



Working Group on Water Monitoring

Draft Mandate

i. Introduction & background

The Joint Water Framework Directive / EU Water Initiative process (JP) aims at developing synergies between the two mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of sound water policies. It was launched in 2004 with 3 ad'hoc working groups (groundwater, water scarcity, Linking rural development with water management) that were developed between 2004 and 2006 (JP Phase I).

At the Euromed water directors conference in November 2006 (Athens), a proposal for a 2nd phase was introduced and accepted to continue the 3 working groups of the 1st phase and develop new ones:

1. Groundwater management: leaders: Greece and the European Commission;
2. Water Scarcity and Drought: leaders: Morocco, France (TBC), MENBO, the European Commission, supported by EMWIS
3. Linking rural development with water management: leader: the European Commission;
4. Waste water reuse: leaders: Malta, the European Commission; supported by EMWIS
5. Shared water resources management: GWP-Med
6. Water monitoring: leader: EMWIS

The reasons for organising a “water monitoring” working group by EMWIS were twofold:

- In 2005 EMWIS conducted a survey on the value of some concepts of the European Union (EU) Water Framework Directive (WFD) for Mediterranean partner countries (MPC). Water Directors as well as basin organisations were surveyed. The two first concepts of interest are the characterization of basins and the monitoring activities. This underlines strong willingness and needs in terms of acquiring a better knowledge on river basins within MPC. That preliminary step is crucial before ongoing the works of planning. Generally, this survey shows a lack of awareness on WFD by MPC, but also a strong interest on the follow up of its implementation in EU Member States;
- The feasibility studies on the enhancement of National Water Information Systems, carried out in 2005 have shown that the water data collection is often a difficulty to get efficient systems. Such systems are the cornerstone for the potential development of a regional water observatory mechanism.

In addition, in its final phase I report, the “Groundwater management” WG highlights the lack of reliable data and recommends to further develop a Mediterranean ground water monitoring network.

ii. Objectives and key subjects

The overall objective of the Working Group is to promote exchange between EU and non EU partners of the Mediterranean region and to identify good practices for the improvement of monitoring networks based on the existing situation and experiences collected within the WFD-implementation process and in the Mediterranean Partner Countries

In particular, the new activity on “Water Monitoring” aims at:

- Reviewing the objectives & requirements of the WFD regarding monitoring and identifying the main issues of relevance for MPC;
- Identifying useful experiences from EU-Member States regarding adjustment & improvement of monitoring systems on technical, organisational and financial aspects based on the set-up of monitoring systems according to the WFD by March 2007;
- Reach an overall better understanding of the current monitoring networks in MPC & to identify the main priorities for improvement;
- Analyse existing monitoring activities focusing on quantity issues in the MPC and EU Member States to support the “water scarcity and drought” working groups of the JP and the CIS-WFD;
- Create the basis for additional related action in the region.

On content, the WFD monitoring requirements implementation provides useful insights on the following aspects of monitoring (while referring to groundwater, surface water and coastal waters¹):

Technical : Dealing with issues of representativeness, frequency, types of parameters, assessment of trends; what new technologies are available and to be used for which objective (investigative, operational, surveillance monitoring, monitoring of protected areas)? A special focus could be put here on biological monitoring;

Organisational : how to analyze and improve an already existing monitoring network, how to develop a strategic, cost-effective approach to improving monitoring networks (choosing representative monitoring points, frequency etc.); how to integrate monitoring information into the design of River Basin Management Plans;

Financial: what are cost-effective solutions when improving monitoring, both through low-cost technical solutions, designing « fit-to purpose » networks.

It will be crucial to have strong links with the **Mediterranean Water Observation Mechanism**. Therein, the “Mediterranean Water Information Partnership” (MEDWIP) will support to reinforcing the capacities of the Mediterranean countries in supporting the organisation of their national water information system (NWIS) and esp. the data production process. In this context, the WG monitoring should focus on the experiences of relevance for this reinforcement based on the experiences made with the WFD implementation and contribute to the MEDWIP in order to avoid overlap.

¹ It needs to be decided at the first working group meeting if coastal waters monitoring are also of relevance for the WG Water Monitoring.

In order to achieve these aims the following general actions would be undertaken (*to be completed*):

- Step 1:
 - Questionnaire on WFD monitoring requirements implementation in EU Countries;
 - Questionnaire on the current monitoring networks and main challenges for MPC;
- Step 2: analysis of best practices of relevance in the Mediterranean.
- Step 4: preparation of recommendations and follow-up actions.
- Step 5: dissemination of results, joint demonstration activities, etc.

The activity is targeted to the EU Member States and the Partner Countries covered by the MED EUWI, the European Commission and stakeholder groups.

iii. Organisation

The activity will be led by EMWIS.
Membership of the Working Group targets to representatives from the EU Member States, MEDA and Balkan countries, International Organisations and stakeholders.
Participation in the Working Group is based on active contribution of the membership to its works.

The activity will be linked to the

- “Groundwater Management” activity (MED EUWI Working Group on Groundwater) under the Mediterranean EUWI/WFD Joint Process, as regards the monitoring of groundwater;
- “Water Scarcity and Drought” activity (MED EUWI Working Group on scarcity & droughts, since there are issue related to water data collection / water monitoring also here.

In addition, the work conducted within the MEDWIP will be closely coordinated with the work of this WG.

Synergies will be also built with the Mediterranean Pilot Basin Network and its shared waters activities.

Webpage of the working group: <http://www.semide.net/topics/watmon>

iv. Expected outcomes and deliverables

The expected deliverables are:

- Report including the description of the current situation, best practices, priorities, recommendations
- Workshop summary reports.

v. Contact persons

For membership application and further information, please contact:

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vi. Working Group Members (to be completed)

	Name	Organization	E-mail
1			
2			

vii. Timeframe (first draft)

Inception meeting	3 July 2007, Madrid
Second meeting	Mid-November 2007 (to be linked with CIS WG Monitoring meeting)
Report to EuroMed Water Directors	November/December 2007
Final meeting	April 2008
Final report	Summer 2008
Final Report to EuroMed Ministerial meeting	End of 2008
Regional Workshop (exchange of information):	linked to an other event focussing on monitoring (to be discussed & identified)