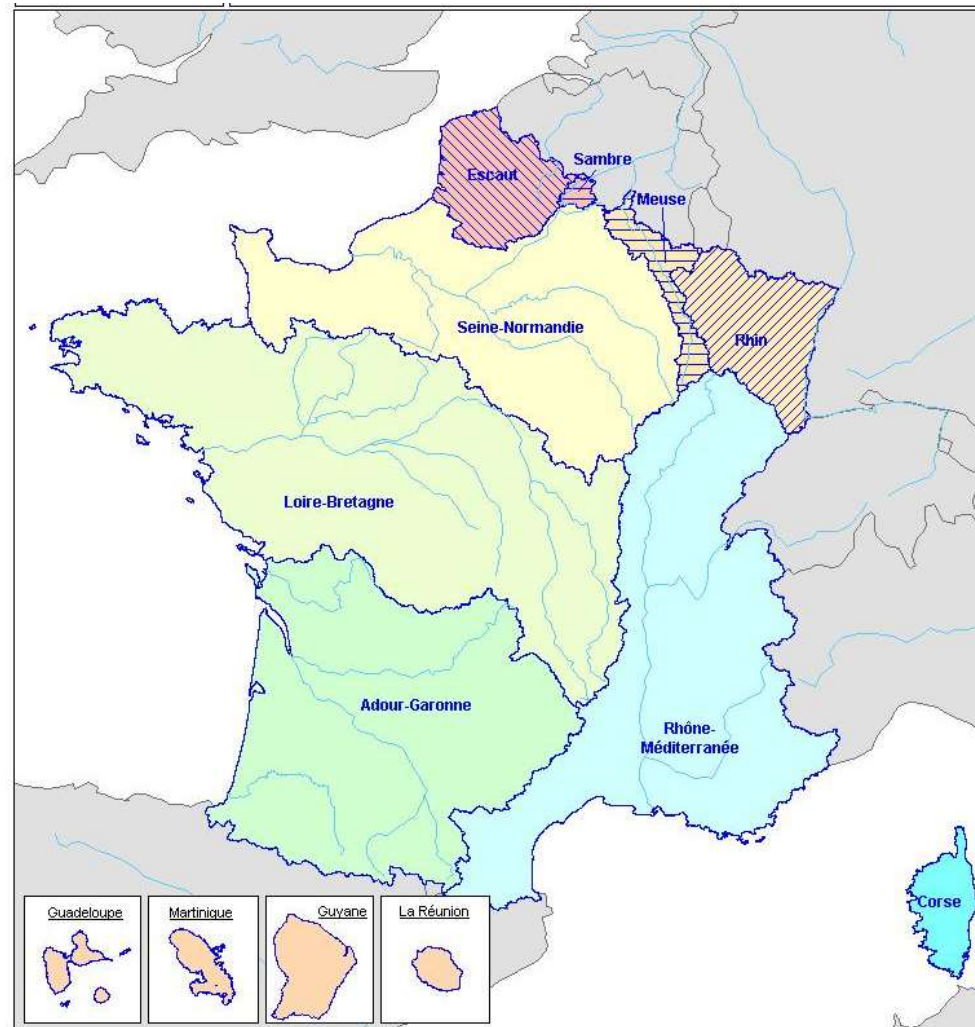
Quantity, quality, biodiversity and risk

