



Natural Water Retention Measures – EU Policy Context

**DG Environment
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**NWRM Regional First Workshop
(Danube Network, Jan 28th -29th)**

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Overview

- *Background*
- *Blueprint and CIS – role of this project*
- *Related Policy and Financing Potential*





Natural Water Retention Measures

Working Concept:

NWRM aim at restoring and maintaining water related ecosystems by natural means.

They are Green Infrastructures intended to maintain and restore landscape, soils and aquifers in order to improve their natural properties and services.

They provide for water flow, water storage and quality regulation, reducing the vulnerability to floods and droughts and favouring climate change adaptation.





Policy Background

- *The White Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change (2009)*
working with Nature = efficient
- *An information package "Towards Better Environmental Options in Flood Risk Management" sent to Water Directors (2011)*
- *The "Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources" (2012) => **The New CIS work-programme***
- *Green Infrastructure Communication (2013)*
- *Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2013)*



Why Natural Water Retention Measures?

Assessment of RBMPs identified...

- *Hydromorphological alteration and diffuse pollution are the most significant issues leading to massive failure in WB status.*
- *Measures implemented until now have been insufficient.*

Blueprint: The main causes of negative impacts on water status are interlinked. They include **climate change**, **land use**, economic activities, agriculture, tourism; urban development and demographic change.

Why Natural Water Retention Measures?

NWMR as one of the responses can:

- *reduce impact of diffuse pollution,*
- *regulate the flow regime in natural pattern and reduce vulnerability to Climate Change,*
- *restoring the deteriorated morphological element on the riparian area and the floodplain,*
- *improve water status (surface and groundwater) (incl. DW, BW),*
- *be a Better Environmental Option for Flood, risk management supporting Natural Flood Risk Management,*



The Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Waters

- Stresses the importance of green infrastructures for reducing the impacts of floods, droughts, and land use related pressures
- Proposes that Member States expand green infrastructures using the River Basin Management Plans. The Plans require an **integrated approach to managing water resources** across policy areas and sectors. NWRM to be supported by:
 - The Commission to develop with CIS tools for facilitating NWRM uptake in the next RBMPs and FRMPs
 - To prioritise funding of natural infrastructures and ecosystem based adaptation for the water sector in the ESIF
 - Use conditionalities, such as greening of the CAP





Follow up to the Blueprint

- *The new CIS work program took to account the Blueprint proposals (in relation to the structure and deliverables)*
 - **Working Group PoM and deliverable on CIS**
- *Launched Pilot Project:" Integration of Natural Water Retention Measures in river basin management"*
- *Commission draws attention to the inclusion of green infrastructure in the Partnership Agreements negotiated with Member States (funding priorities for the next 7 years are being identified)*
- *Encourage synergies with other EU policies to be exploited*





WFD Common Implementation Strategy (CIS)

- *The implementation of the Water Framework Directive raises a number of shared technical challenges*
- *In order to address the challenges in a co-operative and coordinated way, the Member States, Norway and the Commission agreed in 2001 on a **Common Implementation Strategy (CIS)** for the Water Framework Directive .*
- All Member States, EEA and candidate countries, stakeholders and NGOs can nominate experts to participate in this process.
- **Water Directors** lead and decide on the work to be done, making sure that the CIS products will be of use/used in the MS.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/objectives/implementation_en.htm



