

## IWRM-NET Newsletter - November 07

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**Welcome to IWRM-NET's first newsletter. We hope it will give you an insight into the aims and activities of our network for water researchers and policy makers as well as introducing the team.**

*Peter Allen-Williams,  
Environment Agency, UK  
Editor and leader - dissemination  
[Peter.allen-williams@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.allen-williams@environment-agency.gov.uk)*



### Introducing IWRM-NET



### So what's it all about?

IWRM-NET (2006-2010) is an ERA-NET project funded by the European Commission (EC). IWRM-NET's concern is Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) research. ERA-NET is short for European Research Area Network, a specific kind of project funded by the EC. The EC's aim is to support European research managers in co-ordinating their efforts and implementing trans-national and regional research activities together. While research is one output from ERA-NET projects, the EC's funding is used to create the networks of research managers and not for the research itself.

### ***IWRM-NET: a developing community***

IWRM-NET started with 17 partners from 14 Member states. In June, the **Comunidad de Madrid** joined us and is taking part in our first call for research proposals. IWRM-NET is open to new partners who manage water research. Through its website, IWRM-NET provides a forum where research issues for all types of stakeholders, water managers, researchers, NGO's, water

### **Call for trans-national research proposals:**

We are very pleased to announce the launch of our first IWRM-NET joint research call for proposals on:

- **Hydrological and morphological pressures and impacts on ecological status, and**
- **Water governance.**

See p5 or [www.iwrm-net.eu](http://www.iwrm-net.eu)

policy makers, individuals, etc, can be discussed. Our aim is to get a better insight of the European IWRM issues addressed by stakeholders.

**What comes next?**

Our **first joint call** for research proposals was launched on November 12<sup>th</sup>. Research proposals must be submitted by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008. Following evaluation, research projects will be chosen in May 2008 and research should start in September next year for a period of 18-24 months. But this is not all - we are already preparing a **second call** to be launched in 2010. The process of identification and validation of research needs is planned for later next year, with a call for September 2009, with research project selection for January 2010, allowing research to begin in May 2010.

**Want to join IWRM-NET?**

For information contact: [iwrn-net@oieaufr](mailto:iwrn-net@oieaufr)  
or visit our website – <http://www.iwrn-net.eu>

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**Building the links**

**IWRM-Net's Knowledge Management tool.**

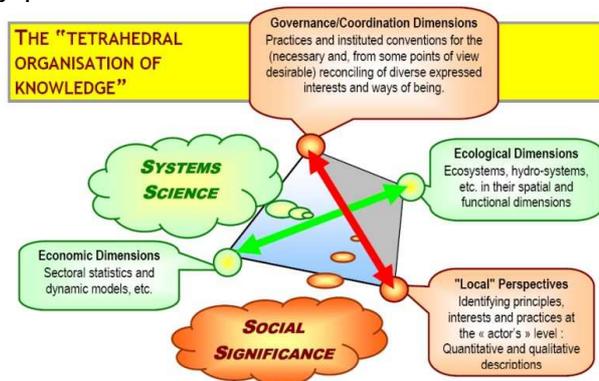
*If we understand national and regional Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) research in other countries better, can we improve our own IWRM research programmes?*

*How can we understand the changes in the European field of water as the Water Framework Directive (WFD) is implemented?*

The IWRM-NET Knowledge Management tool (KM tool), developed by the International Office for Water, will help IWRM-NET partners answer these questions. The KM tool is gathering and analysing facts about regional and national research programmes related to IWRM. So far, we have implemented a structured data base (of more than 150 research programmes) with WFD and IWRM fields providing a common

language and references understood by all the partners.

Development of further KM Tool functionalities is in progress. The first version will be available late in 2007. It will allow cross-referenced searches (i.e. subjects, issues, titles, budgets, geographical areas...) which will highlight common areas of research in Europe as well as research gaps.



The eventual aim of the KM Tool is to become an open source of knowledge on IWRM research and policy issues. Thanks to the IWRM-NET community (see <http://www.iwrn-net.org/>), the KM Tool will progressively become a shared area where programmes managers, policy makers, researchers, NGO can access and provide information on research programmes related to IWRM.



