



Water in the European Union

Why does it need protection ?

The importance of water for life and as a component of the global ecosystem is becoming increasingly clear. It is a resource that not only provides basic needs for the human population and is the key to development in particular to generate and sustain wealth through agriculture, commercial fishing, power generation, industry, transport and tourism, but water is vital for all global ecosystems. However, the facts show that we face a global water crisis. At first glance, this does not appear to apply to Europe's water. After all, the continent faces no overall water shortages. However, Europe's water quality and Europe's water management is, in fact, far from satisfactory. Given the numerous, and increasing, pressures on our water resources, it is vital that effective legislative instruments address the problems effectively and help secure these resources for future generations.



Cl. LEFROU

The Water Framework Directive expands the scope of water protection to all waters and sets a clear objectives that "good status" must be achieved for all European waters by 2015 and that sustainable water use is ensured throughout Europe.

Key Facts about the European Water Situation

- 20% of all surface water in the European Union is seriously threatened with pollution.
- Groundwater supplies around 65% of all Europe's drinking water.
- 60% of European cities overexploit their groundwater resources.
- 50% of wetlands have "endangered status" due to groundwater over-exploitation.
- The area of irrigated land in Southern Europe has increased by 20% since 1985.

Implementation of EU Water Framework Directive in Spain, France, and Italy

General WFD principles have been practiced in these 3 countries for years, even decades. The Directive itself however imposes a more strict and coherent framework.

Agriculture will experience the following constraints under the Directive :

- **An obligation for dialogue** with competing water resource uses with the objective of maintaining a healthy state of resources;
- **More rigorous management of irrigation**, particularly regarding ground water usage
- **More rational use of fertilisers and pesticides** with the objective of maintaining ground and surface water quality;
- **Increased financial participation** in water management.

The Directive applies uniformly to all countries of the European Union.

Characteristics specific to Mediterranean areas are likely to make its application more difficult:

- **A climate with contrasting seasons** gives rise to a very irregular hydrological system for fresh surface water ;
- **A significant proportion of karstic ground water** whose characteristics are very different to ground water in porous environments ;
- **Agriculture that is highly dependent on irrigation** (often the dominant water use) ; irrigation needs appear during periods when water resources are least abundant ;
- **A large tourist industry** that consumes a significant amount of water during periods of low water levels ; tourism contributes to water pollution whilst simultaneously increasing demand on high quality water (drinking water, bathing, water sports)
- **Large hydraulic installations** (built to harness irregular water supplies in order to satisfy demand) that are themselves prone to strong seasonal variations.

Claude LEFROU, Institutional Expert



ISIIMM Steering & Scientific Committee

The 2nd Steering Committee and Scientific Committees meetings were held in Montpellier over the 28th and 29th of June. These two days brought together the two committees to discuss project progress, governance and direction following the completion of the first of the four ISIIMM Project phases. Within the steering committee framework, day one addressed cohesion, in-country case studies and key findings and strategic and practical direction moving into phase 2. During day 2, the scientific committee raised the issues to be targeted during ISIIMM phase 2, noting that a special scientific committee meeting would be required in November to elaborate on existing issues and address outstanding ones. Full report on page 3.

Briefly, in this release

- Water Framework Directive
- End Phase 1, Start Phase 2: Steering and Scientific Committee Meetings
- Upcoming Workshops
- Our Mediterranean Partners: UPV and USUJ
- Good reads
- Upcoming conferences

Water Framework Directive

a new, innovative approach



The EU Water Framework Directive is the result of several years of consultations between the Member States on a common integrated water management policy. The Framework Directive:

- Protects all waters - rivers, lakes, coastal waters, and ground waters.
- Sets ambitious objectives to ensure that all waters meet *good status* by 2015.
- Sets up a system of management within river basins that recognises that water systems do not stop at political borders.
- Requires cross border co-operation between countries and all involved parties
- Ensures active participation of all stakeholders, including NGOs and local communities, in water management activities.
- Ensures reduction and control of pollution from all sources like agriculture, industrial activity, and urban areas, etc.
- Requires water pricing policies and ensures that the polluter pays.

water is a fragile resource

One drop of a hazardous substance can pollute thousands of litres of water. Pollution caused today could remain for generations in our groundwater that we want to use for drinking water. Indeed, water resources are affected by many different water uses like agriculture, industry and households. In essence, the Framework Directive aims to prevent pollution at source and sets out a control mechanism to ensure that all pollution sources are managed in a sustainable way. It protects groundwater and sets ambitious objectives for its quality and quantity. For the aquatic ecosystems of our rivers, lakes and coastal waters ambitious ecological objectives are also set. Although much of our ground waters and surface waters are polluted today, they should all reach "good status" by 2015.

using **water** sustainably

Now we know that so many activities affect water, we can understand the importance of conserving water and helping to protect it from pollutants. It is even more important when we realise that demand is continuously increasing. It is up to us therefore to ensure that the Water Framework Directive is implemented effectively to make sure there is enough water for future generations and that the water meets high quality standards. Managing waters sustainably is essential for our life.