NEW CIS Work Programme

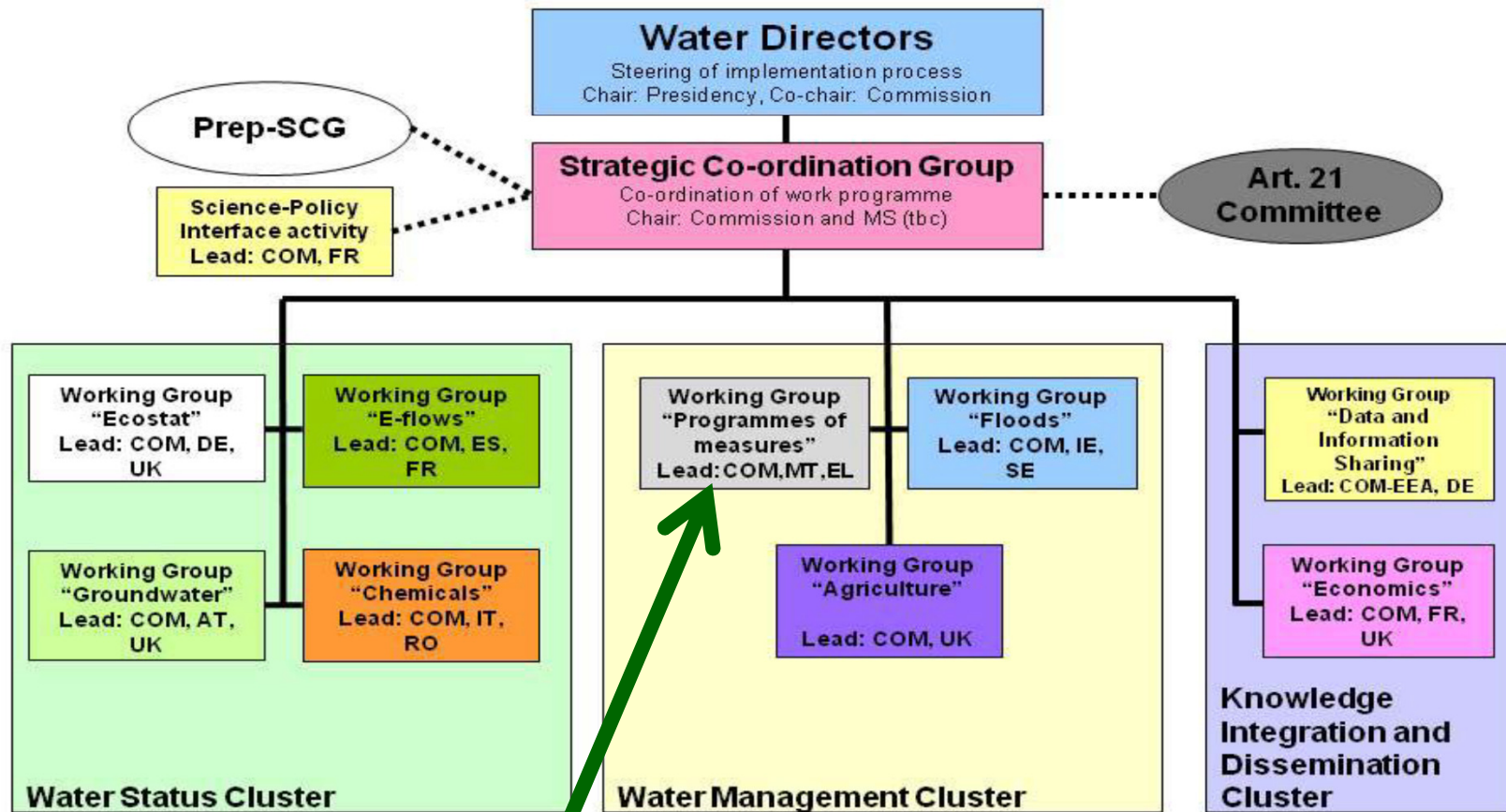
'Strengthening the implementation of EU water policy through the second river basin management plans'

- The Water Blueprint 2012 identified serious implementation **gaps** and delays as well as actions that need to be taken to speed up the achievement of the WFD 'good status' objective.
- Building on the successful co-operation of the past decade , water directors endorsed the new CIS Work Programme (WP) 2013-2015.





CIS Organisation 2013-2015



**Programme
of Measures**

Working Group	Deliverable
PoM	<u>Guidance or other tool on NWRM</u> Sharing Best Practices on Programmes of Measures Information exchange on funding measures outside CAP
Agriculture	Tools for delivery of NWRM and other WFD measures, in particular within the upcoming Rural Development Programmes
ECOSTAT	<u>Intercalibration of ecological potential</u> (including definition of measures)
<u>Ecological Flows</u>	Guidance on ecological parameters/ecological flows and hydrological parameters for assessing quantitative aspects (the volume and level or rate of flow) and link to GES (including implementation aspects)
FLOODS	- Resource document on the links between the WFD and FD to support the achievement of synergies and promote coordination and integration as appropriate. - <u>Links with, and input to, other flood-related activities (including Developments in natural water retention measures (NWRM))</u>
Economics	Review WATECO Guidance to clarify aspects linked to cost-recovery and cost/benefits analysis by 2014



Pilot Project: "Atmospheric Precipitation - Protection and efficient use of Fresh Water: Integration of Natural Water Retention Measures in river basin management "

OBJECTIVES

- 1. To build the knowledge base on NWRM***
- 2. To provide a detailed assessment of effectiveness, costs and benefits of NWRM***
- 3. To further develop and maintain a catalogue of measures and case studies and associated database integrated with WISE***





