



MEDITERRANEAN EUWI/WFD JOINT PROCESS



Water monitoring working group meeting

CEDEX

Madrid (Spain), 10 November 2010

CONCLUSIONS

Version dated 2010-11-14

Working Group web site

<http://www.semide.net/topics/watmon>

These Minutes summarize the discussions and results of the Meeting of the Working Group on Water Monitoring of the Joint Process between the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI) and the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). It took place on 10 November 2010, from 09.00 to 17.00, at the CEDEX premises in Madrid, Spain.

The Meeting was chaired by EMWIS (Eric Mino). The meeting was attended by 11 participants representing 8 Euro-Mediterranean countries.

List of participants, the presentations, draft report and the survey synthesis are available at the web-site of the Working Group: <http://www.semide.net/topics/watmon>

Aims and agenda of the meeting

This meeting focus was on finalising the report on the status of water monitoring networks and programmes in Southern Mediterranean countries, including recommendations and discussions on the identification of pilot areas to demonstrate and validate the working-group recommendations in real-life.

Some exchange of experiences also took place around the presentations of country representatives and a twinning project.

The meeting was based on the following topics:

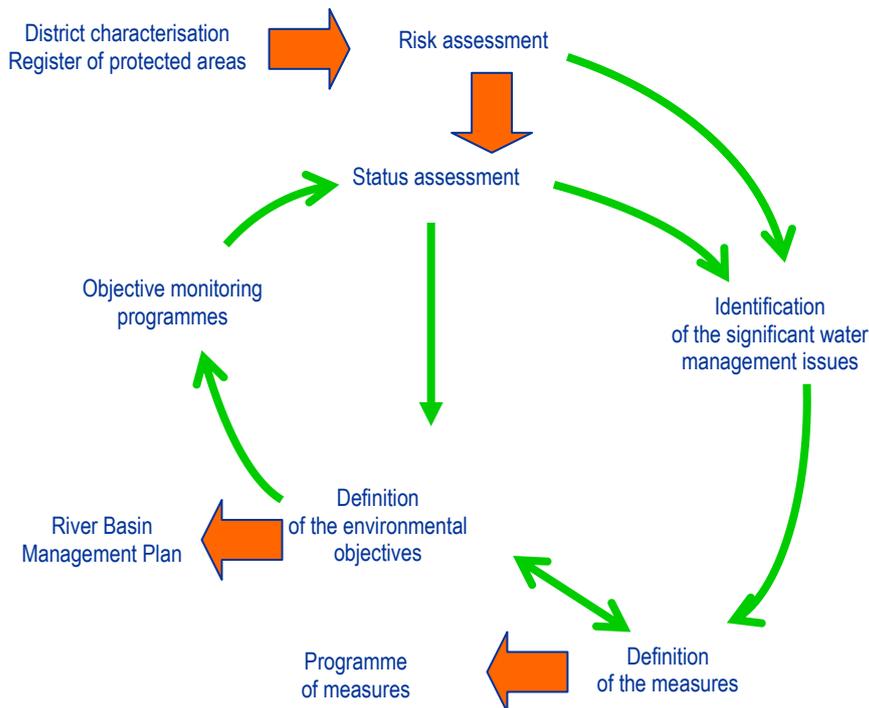
- Reminder on the Med Joint Process and the water monitoring working group and the proposed next phase
- Presentation and discussion of draft working group report
- Examples of water monitoring networks at country level: ground water monitoring in Spain, monitoring optimisation in Tunisia, Palestine and Jordan (Ministry of health)
- Example of a twinning project on water quality management in Egypt
- Discussions on recommendations
- Review of EU programmes able to support pilot activities

Main issues discussed

Based on the presentations given and the related debates, the **main issues raised during the discussion** are highlighted below:

