

# **Mandate of the River Basins Network on WFD & Agriculture 2010-2012**

**(Sub-group of the Expert Group on WFD & Agriculture)**

*Practical experiences and knowledge exchange  
in support of the WFD implementation*

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## **Introduction**

The new 2010-2012 work programme for the WFD Common Implementation Strategy confirms agriculture as one of the major priorities to address to achieve the objective of good status of European waters in 2015.

The Water Directors set up an Expert Group on WFD & agriculture, succeeding the former Strategic Steering Group on this issue.

According to the Expert Group coordination meeting of 15 February 2010, the WFD Expert Group on agriculture shall:

- have an overview on the implementation of the WFD in the agricultural sector
- identify obstacles and constraints related to agricultural issues in the context of the WFD
- address the identified obstacles and constraints by developing solutions
- prepare the future by providing an input to the next CAP reform,
- provide a link to farmers' organisations and other interest groups.

The 2010-2012 mandate of the Expert Group on WFD and Agriculture envisages the possibility to set up a technical network of river basins to support its objectives.

At the meeting of the Water Directors in Segovia (Spain) on 27/05/2010, the continuation of the "PRB-AGRI" exercise was endorsed and the Pilot River Basins network on agricultural issues was renamed as River Basins Network on WFD and Agriculture.

## **1. OBJECTIVE OF RIVER BASINS NETWORK , PHASE 2010-2012**

The River Basin network shall support the Expert Group in its work by offering feed-back from the field and ensuring technical support. Moreover, the network's results shall be disseminated to all other river basin managers, stakeholders and to the EG members.

The **overall objective** of the network is to provide practical examples/cases of good practice in RBMP's by accomplishing the activities here below.

### **(i) Evaluation of measures and enhancement of the CAOM**

The network will support the ongoing development and improvement of the Catalogue of Measures and, on this basis, the feeding of a more complete database on WFD agricultural measures. JRC will take the lead on the development of this database that shall be used by any interested party through different adapted tools (web pages, maps, ...).

To achieve these objectives, the network members will evaluate measures used in their respective PoM through sharing of field experiences, case studies, and comparative studies, focussing on:

- Ex-post assessment of cost and effectiveness
- Financial, technical, social and legal aspects of the measures
- Identification of obstacles and constraints related to the implementation of the agricultural measures (e.g. organisation and methods of implementation, acceptance and involvement of stakeholders in process, costs and effects) and how they have been addressed.

Examples of measures to be evaluated are:

- Establishment of wetlands
- Catch crops
- Re-naturation of streams
- Creation of buffer zones
- Water supply and water demand control
- ...

The measures to be evaluated will be selected by the network in co-operation with the Expert Group at a common kick-off meeting and through a selection process.

As mentioned at the EG coordination meeting, synergies between the network and the EG activity should be exploited in order to optimize limited resources. For example, the 2010 assessment by DG ENV of agricultural measures in the RBMP should be fully taken into account.

### **(ii) Evaluation of specific issues in the RBMPs.**

Cases studies and examples regarding specific issues related to RBMP and/or PoM and agriculture are also of great value for the EG and could be provided by the network. An indicative list of issues for the network is:

- Water pricing in agriculture
- Economical analysis (use of exemptions in agriculture)
- Cost Effectiveness Analysis of agricultural measures
- Financing the agricultural measures in the PoM
- CAP link and input to the debate on the CAP reform
- Farmers involvement, strategies and experiences
- Protection zones for drinking water sources
- Use and development of indicators to assess the progress achieved by the PoM in the agricultural sector
- Interplay between the Flood Directive and flood related measures in the PoM of WFD.
- Market instruments for water quotas

Due to the voluntary participation of each member of the network, interest for an issue will vary from one RB to the other. Thus, specific issues will be selected by members of the network and ad hoc working groups for selected issues will be set up.

The final list of issues will be drawn up at the kick-off meeting of the new network in cooperation with the Expert Group.

The outlines will be submitted to the Strategic Coordination Group.

