



MINISTERIO
PARA LA TRANSICIÓN ECOLÓGICA
Y EL RETO DEMOGRÁFICO

Desalination in Spain

State of play

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Desalination in Spain → Legal status

- Desalinated water is considered as a non-conventional resource
- It is part of the Hydraulic Public Domain
- It is managed within the general Hydrological Plan, side by side with conventional resources
- Its use has to be registered in the General Water Registry





Desalination in Spain → Capacity and accounting of uses

- Accounting through the follow-up of the River Basin Management Plans.
- Total capacity: 4/5 Million m³/day.
- We produce 50/60% of the total capacity
- Latest updated figure (2019): 508 Million m³ (real figure is higher).





Desalination in Spain → Percentage and uses

- The share of desalinated water (out of the total uses) varies a lot depending on the geographical areas and their specificities (meteorological conditions, availability, status of water bodies/pollution of groundwater...):
 - In Spain, the share is 3-4% of the total uses
 - in the Canary Islands it is 35%, with some islands reaching up to 80-90% (Lanzarote, Fuerteventura)
- Strategic resource for water allocation in areas/sectors with competition for uses and recovery of groundwater systems.





Desalination in Spain → Governance issues

- Insufficient connecting points to convey all the available capacity when and where needed
- Need for better coordination between competent administrations to optimise the available resources
- Lack of incentives as regards operating costs:
 - setting up a tariff system that accounts for the mix of sources of water in a comprehensive manner, so that operating costs are shared (i.e. “Taibilla model” in the Segura River District)