Natacha Amorsi,  
OIEAU, FR  
IWRM-NET coordinator  
[n.amorsi@oieau.fr](mailto:n.amorsi@oieau.fr)

**Adding value to the water community and attracting new partners**

IWRM-NET is open to new partners interested in trans-national collaboration and who fund relevant research programmes. IWRM-NET products and activities are valuable and have attracted a new partner

already. However, the partners wish to encourage research programmers to join IWRM-Net. To do this “liaison activities” are carried out. These aim to:

- bring in information from other networks - research, water management, policy etc, to keep our work up-to-date and relevant. For example, research questions from the EurAqua network were analysed to fine tune the joint call research topics.
- engage in discussions with other networks to elicit needs, co-ordinate and strengthen the networking position of IWRM-NET. An example is the discussions held between representatives of several ERANETs on closer collaboration.
- improve the outputs of IWRM-net to be of additional added value

The “IWRM community” section of the [website](#) identifies relevant networks and projects. If you would like to see other networks included, do not hesitate to sent relevant information to [michiel.blind@rws.nl](mailto:michiel.blind@rws.nl)

Our networking activities ultimately aim attract new partners to IWRM-NET and result in IWRM-NET continuing beyond 2010.



*Michiel Blind,  
Centre for Water  
Management, NL,  
Leader – liaison work  
[michiel.blind@rws.nl](mailto:michiel.blind@rws.nl)*

### ***IWRM research needs in Europe:***

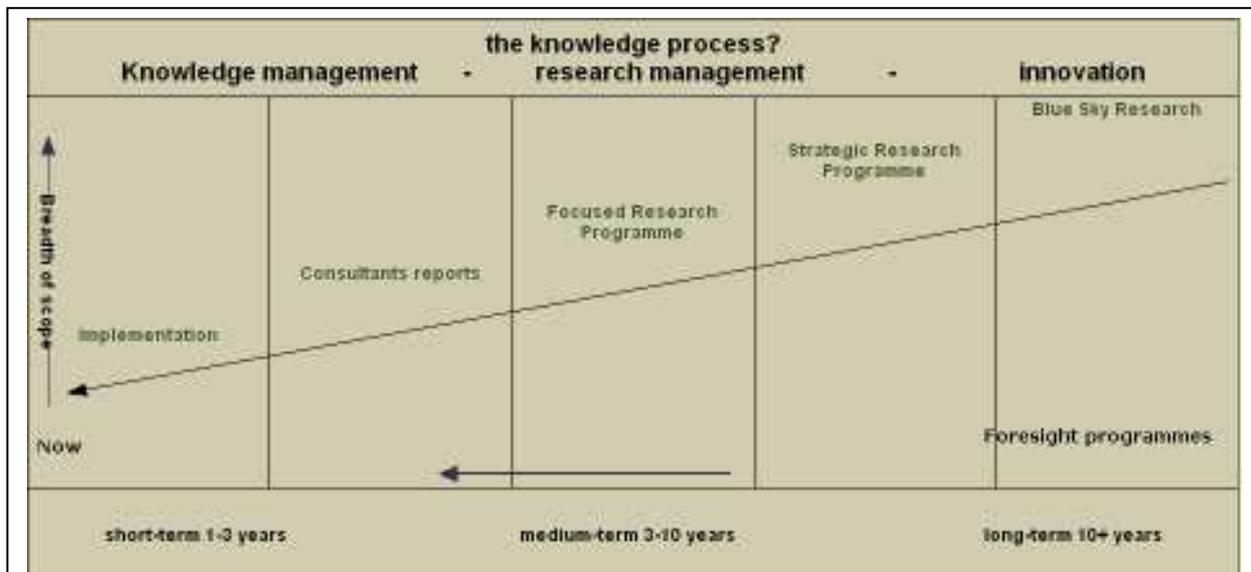
IWRM-NET will cover as wide a timescale as possible from present (short and medium term) to future (long term) research needs. The current focus for most partners is the WFD, but our aim is to start thinking longer-term to facilitate connections between present and future programmes. IWRM-NET will record and analyse the links in the chain of research from the top right hand corner to the bottom left in the diagram below - from longer to shorter term.

Short or long-term research needs are defined by the timescale in which the knowledge produced by the proposed research is likely to be implemented into future working practices. So short and medium term research aims to address water management issues in either 3-5 years or 5-10 years. Long term research needs should anticipate water management issues that may arise in 10-20 years, or more.

Later, short and longer term research needs will be integrated and a joint workshop in early 2009 will present findings of the analysis, summarise research needs and develop recommendations for both long and short-term research.

### ***Investigating shorter term research needs***

The Scotland & Northern Ireland Forum for



Environmental Research (SNIFFER) leads work to investigate present integrated water resource management (IWRM) research needs among partners and in the wider European community. The first analysis of short and medium term research needs led to some clear conclusions about where the current focus across Europe lies. A report mapping current research programmes is now available (on request).

Further analysis will allow IWRM-NET to highlight areas where joint activities can add value to national efforts. This will lead to recommendations for joint calls for research. Changes in European policy, commencement of important projects and other significant events in short-medium term R&D programmes will also be taken into account.

#### **Methods for identifying research needs**

Alongside the work to develop research needs, SNIFFER is investigating methods used to identify research needs. IWRM-Net aims to highlight common processes across Europe and to define where differences in practices occur. A report will provide guidance on “good practice” in R&D identification and assessment processes.

