

DRAFT Mandate proposal

Working Group on "Linking Rural Development with Water Management"

Joint Process Phase II 2007-2009

(this proposal is a draft version still under discussion with Phase I WG members)

Introduction

Progressively, legislations are identifying links through common environmental issues and although their implementation remains still focused on single thematic topics, efforts are being made to increasingly integrate planning and execution. However, implementation and impact management in the field does not yet fully succeed in profiting from a strategic combination of the environmental commitments in the various policies. Hence, planned effects on the sustainable use of the ecosystem might, or could, not be reached as long as a vertical thematic approach is followed. Environmental links between various policy fields, such as water and agricultural management, might be intuitively known but lack real evidence. Shortage of concrete facts makes it more difficult for policy makers to create a common base for discussion and liaise their planning. For the manager on the ground, combined solutions are needed to respond to environmental requirements of various policies and the demands of the public. Understanding is needed on the environmental rules of these interactions, how to manage them and to provide proper feedback to the political level.

Background

This Working Group (WG) is being established as result of the Brindisi Workshops (Sep.2004)¹ parallel to a WG on Groundwater and a WG Water Scarcity and has been operational during a preliminary Phase I of the Joint Process, linking WFD, CAP, enlargement and neighbouring policies within the Mediterranean basin. During the JP Phase I, the WG did not have a formal statute. During Phase II this expected to be solved upon a institutionalization of the JP by the Euro-Mediterranean Water Directors. Being then a part of a formal forum, the JP, the WG will focus on the Mediterranean area and aims at contributing to policy responses related to synergies in environmental concern within WFD, CAP, enlargement and neighbouring Policy, as well as local to regional land and water management policies.

Objectives

The WG aims at

- Fostering technical solutions through knowledge and experience exchange;
- Organizing in-situ testing and verifying, through a number of proposed solutions, of environmental impact and efficiency assessment of relevant policies
- Constituting a bridging between the technical people and the political decision makers by organizing proper feedback mechanisms.

¹ International Workshops on Mediterranean River Basins, 22-24 September 2004, Brindisi, Italy. For information, see website: http://viso.ei.jrc.it/prb_im/index.html

Preliminary sample of 2007-2009 Activities

1. Update structure and management of an electronic forum for knowledge exchange between the WG members and consecutively also with the wider public
 - To catalyze knowledge in view of better solutions
2. Continue and expand the observational network of watershed sites (Med PBs) for testing integrated impact assessment and management strategies. Local partners on voluntary basis undertake case studies and commit collaboration with all WG partners and timely sharing of results.
 - Integrated research work
3. Follow-up of case studies undertaken in Phase I
 - More in-depth quantitative analysis and adapted monitoring systems
4. Provide guidelines on undertaking assessment analysis for compiling adapted programmes of measures in support of watershed based integrated policy for sustainable use of water and agricultural resources
 - To provide efficient guidance for implementing improved agricultural practices and water resources management practices
5. Provide support to Mediterranean wide initiatives through focused information based on case study strategies
6. Organize WG meetings and workshops

Final Output

- Case studies illustrating strategies for policy driven integrated environmental impact assessment and testing of developed methodologies and approaches
- Guidelines for analysis and designing adapted programmes of measures in view of optimizing inter-policy synergies
- Workshop proceedings

Proposed Time table

<i>Time (quarter)</i>	2007	2008	2009
<i>Tasks</i>			
Electronic forum	X		
WG Meeting	X	X	
Workshop		X	X

Membership

This Working Group includes experts in agricultural management, Rural Development experts, water managers and experts in policies from EU and non-EU countries, technical experts in environmental and agricultural sciences and stakeholders. The group is open to all active participants committed to supporting the objectives and activities through concrete contributions.

Organization and Contact Person

Initially the EC-JRC Soil and Waste Unit will activate and coordinate the WG (contact: Michael Cherlet, EC-JRC (Michael.Cherlet@jrc.it)).