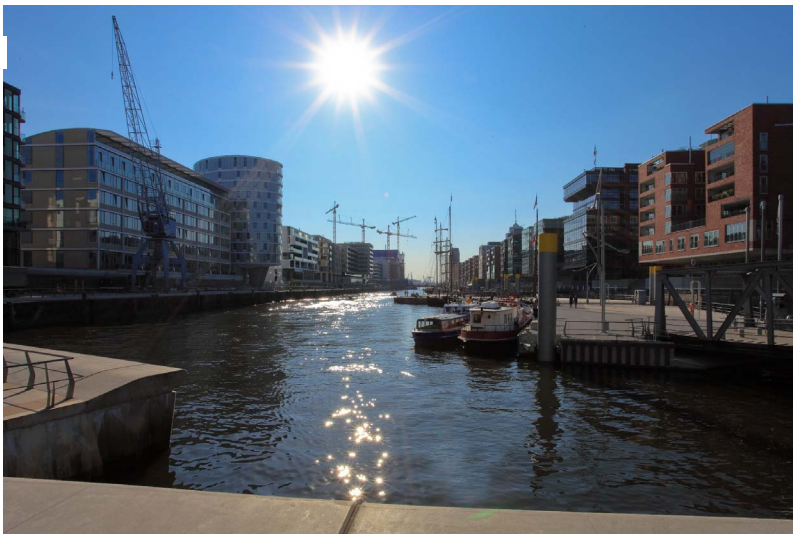


# Managing Water for the City of the Future (Project SWITCH)

***SWITCH is the name of an action research programme focussing on sustainable urban water solutions, implemented and co-funded by the European Union and a cross-disciplinary team of 33 partners from 15 countries around the world. The SWITCH Consortium represents academics, urban planners, water utilities and consultants. This network of researchers and practitioners works directly with civil society through 'learning alliances' in ten global cities. These are platforms which bring city stakeholders (utilities, planners, NGOs, finance departments etc) together with researchers.***



## **Background**

Increasing global change pressures, escalating costs and other risks inherent to conventional urban water management are causing cities to face ever increasing difficulties in efficiently managing scarcer and less reliable water resources. As well, satisfying water uses/services and waste water disposal without creating environmental, social or economic damage is an increasingly difficult challenge.

## **Objectives**

The overall goal of the SWITCH project is to catalyse change towards more sustainable urban water management (UWM) in the "City of the Future". It aims to develop, apply and demonstrate a range of tested scientific, technological and socio-economic solutions and approaches that contribute to the achievement of sustainable and effective UWM schemes in the next 30 to 50 years. The approach is to develop efficient and interactive systems and services (city level) in the context of the city's geographical and ecological setting (river basin level), which are robust, flexible and adjustable to a range of global change pressures (global level). The project is implemented by different combinations of consortium partners, organised in six complementary research themes.

## **Results**

SWITCH has:

- Created "Learning Alliances" of local stakeholders and cross-disciplinary experts in eleven global cities (Accra, Alexandria, Lodz, Tel Aviv, Hamburg, Beijing, Belo Horizonte, Cali, Lima Bogota, Birmingham)
- Initiated city strategic planning processes for integrated urban water management in seven cities including visions for the city, goals, future scenarios and indicators of sustainability
- Implemented fourteen innovative demonstrations across the water cycle including green roofs, rainwater collection, sustainable urban drainage, natural wastewater treatment systems and urine recycling.
- Created the SWITCH Global Training Package and developed guidelines, manuals and policy briefing notes to enable cities around the world to readily make the "SWITCH"
- Formed a global network of scientists and practitioners who are committed to changing the way we manage water in our cities.



## **Impact**

SWITCH is helping to change the way urban water is managed in the city from a fragmented, primarily engineered approach to an integrated, more sustainable approach. This coupled with robust and flexible technologies is allowing cities to do more with less (while having a small resource footprint in terms of energy and materials), to be adaptable and resilient to future conditions, and to create more livable cities of the future.

Each SWITCH city is following its own path to sustainability. In Birmingham, brown roof demonstrations are being upscaled to more areas. In Beijing, rainwater collection tank information is being used to guide further installations and guidelines. Belo Horizonte has implemented a suite of sustainable stormwater demonstrations. Tel Aviv results with soil aquifer treatment are allowing them to use limited land more effectively for treatment. Lima is undertaking a national training programme to upscale effluent reuse across the country. In Bogota, the Governor has supported work to bring slums into urban planning. In Lodz, the eco-hydrology demonstration has catalysed a change in city thinking and has resulted in uptake of a city-wide “blue-green” network for spatial planning.

**For more information, please visit the website: <http://www.switchurbanwater.eu/>**

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