*cross-border co-ordination and new **water** solidarity*

Anyone who has visited the large European river basins like the Danube and the Rhine knows that water does not stop at borders. If that is the case, then the best way to manage water is by international co-operation. The EU learned from experience gained in various regions throughout Europe, like the basin of the Rhine, where a long-standing tradition of international cooperation exists. The Water Framework Directive requires that all partners in a given river basin manage their waters in close co-operation. This stipulates that they set up a common River Basin Management Plan with measures to ensure that the ambitious objectives of the Directive will be met within the given deadlines. The Water Framework Directive attempts to stimulate solidarity around water management within river basins.

water is everybody's issue

And just as different countries will have to co-operate to protect water sources, so will several actors from various sectors. As we all use water in our daily lives and in our work (whether in a factory, farm or office), it is important to involve all of us to accomplish the legislation's objectives. That is why the Directive encourages all with an interest to actively participate in water management activities. The more we understand our impacts on water quantity and quality, the more we can help do our part to protect our precious water resources. The Water Framework Directive encourages all citizens to get involved to protect and manage their waters.

*the fair price of **water***

Water is not a commercial product like any other but should be seen rather as a heritage. However, it is important to give water a price since pricing acts as an incentive to encourage more sustainable use and as such, many European countries have been pricing water for years. The Water Framework Directive requires Member States to develop water-pricing policies where all users - agricultural, industrial and households - contribute in an adequate way. The principle of the Directive is that the polluter should pay because at the end of the day, somebody always has to pay the price for pollution. However, the Directive allows countries to provide water services at an affordable price for those in need.

Joint implementation

The way the Water Framework Directive will be implemented is unique. It relies on the participation of all the players concerned. It also provides the European Commission, the Member States, the Candidate Countries and all stakeholders with an unprecedented chance for a new partnership to guide the process and ensure effective and coherent implementation.

Important deadlines of the directive

December 2003

National and regional water laws to be adapted to the Water Framework Directive / River Basin co-operation to be made operational

December 2004

An analysis of pressures and impacts on our waters to be completed including an economic analysis

December 2006

Monitoring programmes to be operational as a basis for water management

December 2008

River Basin Management plans to be presented to the public

December 2009

First River Basin Management Plans to be published

December 2015

Waters to meet "good status"

Steering Committee

strong necessity for a common framework

The June steering committee meeting provided a crucial convergence of the works performed in each partner country over the first year.

With the participation of 12 areas, 7 countries and 4 working languages, ensuring coherence was always going to be a critical task for enabling added value at the Mediterranean level, a key EC measurement. Jerome Woodford (of the ensuring coherence group) identified a strong necessity for a common framework to understand and better share academic and technical vocabulary.

A special focus meeting was held in August 2004 to tackle coherence.

Four key themes were raised from the in-country analyses over the first year:

- *Technology*: irrigation modernisation and water savings;
- *Social*: participatory management and behavioural changes
- *Economic*: economic instruments and water use models
- *Politics and policies*

These themes will be strategically targeted during phase 2.

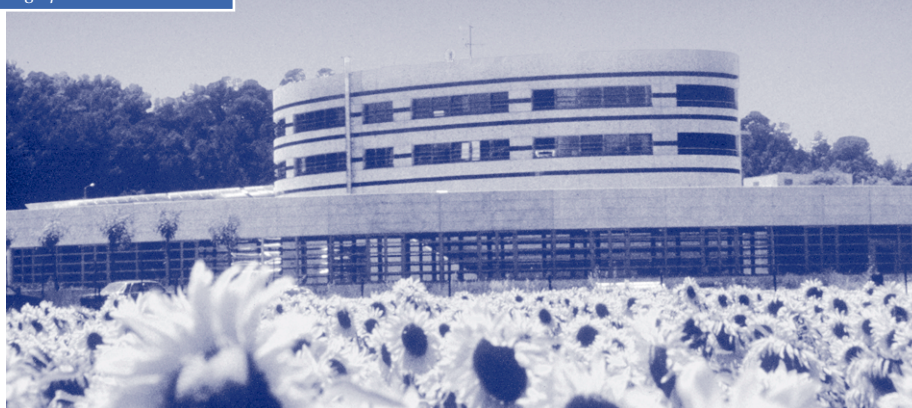
On a more practical level, decisions of the steering committee included organising leaders for themes and introducing mechanisms to increase information exchange.

The Scientific Committee convened over the second day to provide governance on the direction and value of the project substance. The main issues explored related to the perception and valorisation of space. In particular

where is power situated in terms of water management? How can water be a tool for sustainable development in the Mediterranean? It also identified the need for the project to refocus on the support policies for irrigator communities in Mediterranean irrigation development. The questions raised will be further explored during phase 2 of the project.

Full meeting minutes can be found at the ISIIMM website: www.isiimm.agropolis.org

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Upcoming Workshops

J.P. Cheylan



The special session of the ISIIMM Scientific Committee and Scientific Workshop

These two meetings took place in Treviso (Italy), from 14 to 16 October.

