

IWRM-Net Newsletter 3 February 2009

Welcome to this third newsletter of IWRM-Net, the network for managers who fund Integrated Water Resource Management research in Europe.

This newsletter is coming to you as we prepare our mid-project event - Bridging the Sci-Pol gap - in Brussels 11-12 February 2009. A conference/workshop in which we will find out about the ways that research managers around Europe are working with policy manager colleagues to ensure that the water research they fund is relevant and gets used by the policy staff.

The conference is one of the various ways of furthering IWRM-Net's overall aim of improving long-term co-ordination of national and regional Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) research programmes across Europe.

In June 2009 the network will launch its second call for research about Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM). Please read more about it in this newsletter.



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1

Contents

IWRM-Net organizes a second Trans-European conference for national water research managers, policy makers and researchers in February 2009. Page 2

In search of water knowledge... Use the new quick and flexible Knowledge Management Tool developed by IWRM-Net. Page 3

What research do you need? Take part in the dialogue. Report from the ongoing process to identify short term research needs in Europe. Page 3

Second IWRM-Net call for research in June 2009. IWRM-Net partners will launch a second call to fund trans-national research projects. You are all invited to give your response on the identified research topics. Page 4

Collaboration between water related ERA nets. Initiatives taken for future collaboration. Page 4

Water projects filling the gaps of knowledge in Europe. Read about the four projects funded by IWRM-Net first call. Page 5-7

New science to policy activity launched by the Common Implementation Strategy, CIS. Page 8

Future IWRM-Net activities. Page 8



1

Bridging the Sci-Pol gap?

IWRM-Net's Second Trans-European Water Research Management Conference in Brussels - 11/12 February 2009

With a mixture of researchers, research managers and policy makers from both Europe and the rest of the world registered for this event, we can expect illuminating presentations on the first day and lively discussions in the working groups planned for the second day.

We will also learn more about the research projects funded by IWRM-Net (FORECASTER, I-FIVE, KNAC, RIPFLOW) and how they plan to transfer the results of their work to the relevant audiences. We will also have many enjoyable opportunities to build the relationships essential to any network of professionals.

Speakers from the EU and national research programmes will be discussing water research and how to put it into operational practice for the European Water Framework Directive.

More information and output from the conference will be found at:
www.iwrM-net.eu

WEDNESDAY 11TH FEBRUARY University Foundation Club, 11 Rue D'Egmont, Brussels 1000

1300hrs **WELCOME**
(lunch from 1215hrs)

Session 1. THE SCIENCE POLICY INTERFACE

Presentations

KEYNOTE – “Making better use of water research” Phillipe Quevauviller – DG Research

- Developing water research programmes in Member States, contrasting experiences of water research managers in UK, Germany and Spain
- Putting educational concepts into practice – a practitioner turned academic's experience
- the French water and territories research programme experience
- Plenary sessions

Session 2. IWRM RESEARCH - PRESENT AND FUTURE

Presentations

1. Current research projects funded by IWRM-Net
 - **FORECASTER**
 - **I-FIVE**
 - **KNAC**
 - **RIPFLOW**
2. Developing **IWRM** research needs for Europe

DINNER – UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION CLUB

0900hrs **THURSDAY 12TH FEBRUARY**

Parallel Working Groups

- Improving Science/Policy communications;
- Towards an European IWRM research agenda;

PLENARY

1230hrs **CLOSE** (buffet lunch)

In search of water knowledge...

A new quick and flexible Knowledge Management Tool that allows you to find research programmes and projects based on water issues all over Europe.



With so much information out on the internet you have to come up with something good to keep people interested. To mix metaphors, “3 clicks and you’re out” sums up the average surfer’s desire for quick information, and this is what the IWRM-Net Knowledge Management Tool provides - a quick and flexible way of finding current and completed research programmes and projects related to specific water issues.

Following an update of the IWRM-Net website (www.iwrM-net.eu) to create ‘Community’ web-pages you can find the research needs identified in workshops organised by IWRM-Net alongside the knowledge management tool. With these two aspects side by side you can now reflect upon and comment on the research needs as well as looking at what research is already completed, based on a keywords search.