## **2. EXPECTED OUTPUT**

Outputs will be disseminated through the web platform already in place. Expected outputs include:

### **(i) Evaluation of measures:**

Short fact sheets on each measure evaluated to be distributed among RB administrators, the EG members and as direct inputs to the Catalogue of Measures and, thus, to the new database. A preliminary example of a fact sheet template is attached to the mandate.

### **(ii) Evaluation of specific issues in the RBMPs:**

For each issue selected by the network and dealt with in ad hoc working groups the output will be short articles and information sheets to serve as input for the EG in workshops, assessments or seminars held by the CIS/Commission as well as for distribution among RB managers and stakeholders. For example, information on practical cases of water pricing in agriculture could be an input to the next conference on water pricing suggested by the EG in 2011.

The Web platform will be further developed by the JRC and used as the main communication tool between the EG and the network (restricted access section) and must as well be considered as the main instrument for the dissemination of the network's outputs (free access section). It will host the new database on WFD agricultural measures and any relevant tool to access the information from it. Thus all cases and examples of good practices as well as factsheets and articles will be published there

A list of all RB managers will be made in order to inform them about the Web Platform and the results of the network.

In order to facilitate an extended cooperation of the members within different ad hoc working groups, the web platform will also propose dedicated forums.

## **3. STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION**

The network activities will be led by the JRC (IES). A kick off meeting (late summer 2010) with all the members of the new network- and representatives of the Expert Group will be arranged by the JRC (IES). The selection of specific issues, the organisation of ad hoc groups and the set up of a clear timetable with expected deliverables will be considered then.

The outlines will be submitted to the Strategic Coordination Group.

The main work will be carried out in several small working groups involving the River Basins who are interested in the same issues. An extended use of Global Web-Conferencing system will be considered.

The network shall involve a large number of RBs in order to gain representativeness and to broaden the discussion. Therefore DG ENV will ask the Water Directors to invite new RBs and RBs involved in the previous phase to join the new network.

A yearly workshop hosted by a network member will be arranged for all network members to share results among them and to foster mutual learning from good examples. The workshop will also serve as the opportunity for the small ad hoc working groups to come together. A field trip to see and learn the local good examples will be an integral part of the yearly workshop.

The timetable for deliverables will follow the EG mandate when activities are directly linked to it, e.g. cost effectiveness analysis, water pricing, etc (as described for issue ii).

An Expert Group representative will participate to the annual workshops to present the status of the implementation of the EG mandate and to enhance exchanges between the EG and the Network. Moreover, all the EG stakeholders will be invited to attend the annual workshops.

The coordinator of the network will participate to the EG meetings to present the state of play of the network activities and to enhance exchanges between the EG and the Network.

ANNEX 1: Preliminary example of a fact sheet for evaluation of measures:

<b>Evaluation of Measure</b>	
Name of Measure: Name of RB Name of RB authority	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Definition of measure</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Extent of use of measure</b>
	(e.g. all farmers or selected farmers, certain areas etc.?)
<b>3.</b>	<b>Effects of measure</b>
	(What is the observed effect of the measure compared to the intentions? How is the monitoring/evaluation of a) the rate of implementation and b) the effects of the measure ?)
<b>4.</b>	<b>Method of implementation of measure</b>
	(e.g. the extent to which the measure is voluntary or compulsory, implemented at one time or over a period, compensated /not compensated, etc. - How is the implementation of the measure controlled?)
<b>5.</b>	<b>Organisation of implementation</b>
	(e.g. Who is legally in charge? Who administers the implementation, the control etc.?)
<b>6.</b>	<b>Acceptance of farmers and involvement of stakeholders, social aspects</b>
	(e.g. What are the opinion of the farmers on the measure? To which extent have the farmers or other stakeholders been involved in the process of selecting and implementing? What is the level of acceptance by local population? Etc.)
<b>7.</b>	<b>Financial aspects of the measure</b>
	(e.g. what costs have been calculated ? How is the measure financed? Does the cost-efficiency hold during implementation? Any synergy effects of the measure observed that improve cost efficiency?)
<b>8.</b>	<b>Legal aspects</b>
	Are there legal obstacles observed during implementation and how have they been tackled?)

The fact sheet is to be developed by the River Basins involved.