

MEXICAN WATERS FREE FROM TOXICS.

According to the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, only **42.6%** of the population has **access** to safely managed drinking **water**.

This situates Mexico as the 87th of the 96 countries analyzed.

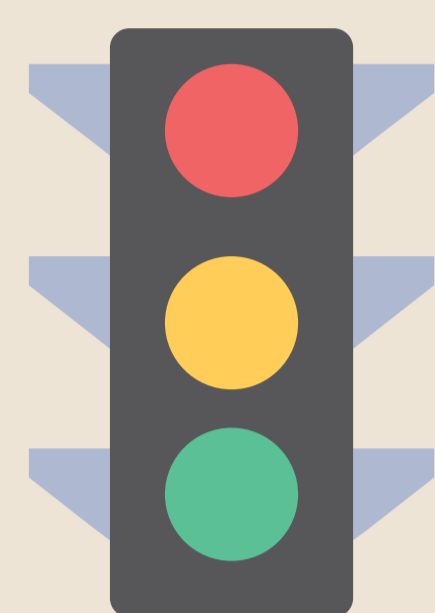
In terms of sanitation, the JMP calculates that just 45.2% of Mexicans have safely-managed services whereby excreta is safely disposed in situ or transported and treated off-site (OMS y UNICEF, 2017).

For sanitation, Mexico is number 60 of 83 countries evaluated.

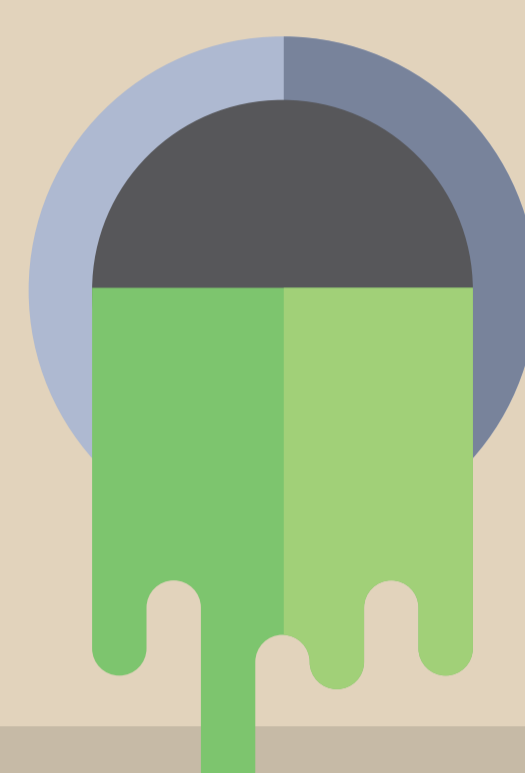
For 2012-2016, The National Water Commission's water quality monitoring network found that 58% of rivers, streams, lakes, lagoons, reservoirs and coastal zones had pollution problems, and assigned them a red or yellow classification in a 'traffic light' system.¹