For more information please visit: www.iwrM-net.eu.



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What research do you need?

Workshops about short term research needs were arranged in 2008 to identify the most important knowledge gaps and research needs in various parts of Europe.

This series of workshops around Europe explored current water research needs on a regional basis.

In workshops held across Europe from Valencia to Stockholm, groups of delegates considered both regional and pan-European issues, coming up with lists of research questions. The process involved a brainstorming session in small groups followed by a prioritisation exercise and refining of the questions.

You are welcome to look at, comment and add to our results in the ‘Community’ section of the IWRM-net website www.iwrM-net.eu/community. IWRM-Net believes in a transparent process and welcomes comments on the topics identified or suggestions to update, refine and merge them to create high quality research questions!

The on-line process will be moderated by members of IWRM-Net and we hope that through this web forum we will be setting up an ongoing process to create a research strategy that will feed directly into the joint calls or joint programming between IWRM-Net partners.

Through the Forum’s links to the Knowledge Management Tool, IWRM-Net also aims to provide you with updates on what research has already been completed so that you can share results across Europe and find where the latest knowledge for water management is being developed.

Please get involved and send us your comments!



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Second IWRM-net call for research in June 2009

We would like to announce the 2nd IWRM-Net Call for trans-national research projects scheduled for June 15 - October 15, 2009.

A scientific specification will be derived from our IWRM-Net Research Agenda which, in February, will be subject to an European-wide survey and verification by scientists, funders, stakeholders and policy makers to support transparency and relevance of our efforts.

Since this 2nd joint Call on Integrated Water Resource Management and the Water Framework Directive related topics will also be open for European funding organisations outside IWRM-Net, you may express your interest to the Call Secretariat (iwrM-net@jptka.fzk.de).

As soon as the final scientific specification has been completed, we will inform you about its topics, the general principles and procedures. Alternatively, you might consider joining our mid term event in Brussels, February 11/12, 2009, where you can discuss the potential content and start building the relationships required for successful trans-national research.

Irene Huber, PTKA, DE, or Daniela Past,
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Collaboration between water related ERA nets

IWRM-Net supports sharing of information and collaboration between the water related ERA-nets in Europe. Several initiatives have been initiated by IWRM during 2008.

IWRM-Net is not the only ERA-net involved in fresh-water management in Europe. CRUE ERA-net is active in flood risk management (<http://www.crue-eranet.net>). SPLASH! supports research related to the EU water initiative (<http://www.euwi-era.net>). The ERA-net SNOWMAN works on "Sustainable management of soil and groundwater under the pressure of soil pollution and soil contamination". CIRCLE deals with Climate impact analysis and adaptation (<http://www.circle-era.net>). Finally, BIODIVERSA aims to improve co-ordination of environmental research in Europe.

Obviously IWRM issues will appear on many other ERA-net's agendas. Similarly, topics identified in IWRM-Net are relevant to these ERA-nets. Other drivers for collaboration between the afore-mentioned ERA-nets are a need to share information on research programmes and research programming efficiently, the fact that there are many partners active in more than one ERA-net and also the need to look to the future: How can we sustain the networks created by ERA-nets?

IWRM-Net initiated discussions on how collaborating now, and in the future, that have resulted in sharing information and jointly organizing a successful side-event at the Stockholm Water Week. Today, some ERA-Nets are working to interlink their information resources. Finally, as a result of this year's activities, some ERA-nets are exploring a joint future beyond their contractual lifetimes.

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Water projects filling the knowledge gaps in Europe

In June 2008 IWRM-Net agreed funding for four research projects. The projects will provide valuable information for the water management community in Europe.

FORECASTER – aims to better understand better the effects of hydromorphological changes on riverine eco-systems and fish populations to enable targeted rehabilitation actions. The research consortium includes The United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain and Romania.

KNAC - is about analysing knowledge arrangements underlying current management capacities using the example of hydro-morphological restructuring. The research consortium includes Germany, The Netherlands and Switzerland.