Pilot Project: *"Atmospheric Precipitation - Protection and efficient use of Fresh Water: Integration of Natural Water Retention Measures in river basin management "*

OBJECTIVES

- 4. To promote knowledge and best practice exchange***
- 5. To contribute to the WFD CIS and to identify or create operational tools that can be used at national, river basin, and/or local level to facilitate inclusion of NWRM in the 2nd or 3rd RBMPs and FRMPs.***





NWRM have links with other Policies

- *Env. Policy: Biodiversity Strategy (including GI strategy), Nature 2000, Habitats Directive, LIFE, Soil Strategy*
- *Climate Change Adaptation Strategy*
- *New Forest Strategy*
- *Regional Policy: Cohesion Funds, ERDF*
- *Agricultural Policy: CAP, EAFRD*
- *Research and Innovation funds*



Biodiversity Strategy: Green Infrastructure

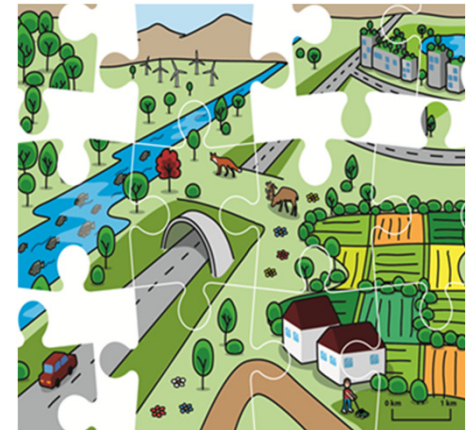
“A network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services “

Contribution to Europe 2020 Strategy by investing in our natural capital.

Communication on "Green Infrastructure (GI) (2013)

- *Promoting the deployment of GI in main policy areas and their funding mechanisms (integrate into implementation + guidance, awareness raising, best practices)*
- *Improving knowledge base and promote innovation*
- *Need to provide financial support(including innovative mechanisms)*

***Spatial structure
delivering nature
benefits to people***





Financing Potential for NWRM

- *Promote NWRM in European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) (Partnership Agreements)*
- *CAP Pillar I – (conditionality)*
- *Research and Innovation Funds*
- *LIFE*
- *Other financial instruments e.g. EIB*





Financing potential through European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

Legislative package framing cohesion policy for 2014-2020:
EU investment is targeted on Europe's long-term goals for growth and jobs ("Europe 2020") and sustainable development

➤ *ESI Funds:*

- ❖ European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- ❖ the Cohesion Fund (CF)
- ❖ the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)
- ❖ the European Social Fund (ESF)
- ❖ European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)





ESIF - Thematic objectives Linked to Multifunctional Measures

Among the 11 thematic objectives, 3 on sustainable growth:

Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors

Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management

Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency



Climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management

Priorities:

- *supporting dedicated investment for adaptation to climate change, including ecosystem based approaches*
- *promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems;*

Opportunities:

Ecosystem-based adaptation:

- Preserving natural areas, biodiversity, water quality & quantity, ecosystem services
- New/Improved recreational areas = positive health effects
- New jobs & activities



Protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency

Priorities include:

- *investments in water sector to meet the EU environmental acquis;*
- *conserving, protecting, promoting, and developing natural heritage*
- *protecting biodiversity, soil protection and promoting ecosystem services including NATURA 2000 and green infrastructures;*
- *improving urban environment including regeneration of brownfield sites and reduction of air pollution.*

Opportunities for NWRM:

- Supporting Implementation of RBMPs /FRMPs including investments in green infrastructure: Preservation of ecosystem services e.g. Floodplains, river re-naturation, wetlands...
- Synergies with other Environmental objectives





Links with Agricultural policy CAP mainly EAFRD (1/3)

Most relevant Rural Development priorities: (in total 6)

- *4. Restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry*
- *5. Promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors*





Links with Agricultural policy CAP mainly EAFRD (2/3)

30 % budget of each RDP to environment investments

- *Investments in physical assets (article 17)*
- *Restoring agricultural production potential, preventing natural disasters (floods)*
- *Investments in forest area (articles 21 - 25) :*
 - ❖ development and improvement of the viability of forests,
 - ❖ afforestation and creation of woodland,
 - ❖ establishment of agroforestry systems ,
 - ❖ prevention and restoration of damage to forests from forest fires and natural disasters and catastrophic events,
 - ❖ investments improving the resilience and environmental value of forest ecosystems.