Currently most countries use “expert opinion” to assess needs, usually by holding meetings or workshops with the invited participants. These opinions, used as a basis for discussions on where to spend research money, But are arguably subjective. The way information is recorded, stored and used to identify research needs will be analysed to promote methods that can be used to manage research programmes and knowledge objectively across a wide range of scales from local to national level.

For more information or to provide comments please contact



*Stephen Midgley,  
SNIFFER, UK,  
Leader - short term  
research needs  
[Stephen@sniffer.org.uk](mailto:Stephen@sniffer.org.uk)*

#### **Horizon Scanning and use of Scenarios**

Work led by the French Ministry for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Spatial Planning (MEDAD) will help managers in long term strategic needs for integrated water resources management beyond WFD 2015 implementation requirements.

Strategic research themes must be identified today to start research projects in 2009 if scientific evidence is to be available for decision makers within 10 years and beyond. So future research needs are often the *non intuitive* scientific questions that will become *obvious* after 2015.

To look beyond current short and medium-term research needs we have concepts such as foresight and horizon scanning. These processes allow us to scope ideas and issues to be developed now, so that our knowledge improves in time to answer the questions that will arise in the future.

To identify long-term research needs, a methodology based in a collaborative process of gathering foresight specialists and water managers is being used. This process started with a methodology workshop in June 2007 and is being carried on by working groups who will choose the most relevant methodologies to identify future research needs and start the thinking about the research issues for future water management. The main issues will be delivered through a workshop to be organized in April 2008.

For more information please contact

*Laetitia Citeau, OIEAU or  
Xavier Lafon, MEDAD, FR  
Leaders - long term research needs  
[l.citeau@oieau.fr](mailto:l.citeau@oieau.fr) [Xavier.LAFON@ecologie.gouv.fr](mailto:Xavier.LAFON@ecologie.gouv.fr)*



## ***The IWRM-NET Joint Call***

One IWRM-Net aim is to plan, prepare and implement sustainable European trans-national research related to needs identified by IWRM.Net. Therefore we will be inviting proposals for research that brings together scientific and management disciplines to deliver new approaches to managing water sustainably.

Our first common call for proposals will be published between November 2007 and January 2008. The focus for this first call is applied research to support development of the 2015 river basin plans. IWRM-Net wishes to develop a series of case studies, which include field testing and application that can be used by river basin managers across Europe. Specific research topics are:

- **Hydrological and morphological pressures and impacts on ecological status, and**
- **Water governance**

The first call's research period will be for a maximum of 24 months between 2008 and 2010.

Within this call we also consider longer term issues, such as climate change and start building links with longer-term research and knowledge management processes (e.g. foresight and horizon scanning).

All information created by IWRM-Net research

will be disseminated to relevant audiences, such as river basin managers, in the most effective ways possible. By improving knowledge transfer amongst stakeholders in IWRM, the IWRM network will enable partners to develop synergies between research needs and policy, and promote inter-disciplinary activities in IWRM across Europe.

In this call, the funding organisations involved will primarily fund their own national applicants collaborating in the joint research projects under national funding rules. Applicants from other countries may join by providing their own financial base or may be supported by one of the partners e.g. via subcontracts, to allow essential contributions to the overall project.

All information concerning the call will be found at <http://www.iwrM-net.eu> and at the national websites of the funding organisations.

*Irene Huber, PTKA, DE,  
Leader - trans-national research calls,  
[irene.huber@ptka.fzk.de](mailto:irene.huber@ptka.fzk.de)*



### ***Want to find out more about European water management and research?***

Use the links from our [website](#) as an easy way to get to other relevant websites

If you provide similar information and would like us to make a link to your webpage, please contact;

*[Michiel Blind](#), Centre for Water Management, NL, Leader – liaison work*

**Call for trans-national research proposals:**

We are very pleased to announce the launch of the first IWRM-NET joint research call for proposals on:

**Hydro-morphological pressures and impacts on ecological status**

and

**Water governance.**

See [www.iwrM-net.eu](http://www.iwrM-net.eu)  
or contact [Irene Huber](#)

**How can you get involved?**

Here are some events planned by IWRM-NET

Year	Month	Activity
2007	Nov - Dec	<b>First joint call launched</b>
2008	28 Feb 08 May/June June -Oct Sept	<b>Deadline for receiving joint call proposals</b> <b>First call projects announced</b> Regional workshops (SW,SE & NE Europe) <b>First call research starts (to end 2010)</b>
2009	February ?	<b>IWRM-NET Mid-term conference</b>
2010	January December ?	Provisional deadline for second joint call proposals <b>IWRM-NET Final Conference – Lisbon TBC</b>

