

## **WASAMED Project - Communication and Impact Water savings in Mediterranean Agriculture**

**FP5 - ICA3-CT2002-10013**  
**<http://iamb.wasamed.it/>**

WASAMED: the activities of the project are centred on the implementation of a series of workshops. Each workshop include a session of technical or non-technical presentation by stakeholders, plenary discussion and working groups. Stakeholders are mainly ministries, decision makers (i.e.: water boards), NGOs, farmers (associations). They are partners of the project. Researchers have used the above events to communicate to them and to invited institutions which are not partner of the project. Up to know, four of the six workshops have been implemented. The communication is centred on the integrated management of agricultural water saving in the Mediterranean (considering local and regional level) and it has been gradually (from the first to the fourth workshop) consolidated and contextualised in the frame of sustainable development considering the integration of different technical notions (and disciplines) and the criteria of social, economic, environmental and institutional sustainability, and their inter-linkages too.

Ethical values like equity, solidarity and justice in the benefits shared as a result of water saving and reallocation has been also gradually consolidated in communication with stakeholders. The concept of water allocation efficiency is not anymore treated only by using conventional technical or economic criteria but by incorporating the above ethical values. A common frame of goals and indicators is under discussion among researchers and stakeholders, considering technical, sustainability, governance and, to some extent (more difficult), ethical values for water management.

### **Usability and potential impacts of results (technical and societal impacts, barriers for using results)**

The Turkish stakeholders in south-east Anatolia, Sanliurfa, have entered dialogues on integration and sustainability in the project and these dialogues have been strengthened by links beyond the project's remit. The KISAS association (a farmer association) requested advice from the University of Adana and the GAP administration on developing measurable indicators of sustainability to be used for farm self-assessment. The consultation has been self-financed by KISAS. The involvement of local user associations and their participation in irrigation management has increased and has led to water saving and water use efficiency.

### **Role of local and traditional knowledge with science**

A project work package has the following title: Participatory Water Saving Management and Water Cultural Heritage. Thus the answer is YES for water cultural heritage and for other cultural aspects.

#### *Cultural heritage*

Discussion on cultural heritage has been very interesting and has focused on the importance of using relict information from Roman wells and foggara to improve knowledge of climate variability and improve the capacity of assessing: extreme drought or flood risk and to reconstruct impacts on local ecosystems.

#### *Current traditional culture*

Embedding of local traditional culture - in agriculture - is ensured by the interaction with local farmers. Each INCO partner country has one farmer association as partner in the project. The discussion of water saving technical options are responsive to the cultural concerns of farmers. This is particularly evident when addressing themes such as models of participatory management for water saving, and the use of unconventional waters as water saving options.

### **Take up by managers, policy makers, educators**

Maybe they have been taken up but, to the knowledge of the coordinator, there is no example. In my opinion, take up of ideas by managers or policy makers takes a long time and the project is not yet finished. However, attention is drawn to the fact the one deliverable of the project is the signature of a mutual agreement of understanding among the representatives of the Ministries of the INCO-MED countries to develop cooperation on the base of the criteria of sustainability (and integration)

### **Contribution to capacity building legacy**

Not specifically addressed by the project. Although partners of the project, particularly the Ministries of Agriculture of Southern Mediterranean countries send officers to the premises of the coordinator for courses on "Sustainable Agriculture" and "Sustainable Planning and Research in Water Management".

**Longer-term institutional cooperation**

The partnership existed before the project was funded and the institutions involved as stakeholder were already working together. The project has certainly strengthened the institutional cooperation at the regional level. There has been an improvement of mutual consultation among the partner institutions of the different countries. However, it is difficult to say whether this cooperation will be extended to new institutions.

**Enduring legacy of the project (political, social, economic, scientific, and connections to traditional knowledge)**

I think that the scientific element is still the most enduring legacy. Building new actions in the project is still driven by our scientific goals. However, as mentioned above, we are insisting on recognising political conditions. We draw attention to the importance of project components and objectives to government officials and policy makers. Some work-packages of the project are led by partners in these institutions.

**Local, 'grass-root' experience that would be valuable as case material for the WWF4 discussions?** The Water User Associations, represented by true farmers, are active actors in the project and in the discussions, which it convenes. This is a stimulating mode of interaction.

**Recommendations arising from the experience of having (or not) impact on discourse and action outside science to be taken into account for future research (e.g. FP7)**

The partnership structure of Wasamed was certainly an inspired intuition. However, we should reinforce it with the involvement of people who have a deep involvement in policy making. Wasamed is not structured to properly facilitate such activity. Important stakeholders from outside the agricultural sector should also be included. Although promising the WEB FORUM did not work as it was planned. Few participated and the discussion was poor. We should develop a better and more friendly method of internet communication/dialogue. But there is cultural resistance in the Southern Mediterranean to the public use of this tool.