1. As suggested at the last WG meeting, [a revised working group mandate](#) with a focus on water quality issues was introduced. This mandate was prepared as part of the proposed 3rd phase of the Med Joint Process aiming at supporting the preparation of an action plan for implementing the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean –SWM. This strategy includes 2 important objectives for the WG:
 - Ensure good quality public water services, fulfilling public health considerations and preventing further deterioration of water resources quality among other needs;
 - Reduce and prevent water pollution by: expanding the scope of water protection; avoiding overexploitation of water resources, controlling the use of fertilizers and pesticides to appropriate and recommended standards. A medium term goal is to reach a good status for all waters based on a comprehensive monitoring system for water quality and quantity, as well as for ecosystems and biodiversity status.
2. Various comments and suggestions were made on the state of play document presented. Participants were asked to send their written comments to the EMWIS Technical Unit in order to update the survey synthesis and to include them in the final WG report to be circulated to the water directors at the next EMWIS Steering Committee meeting (3rd December 2010). The concept of DPSIR will also be described under the WFD section of the report.
3. A clarification was made on concept of “public and private monitoring” used in the survey. It was agreed to change public by governmental and private by non governmental (e.g. universities/scientific institutes, water utilities). A disclaimer will also be added explaining that the survey is not providing an exhaustive analysis of all the existing monitoring networks but only an overview based on the knowledge of the organisations who replied. The list of organisations who replied will also be added.
4. In terms of common indicators, in a first stage it was suggested focusing on indicators related to monitoring activities rather on the status of water. Such indicators could be the amount of monitoring stations, the amount of parameters analysed and the amount of analysed made compared to the annual ground and surface freshwater resources.
5. As one of the main challenges identified is the coordination between the several institutions managing water monitoring networks for various purposes, a discussion took place on inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms existing in the Southern Med Countries. Such coordination body exists in most of the countries but does not specifically focus on water quality issues and/or does not meet regularly. Nevertheless, these inter-ministerial bodies could provide the legal basis to start the coordination on water quality management.
6. The EU twinning approach has been introduced to the participants as a potential tool to support capacity building and transfer know-how from EU countries to Southern Med Countries: EU public institutions experts work with country experts on local priorities in order to ensure the local ownership of methodologies and tools. This is particularly relevant for the water sector where the knowledge generated by the implementation of the WFD can be transferred to South Med countries. This approach was demonstrated by the presentation of the twinning project on water quality management in Egypt that was carried out by a European team from Italy, Austria and France.
7. While water quality monitoring under the WFD focus on the good ecological status of the water resources, due to the water stress in the Southern Mediterranean countries the focus is on quality monitoring of the resources for targeted water use (optimal use of limited resources available)
8. The main recommendations identified are related to:

- a. Improving the cooperation between institutions involved in water quality monitoring
 - b. Improving water quality data banking as part of National Water Information Systems
 - c. Developing basin characterization (impact and pressure analysis) and water quality management plan involving all the stakeholders (including those making pressure on the resources, e.g. industry, tourism, municipalities, ...)
 - d. Models and simulation tools for decision making
 - e. Defining protected areas
 - f. Including water quality targets on transboundary resources agreements as well as on National Strategic Plan
 - g. Preparing dissemination strategy and public information campaigns on water quality issues
 - h. Developing economic analysis for optimizing monitoring networks
 - i. Capacity building for labs aiming at certification and inter-calibration
9. Water quality monitoring in the context of IWRM was seen as a suitable approach for pilot activities as it requires: institutional coordination, the involvement of stakeholders, data reporting, etc.
10. The [main relevant EU programmes](#) providing funds for potential pilot activities are: the ENPI Cross-boarder Cooperation Med (standard and strategic projects), the ENPI Sustainable Water Management and Depollution of the Mediterranean, and the ENPI National Indicative Programmes (e.g. for twinning activities). The 2 first programmes are suitable for regional projects covering both local activities and exchange of experiences between countries.
11. It was agreed that pilot activities could be carried out in local areas such as



governorates or districts covering a specific water body (i.e. part of a water resource with uniform parameters). It was proposed to use the approach described in the left figure (taken from twinning project for Egypt)

Conclusions and next steps

Based on above discussions, the following conclusions and next steps were identified:

- The working group members will send written comments, suggested modifications and additional contributions to the EMWIS Technical Unit by Friday 19 November.
- The working group members will suggest local areas (e.g. governorates or districts) where pilot projects could take place, identifying the water bodies concerned, related pressures and the key local stakeholders
- The WG state of play report will be finalised and sent to the EMWIS Steering Committee as well as to the European Commission
- The EMWIS Technical Unit will support the preparation of regional projects for the programmes identified during the meeting
- The organisation of the next WG meeting is pending on the launch of a new phase of the Med Joint Process