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*How to achieve sustainable water ecosystems management:
connecting research, people and policy makers in Europe*

CONTACTS

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Funded by the European Commission 7th Framework Programme

Project website: www.aware-eu.net

Project duration: June 2009 - November 2011

WHY THIS PROJECT

Water is connected to a lot of aspects in life and has large impacts on people's everyday lives. **The risk of deterioration of the coastal waters** is today a reality in several European and worldwide seas.

This is a consequence of the discharge of fertilisers, pesticides and other substances into the water, from agricultural, industrial and urban activities.

Properly managed, European coastal waters can continue to be a source of wealth and pleasure for populations. We need **sustainable water** management for the increasing coastal population, but also to prepare for the manifold consequences of climate change in the 21st century.

RAISE PEOPLE'S AWARENESS AND COOPERATION

AWARE's focus is on human-caused deterioration of coastal water ecosystems. The project engages scientists, policy makers and the public in jointly creating and analysing scenarios for improved water management in coastal areas. AWARE's participatory approach develops further the concept of integrated adaptive ecosystem management, by creating active roles for public participation.

The project implements this approach in three case studies: the coastal waters of the Gulf of Riga (Estonia and Latvia), the Seine, Somme, and Scheldt river basins and the Southern North Sea coastal zone (France and Belgium), and the Po river Delta and Goro lagoon (Italy).



WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- To design and prepare the pilot experiments of participatory scenario-building.
- To perform three case studies of participatory-scenario building in different coastal regions of Europe.
- To make an evaluation and assessment of the pilot case studies and of the proposed approach.
- To foster networking between science institutions, policy authorities and stakeholders in the case study areas and at EU level, and disseminate the approach elsewhere in Europe.

THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The project will select 30 citizens living in the 3 case studies areas, the citizens panel will meet to discuss sustainable water issues from the perspective of their everyday life experience and the existing body of EU research which is relevant in the 3 case study areas.

The citizen's conference gives a panel of European citizens the opportunity to: meet with scientists and policy makers, become aware of the key research and policy questions concerning the sustainable management of coastal waters, and discuss to the future options available to maintain or achieve a good ecological status of the water environment, and a better quality of life for the people living nearby or using the water ecosystem.

The citizens will work together, assisted by professional facilitators and using the information on relevant research findings provided by experts, meeting three times at the European level – in two preparatory workshops and in a final European Citizens Conference – and two times in the local case study areas.

The aim of the conference will be to communicate and discuss at the higher EU level the results of the pilot integrated assessment approaches undertaken in the AWARE case studies.

The final output will take the form of general lessons learned and recommendations for the dissemination of the approach to connect science work and policy development by means of a greater involvement of the public.