Issues to debate include:

- Water and power: how to identify effective actors, how to analyse the basic practices of the different authorities, actors' strategies, stakes and the development of social capital within water power structures.
- Diagnosis and context: how to place *social water management* in its dynamic context, within economic planning, valorisation systems, social, historical, governance, territorial, and linkages with potential related projects.
- Rules and practices: How do we observe them, identify the gaps, the degrees of freedom, the capacities to interpret and to adjust, etc...

This session also aims to make recommendations by river basin and country, regarding the above points.

Water Framework Directive implementation in Spain, France and Italy

This seminar, organised for Valencia (Spain) from 2 to 5 November is aimed at project partners, institutions, irrigation managers, administrators and users

The main objectives of this workshop are:

- to compare the progress in WFD implementation between countries and its associated implications with an emphasis on Mediterranean aspects
- to express the concerns of users and managers
- to identify the consequences of the WFD on Mediterranean agriculture

A specific session will be devoted to the sustainable management of Mediterranean wetlands.

Cairo (Egypt)



Mediterranean Forum for Irrigator Communities

This workshop will be held in Cairo (Egypt) at the beginning of January 2005.

The following issues will be discussed:

- Autonomy or participative management?
- Modernisation and physical and institutional rehabilitation of large irrigation systems, A specific session on sustainable management of Mediterranean deltas (the Nile) will also be held.



Good reads

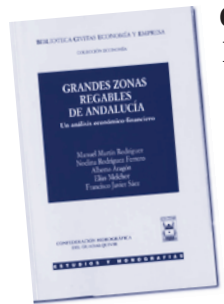


Los Regadíos de Iniciativa Pública en la Cuenca del Guadalquivir: Un Análisis Económico

Noelina Rodríguez Ferrero

Economic analysis of the models of water management in Spain. The first part, covers certain water concepts and presents Spanish water policy during the 20th century. The second part analyses river basin organisation, the Hydrographic Confederation of the Guadalquivir and the different organisations that comprise it. The third and last part (*chapter 4*), constitutes the fundamental contribution of this work: the economic effects induced by water use in the Guadalquivir case study, and an analysis of the causes and consequences of inefficient management.

ISBN: 84-338-2755-3
In Spanish - 23 Euros



Grandes Zonas Regables de Andalucía: Un Análisis Económico- financiero

M. Martín/N. Rodríguez/A.
Aragón/E. Melchor/EJ. Sáez

This book presents an economic analysis of three zones within the scope of the Guadalquivir Hydrographic Confederation, that can be considered representative of the agricultural diversity of the Guadalquivir and the main irrigation works that have existed in the river basin throughout different historical times: the Viar; the Cacín; and the Vegas Bajas.

ISBN: 84-470-1499-1
In Spanish - 32 Euros

The Mediterranean Partners

Universidad Politécnica
de Valencia (UPV)



The coordination of the project in Spain will be carried out from the "Valencian Centre Irrigation Studies" (CVER)

of the Polytechnic University of Valencia. The CVER is a multidisciplinary centre, formed by four research groups about water use in irrigation lands (Economics and Social Sciences: Centre and project responsible. Dr. José Carles, Irrigation Engineering: Responsible. Dr. Teodoro Montalvo, Hydrology: Responsible. Dr. Juan Marco, Relationship water-floor-cultures: Responsible. Dr. J. Vicente Maroto). CVER will work with the Jucar users' association and co-ordinate the studies and participation of Genil watershed users' association in Andalucía.

website
www.upv.es

Unidad Sindical de Usuarios
del Júcar (USUJ)

Acequia Real del Júcar (USUJ) distributes water to some 22.000 Ha of small farms (1,1 Ha on average) in the Jucar basin in central-eastern Spain, producing oranges, other fruit, vegetables and rice. The basin's Hydrological Plan anticipates water use reduction to 100 Hm³ per year, hence raising the urgency for technical and managerial modernisation.

USUJ is leader of a group of six collective irrigation communities (Comunidades de Regantes) that distributes and uses the total water supply from the Alarcon's reservoir (1.100 Hm³ of capacity). These communities are all being pushed to undertake similar modernisation processes.

website
www.acequiarij.es

A new face at ISIIMM

Congratulations to Anita Fassio, the Piave Facilitator in Italy and her baby girl **Emma**, born on 10 September 2004. We are happy to hear that mother and daughter are doing fine and send our best wishes to Anita, Emma and the Fassio family.



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Upcoming conferences

25-26 November 2004
Montpellier (France)

4th International PCSI Seminar
(Programme de recherches Coordonnées sur les Systèmes Irrigués)



21-22 October 2004
Paris (France)

2nd International Workshop on Implementing Economic Analysis in the Water Framework Directive
www.emwis.org/documents/pdf/Paris_211004_call.pdf



9-12 October 2004
Rome (Italy)

2nd Israel-Palestinian International Conference on "Water for Life in the Middle East"



ISIIMM news

(also available in PDF, see ISIIMM website)

"Promoting an integrated and balanced management of water resources by reconciling respect for the environment with economically viable irrigated agriculture"

ISIIMM

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