

Activity Sheet

Working Group on "Linking Rural Development with Water Management"

Introduction

This Working Group (WG) is being established as result of the Brindisi Workshops (Sep.2004)¹ parallel to a WG on Groundwater and a WG Water Scarcity and will work in close collaboration with these. The members of the Discussion Group in Brindisi are members of this WG, other members can be proposed. No decision has been taken on the statutory nature of the WG. At this stage the WG focuses on the Mediterranean area.

Environmental interactions of both agriculture and water practices are completely interlinked. For the manager on the ground, combined solutions are needed to respond to environmental requirements of various policies and the demands of the public. Understanding is needed on the environmental rules of these interactions, how to manage them and provide proper feedback to the political level.

Objectives

The WG aims at

- Fostering technical solutions through knowledge and experience exchange;
- In-situ testing and verifying, through a number of proposed solutions, of environmental impact and efficiency of relevant policies
- Constituting a bridging between the technical people and the political decision makers by organizing proper feedback mechanisms.

Tasks and expected outcomes

1. Create an electronic forum for knowledge exchange between the WG members and consecutively also with the wider public
 - Catalyzing knowledge in view of better solutions
2. Compile an inventory of relevant on-going actions/projects
 - State-of-the-art definition and build on complementarities between activities
3. Draft a strategy paper on needs or possibilities for watershed based integrated impact assessment and sustainable use of agriculture land, specifically related to the Mediterranean area
 - Efficient guidance for collaborative work
4. Create a network of observational sites for case studies to be organized in collaboration with local partners and define the framework for coordinated research
 - Integrated research work
5. Organize Network and WG meetings
6. Organize a workshop on advancement of state-of-the-art of technical work and update/link on policy needs
 - Guiding of further work and providing feedback to the political level

¹ For info on the Brindisi meeting, see website: http://viso.ei.jrc.it/prb_im/index.html

Proposed Time table

<i>Time (quarter)</i>	2005			
<i>Tasks</i>	1	2	3	4
Electronic forum	X			
Inventory	X			
Strategy paper		X	X	
Network creation	X	X		
WG Meeting		X		
Workshop				X

Contact Persons

Carlos Pais, Portugal Ministry of Agriculture
Michael Cherlet, EC-JRC

Organization

Initially the EC-JRC Soil and Waste Unit will activate and coordinate the WG. Further on, the WG could function under the Lead provided by Portugal (TBD!). It would be working in support to the European Commission on Rural Development issues.

It would contribute to the objectives of the Working Group on Agriculture under the Common Implementation strategy (CIS) of the WFD.

Participation from Southern Mediterranean countries Frameworks is re-enforced through initiatives such as the umbrella of the MEd-EUWI initiative and/or proximity policies.