I-FIVE – is comparing the effectiveness of innovative institutional approaches to the implementation of the European Water Framework Directive. The research consortium includes France, Germany and The Netherlands.

RIPFLOW - is developing a flexible dynamic model of riparian habitats and vegetation in permanent and impermanent rivers with case studies. A research consortium from Austria, Portugal and Spain.

Read more about the projects below.



FORECASTER - Facilitating the application of Output from Research and CAse Studies on Ecological Responses to hydro-hydro-morphological degradation and rehabilitation.

Recent IPCC climate change predictions suggest dramatic changes will occur in the functioning of running waters affecting the ecological services provided by them to society. The use of streams and rivers is likely to change. Thus, assessing research output (both national, European and international) and case studies on the ecological effects of hydrological and morphological degradation and the positioning of hydromorphology in river rehabilitation strategies is an essential component in adapting to the required shift in management paradigm. This is the focus of FORECASTER.

These aspects are national issues as well as being transferable to other European countries to determine the programmes of measures required to bring fresh-water bodies to good ecological status or potential under the European Water Framework Directive. The project will link science with practical implementation of robust, cost efficient rehabilitation strategies for improving rivers and standing waters. The focus will be on rivers and fish, but invertebrates and lakes will also be addressed. Where appropriate, results will be linked to socio-economic functions, since they constrain scope for rehabilitation, but can also provide innovative solutions.

Partners:

Hull International Fisheries Institute (HIFI), UK; DELTARES, The Netherlands; IGB in Forschungsverbund Berlin e. V., Germany; CEMAGREF, France ; Universidad Politécnicna de Madrid, Spain; Danube Delta National Institute for Research and Development, Romania.

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KNAC- Knowledge in Action in the Rhine river basin hydro-morphological restructuring

KNAC is about analysing knowledge arrangements underlying current management capacities using the example of hydro-morphological restructuring. Improvement of transfer, circulation or co-creation of knowledge is needed and the focus of the research is the analysis of trans-national, cross scale and interdisciplinary knowledge systems with the following objectives:

1. Assess knowledge arrangements of planning and decision taking.
2. Test approaches of knowledge co-creation with actors in the field.
3. Formulate general principles for the transfer, circulation and co-creation of knowledge.

An important element is the community of practice (CoP). In the CoP representatives of science, practice, policies and stakes will participate. Members of the CoP will play an active role in dissemination.

An assessment of knowledge arrangements in the Rhine river basin will be executed. Three field test events in the Netherlands, Germany and Switzerland will be held, where co-creation methods will be tested.

The research will enhance our understanding of the role of knowledge in river basin management and will formulate general principles on establishing or improving knowledge arrangements.

Partners:

ahu AG (Aachen), University of Wageningen, Germany; Technische Universität Kaiserslautern, Universität Basel, Switzerland; STOWA, the Netherlands.

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I-FIVE- Innovative Instruments and Institutions in Implementing the Water Framework Directive

The I-Five project aims at supporting the implementation the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) by promoting transboundary exchange of experiences, by broadening the range of methods and tools available to water managers, and by helping water managers develop the best approach for their circumstances.

The project will analyse ongoing WFD implementation processes in which innovative instruments and institutions 1) (henceforth called I-3) are used for the setting of environmental objectives (cf. WFD art. 4) at the sub-basin level and for the development of measures to be included in the river basin management plans.

The project will evaluate I-3 within the national contexts in which they have been applied. Particular attention will be given to the possibility to 'transplant' the I-3 under study to other national contexts 2).

The project will result in a 'Quick Scan' method that will allow practitioners to assess ex ante whether (and to some extent how) a particular I-3 can be adapted to their context.

It will also analyze the following aspects: institutional context of I-3 emergence; process of development; involvement of stakeholders and experts; adaptive management capacity of the selected institutional settings; performance and effects; and implementation requirements

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RIPFLOW- Riparian vegetation modelling for the assessment of environmental flow regimes and climate change impacts within the WFD

Two general goals are proposed in this project:

1. Development of a dynamic riparian model

The specific objectives in this first general goal are:

- To develop a flexible dynamic model of riparian habitats and vegetation to be easily applied in a wide range of conditions across Europe.
- To create a software to run such model in a user-friendly interface, with necessary outputs to give decision support in the implementation of the WFD by the water managers.
- To implement in the software a tool to assess the ecological status -sensu WFD- for alternative flow regimes.
- To identify and to apply cost-effective methods for the acquisition of biological information needed to calibrate this model.