Links with Agricultural policy CAP mainly EAFRD (3/3)

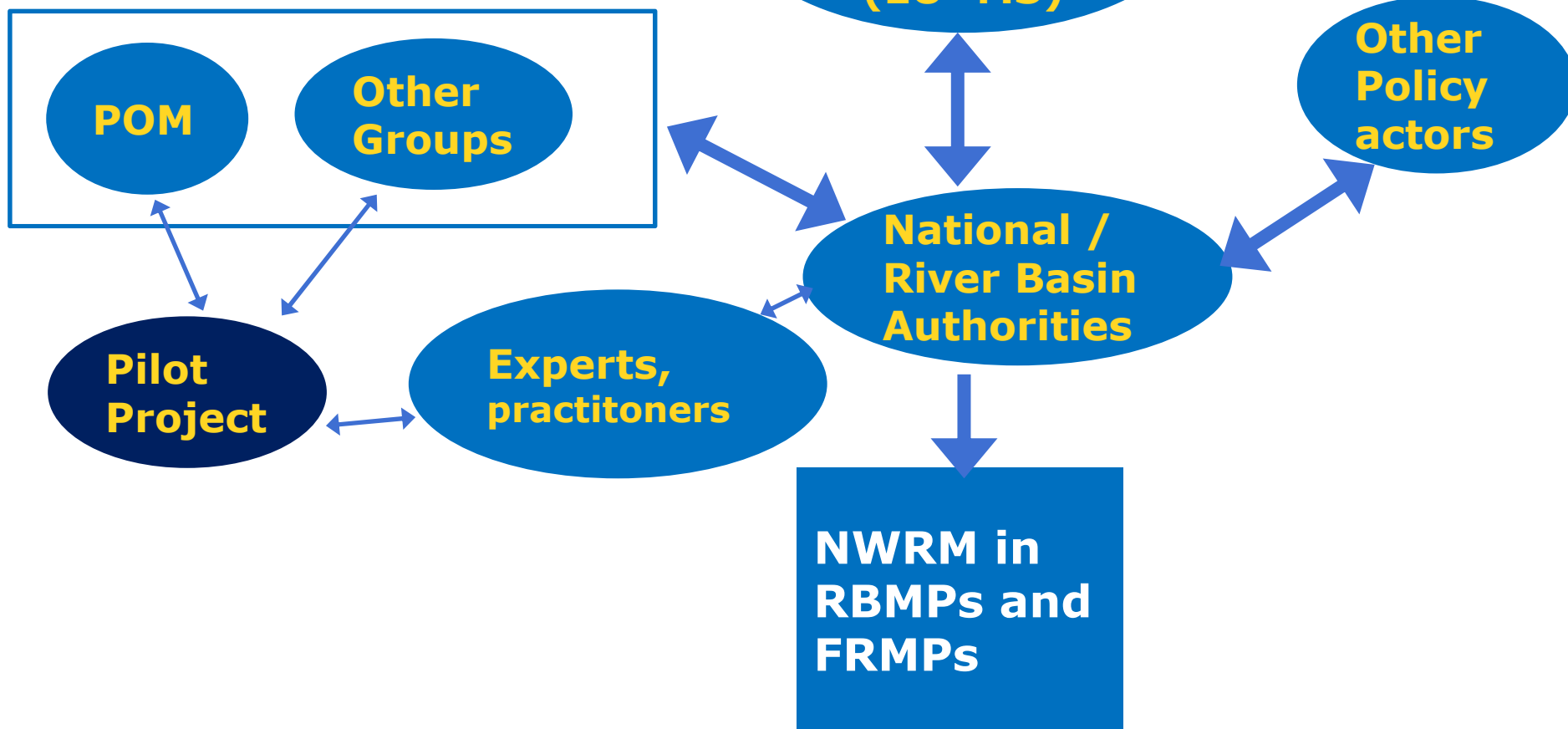
- *Agri-environment-climate payments (article 28)*
- *Natura 2000 and Water Framework Directive payments (article 30)*
- *Forest-environmental and climate services and forest conservation (article 34)*



Links with CAP Pillar 1 - Greening

- *"Greening" - 30% of direct payments*
 - ❖ Ecological Focus Areas (important if used wisely along water courses)
 - ❖ Crop Diversification
 - ❖ Maintenance of Permanent GrasslandsEquivalent practices also relevant
- *Cross Compliance standards*
 - ❖ Relevant Good Agricultural Environmental Conditions (set at MS level)

WFD CIS





***Thank you for
your attention***