



Working Group on Water Monitoring

Draft Mandate (revised; Status: 4 July 2007)

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, to be defined (see below).

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. The **focus of the activity is on groundwater monitoring and esp. quantitative aspects**, while quality monitoring will also be considered. Monitoring of surface and coastal waters will also be part of the activity, in case it is linked to groundwater management & monitoring.

In particular and in this context, 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 “groundwater” and “water scarcity and drought” (WS&D) working groups of the JP and the CIS-WFD, and suggest recommendations on monitoring activities linked to the issue of WS&D
- 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 mainly to groundwater, see above):

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)?;

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.

The **specific sub-topics** to be primarily dealt within this mandate will be specified further at a later stage, based on a more specific need evaluation in the MPC as well as a better understanding of the experiences gathered through the WFD-implementation. An already identified sub-topic are the methodologies for cost calculations while assessing different monitoring strategies and specific monitoring network improvements; in addition, an exchange of experiences regarding how to organize monitoring activities in order to identify groundwater risks/problematic trends (e.g. nitrates/pesticides concentrations), thus using “monitoring for prevention” would be valuable.

The experiences made in EU Member States with the old Groundwater Directive as well discussions regarding the implementation of the new Groundwater Directive are also relevant for the JP-WG on Water Monitoring.

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 on groundwater monitoring and contribute to the MEDWIP in order to avoid overlap.

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

- Step 1: Fact-finding in MPC through questionnaires and in Med-EU Member States through an analysis of implemented monitoring programmes
- Step 2: analysis of EU guidance documents (mainly N°15 “groundwater monitoring” and 16 “Groundwater in Drinking Water Protected Areas”) to identify the best practices of relevance, and adaptations required for 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 is currently led by EMWIS, while additionally other Med countries (e.g one Med EU Member State and one MPC) for sharing the lead task are sought.

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:

- WFD-CIS working group on Groundwater and chemical monitoring (WG 3);
- “Groundwater Management” activity (MED EUWI Working Group on Groundwater) under the Mediterranean EUWI/WFD Joint Process;
- “Water Scarcity and Drought” activity (MED EUWI Working Group on scarcity & droughts, since there are issue related to water data collection / groundwater 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

September 2007 (tbc if possible; would then be linked with CIS WG Monitoring meeting), otherwise Mid-November

Report to EuroMed Water Directors

December 2007

Final meeting

March 2008

Final report

Summer 2008

Final Report to EuroMed Water Directors

End of 2008

Regional Workshop (exchange of information):

timing to be clarified; linked to an other event focussing on monitoring