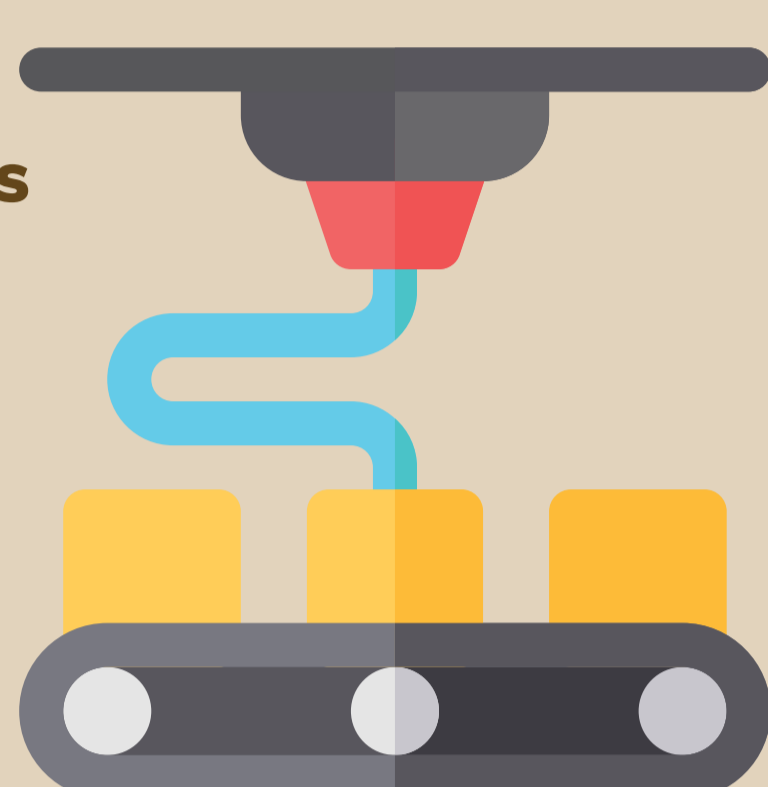
Moves toward a new discharge standard



The current wastewater discharge standard, unchanged for over 20 years, is insufficient and goes unenforced. In early 2018, there was an attempt to modify the current standard, with a proposed NOM-001-SEMARNAT-2017.



In reaction to this move to improve the discharge standard, **industry chambers and associations** expressed their opposition, demonstrating an unwillingness to ensure their emissions do not harm **the environment or human health**.



This proposal includes minor improvements, such as including the parameter of acute toxicity, although at levels that are lax when compared with the standards in countries such as Germany or the United States. The proposal still does not contemplate chemical substances which can cause mutations, birth defects or other serious effects.



What would adequate standards involve?

To protect aquatic ecosystems, human life & health and to restore severely damaged watersheds, we need: Specific standards for each industrial sector, instead of only one discharge standard. International best practice confirms this.³



CONAGUA has very few inspectors, and the situation has worsened in the past 2 years because of budget cuts.

The number of inspections undertaken in the last 20 years – and especially in the last 2 years – is alarmingly low. **At the national level, it would take the CONAGUA 65 years to inspect the total number of users.**

Transparency and access to information are needed, as is the participation of higher education institutions and civil society organizations. The population must have timely access to information on the discharge of pollutants that could affect human health or the environment.



The current standard and even proposed modification are insufficient for Mexico to move towards water security and sustainability. Further action is required to ensure the promotion, respect, and protection of the human right to water and sanitation.



How can I participate?



Ask the authorities to bring a stop to toxic water pollution and the degradation of Mexican waters by approving a **new wastewater discharge standard** that guarantees the protection of aquatic ecosystems and human health.



The responsible authorities are the following: Environment and Natural Resources Ministry (SEMARNAT), Federal Regulatory Improvement Commission (COFEMER), National Consulting Committee on Standardization of Environmental and Natural Resources (COMARNAT)



We invite you to stay up-to-date, to spread the word, and to join the actions to peacefully demand an end to the toxic pollution of Mexican waterways.

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1. <http://files.conagua.gob.mx/transparencia/CalidaddelAgua.pdf>. (como referencia sólo poner lo que aparece resaltado, el resto no) El semáforo rojo corresponde a problemas de contaminación por Demanda Química de Oxígeno (DQO), Demanda Bioquímica de Oxígeno (DBO), Toxicidad o enterococos fecales, mientras el semáforo amarillo corresponde a problemas por coliformes fecales, Escherichia Coli, Sólidos Suspendedos Totales (SST), u oxígeno disuelto.
2. Daños genotóxicos, mutagénicos, teratogénicos, así como impactos ecotoxicológicos y daños al sistema endocrino.
3. En los Estados Unidos existen estándares nacionales para los efluentes de casi 60 categorías de industria, <https://www.epa.gov/eg/industrial-effluent-guidelines>. En Alemania se fijan límites para parámetros específicos de más de 50 categorías de industria, http://www.bmub.bund.de/fileadmin/bmu-import/files/pdfs/allgemein/application/pdf/wastewater_ordinance.pdf. urbano-industrial en torno al río Santiago, Jalisco, México. Cuadernos de Trabajo de la Red WATER-LAT-GOBACIT, Vol. 3, No. 6: 60-94. Disponible en: <http://waterlat.org/WPapers/WPSATCUASPE36.pdf>.