Climate change

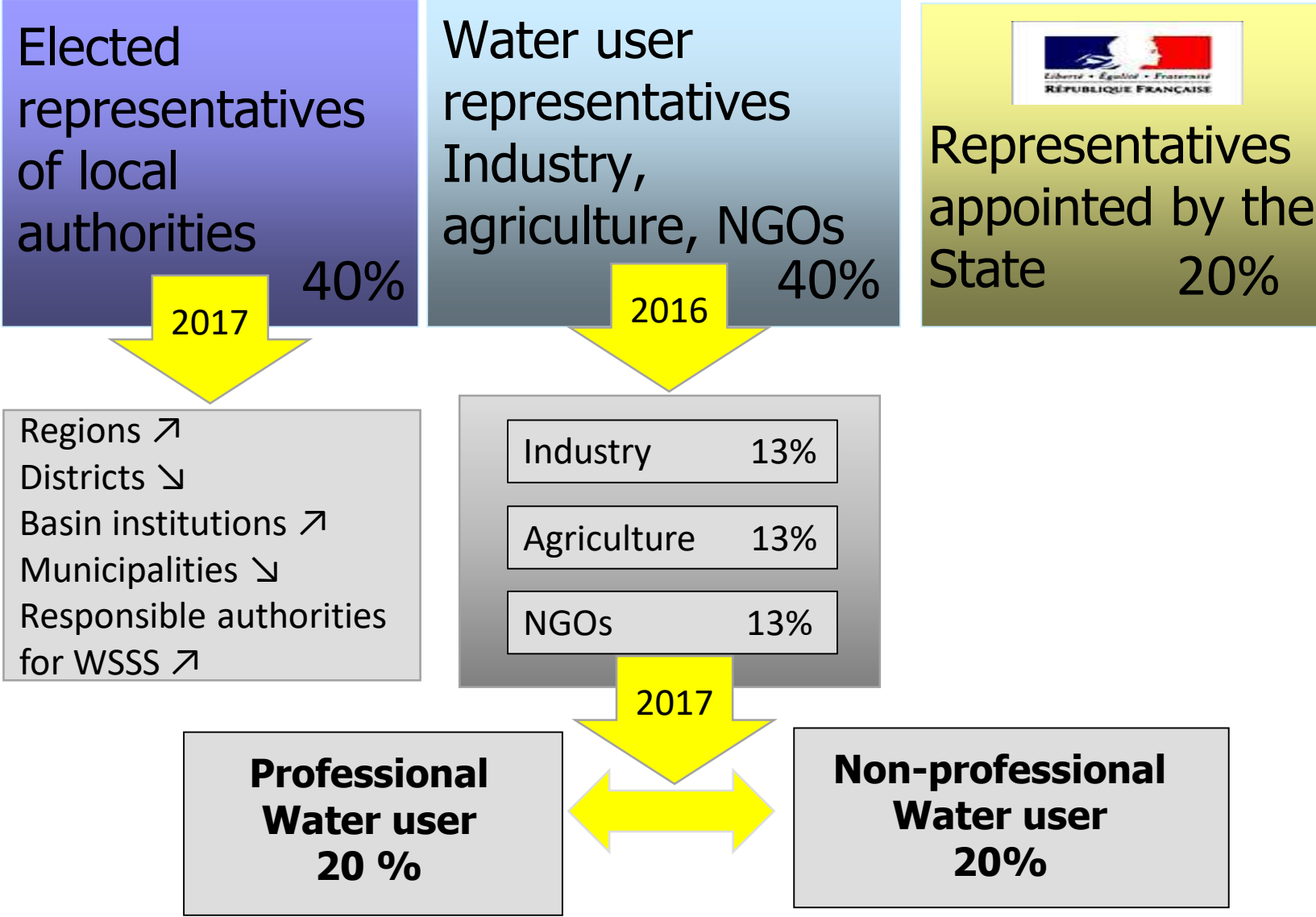
Smaller catchments

Dedicated institutions

Dedicated participatory governances



# Basin committees : sharing the power



Water pollution as major environmental problem

1964

- Waters pays for water : basin solidarity
- The consumer and the polluter pay

Emergence of other environmental concerns

2003

- Contribution of water agencies to national expenses

Water as a part of environmental issues

2017

- Extension of mandate of the water agencies and national agency to biodiversity at large

# French experience and the WGI principle

- In line with the WGI principles for years
- Concept framework stable → create confidence
- Major long term drivers (decentralization) → step by step reforms in a general trend
- Evolving needs increase of tensions between actors
- Disputes as factor of decision to change
- Not a rational Water Policy Cycle :  
policy formulation → implementation → monitoring → evaluation → new policy formulation
- But a pragmatic adjustments to new realities :  
new concerns → pressure/disputes → authorities ask for reports → decision → implementation → new gaps to be filled

Thank you for your attention