

# Secure a sustainable water cycle against coming challenges

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# **Berlin** A growing unified city





- 3.5 million inhabitants, growing city: since 2014 plus 40,000 inhabitants per year
- 3,800 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>
- City area is about 900 km<sup>2</sup>
- 25% of city area is restricted for water catchment
- Rich in waters: two rivers Spree and Havel, many lakes
- Reunification in 1989



# Berliner Wasserbetriebe

Largest integrated water utility in Germany



- In 1992, merger of the two companies of East and West Berlin
- Responsible for water, wastewater and stormwater
- Partially privatised in 1999 (49.9%)
- Re-municipalised in 2013, 100% owned by municipality of Berlin
- Germany's largest company that integrates water and wastewater management



# **Berliner Wasserbetriebe** Key Figures



- 190 million m<sup>3</sup>/a water sales
- 240 million m<sup>3</sup>/a wastewater treatment
- 9 waterworks with capacities from 30,000 to 250,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day, 900 wells
- 6 WWTP with capacities from 40,000 to 250,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day
- 8,000 km water distribution network, less than 5% water losses
- 9,700 km sewer network, 1,100 km pressure lines
- 4,500 employees



# **BWB's mission** Management of the city water cycle as a whole



- 95% of drinking water is caught from city area
- Water is of very good quality and is treated near-naturally
- 70% bank-filtrated water, 30% ground-water
  - Condition of surface waters is important
  - Significant decrease in water consumption after 1989 (-40%), current development: increasing consumption (+5%)



### Wastewater

Optimised system to reduce environmental impact



- Inner part of city: combined sewers (1,900 km)
- Other parts: separate sewers or local infiltration of stormwater
- Plain city area: Wastewater is pumped over long distances (1,100 km pressure lines)
  - Present storage capacity for combined sewage: 230,000 m<sup>3</sup>
  - 90,000 tons of sewage sludge per year



# **Energy** Ambitious CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction targets



- 370 GWh energy consumption per year
- Increase of customer generated energy up to 30% by means of:
  - digester gas
  - wind power
  - photovoltaics
- Carbon dioxide emissions were reduced by more than 60% in last 20 years
- Focus on optimisation of energy consumption



#### **Impact of climate Change**

Preserving the inherited water management system more important than ever



- Temperature rise, increasing evaporation, heavier single events of precipitation
- Impact on water management in Berlin:
  - Decreasing groundwater recharge
  - Increasing share of bank-filtrated water
  - Condition of surface waters becomes much more important
    - Need for optimised stormwater management
    - Effort in place to reduce carbon footprint

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#### **Adaptation Strategies**



Sustainable management of the city resources





# a) Drinking Water

Protection of resources regarding quality and quantity



- Optimisation wells: layout and operation
- Improvement of quality monitoring system
- Where necessary: Decoupling of WWTP from water cycle
- R&D in relevant fields (bank filtration ...)
- Additional aspects:
  - Sulphate in river Spree from coal mining activities
  - Increasing consumption of pharmaceuticals

#### **b) Wastewater** WWTP: Expansion of treatment capacities





- Fourth treatment stage in WWTP: reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus
- Where necessary: UV-disinfection
- Additional aspects:
  - Trace organics
  - Reduction of germs
  - Growing population
  - Microplastics



#### **c) Stormwater** Improvement of the condition of surface waters





- Quality improvement of surface waters: Reduction of combined sewage overflows
  - Capacity extension of storage in sewers (today: 230,000 m<sup>3</sup>, in 2020: 307,000 m<sup>3</sup>)
  - Optimised operation of pumping stations
  - Where possible: Transformation of paved areas into permeable areas, decentralised solutions

#### Storage capacities in sewers



#### **d) Energy** Increasing share of renewable energies



- Further optimisation of energy consumption
- Increasing production of digester gas by means of power-heat generation
- Increasing the share of renewable energies:
  - Optimisation of customer generated energy
  - Purchase of electricity from renewable sources



# Increasing Investments Main Focus Wastewater Disposal



#### Conclusion





# To prepare for the future in a context of climate change we are:

- unlocking the full potential of unique Berlin water cycle system through operational optimisation and comprehensive water cycle management by strengthening our efforts on keeping, respectively achieving a good condition of surface waters
- keeping a focus on further energy optimisation
- prioritising future investments in stormwater capacity, water and wastewater treatment capacity and energy optimisation