2. Application to project case studies

The specific objectives in this second general goal are:

- To calibrate the model in nearly totally un disturbed conditions, and to validate the developed model in sites with altered flow regime.
- To help water managers in the learning and the starting point for the practical application of the results in the water management of the case studies (exploitation in national context), to be potentially used in the corresponding River Basins Plans.

- To identify scientific based guidelines for assessing the impacts of altered hydrology on riparian vegetation, due to climate change or dam operation rules (trans-national context).
- To identify good practices in water management for the natural recovery and the improvement of the ecological status of the riparian vegetation, in the context of the EU directives.

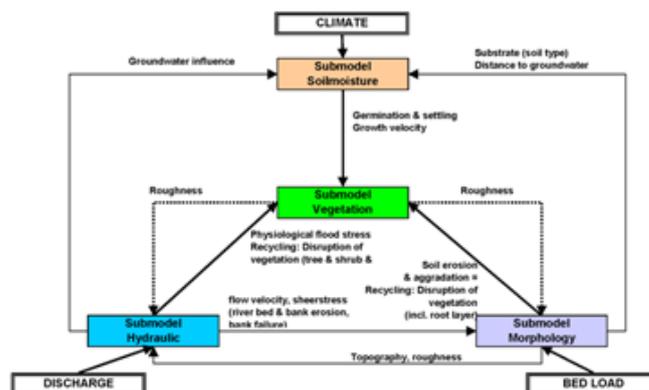


Figure 1. Possible input data, parameter and variables of a riparian ecosystem model.

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New science to policy activity launched by the CIS

The European Water Directors have launched a new activity to improve the Science-Policy Interface (SPI) in integrated water resources management.

At their last meeting in Paris in November 2008, European Water Directors agreed to launch a activity on the science-policy interface (SPI) under the framework of the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) of the WFD. The objectives are to improve the transfer and use of water-related research outputs to policy-makers and stakeholders, and to translate operational problems linked to policy implementation into research questions, in order to provide “research answers” in phase with the implementation calendar of the WFD and other relevant policies. The preliminary activity will be carried out in 2009 with voluntary countries, stakeholders and the participation of EC DG Research, to develop a mandate for a fully-fledged activity under the CIS work programme for 2010-2012.

Since its inception, IWRM-Net has focussed on the issue of science-policy interface and decided to make it central in its work. Strong links between the CIS-SPI activity and IWRM-Net will be developed, providing opportunities for IWRM-Net to strengthen its links with the various levels of end-users (e.g. policy-makers, policy-implementers, industry, etc.). IWRM-Net, will be represented on the CIS-SPI group and will be one of the key stakeholders. Additionally, each individual partner of IWRM-Net may also take part in the activity, representing national views on science-policy interfacing in field of water management. ONEMA, as the main contact point for the CIS-SPI activity and a permanent observer in IWRM-Net will ensure that operational links are developed continuously.

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Planned IWRM-Net events 2009-2010

Year	Date	Activity	Location
2009	11-12 February	IWRM-Net Second conference “Bridging the Sci-Pol gap?”	Brussels, Belgium
	Mid Feb - MidMar	Identifying IWRM Research needs – a public internet forum to discuss and refine research issues for the second IWRM-Net call	see www.iwrn-net.eu
	March – May	Identifying IWRM research needs – decisions on second call topics	Internal event
	Mid Jun	Second IWRM-Net call opens	
	Mid Oct	Second IWRM-Net call closes	
2010	January	Decisions (provisional) on second joint call proposals	
	April (approx)	Second call research project start	
	October	IWRM-Net Final Conference • Results of IWRM-Net • Results from First call projects FORECASTER, I-FIVE, KNAC, RIPFLOW	see www.iwrn-net.eu