



Why Natural water Retention Measures ?

**DG Environment
Evdokia Achilleos**

**TURIN SEPTEMBER 11TH ,
2ND MEDITERRANEAN REGIONAL WORKSHOP**



NWRM - Policy Background and Context

- ***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)***
- ***BDS and Green Infrastructure Communication (2013)***
- ***Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2013)***



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: **Working Group PoM and deliverable on CIS***
- *COM Launched Pilot Project: "Integration of Natural Water Retention Measures in river basin management" (www.nwrm.eu)*
- *Commission draws attention to the inclusion of Green Infrastructure in the Partnership Agreements negotiated with Member States*
- *Encourage synergies with other EU policies to be exploited*



NWRM Pilot Project (www.nwrm.eu)

- *to build the knowledge base on NWRM, to provide a detailed assessment of effectiveness, costs and benefits of NWRM*
- *to further develop and maintain a catalogue of measures and case studies and associated database with geographical references*
- *to promote knowledge and best practice exchange:*
- *To contribute to WFD CIS and to identify / create operational tools that can be used at national, river basin, and/or local level to facilitate inclusion of NWRM in the RBMPs and FRMPs.*

Main Deliverables: *Practical Guide, Knowledge Database, Building a community of practise (by December 2014)*

11 partners: OIEau (FR), ACteon (FR), AMEC (UK), SRUC (SC), REC (HU), IACO (CY), Enveco (SW), REKK (HU), Imdea (SP), SLU (SE), BEF (LV)



Definition of NWRM

Natural Water Retention Measures are multi-functional measures that aim to protect water resources and address water-related challenges by restoring or maintaining ecosystems as well as natural features and characteristics of water bodies using natural means and processes.

The main focus of applying NWRM is to enhance the retention capacity of aquifers, soil, and aquatic and water dependent ecosystems with a view to improve their status. Appropriate application of NWRM supports green infrastructure, improves the quantitative status of water bodies as such, and reduces the vulnerability to floods and droughts. It positively affects the chemical and ecological status of water bodies by restoring natural functioning of ecosystems and the services they provide. The restored ecosystems contribute both to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

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,*



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*



NWRM - WG PoM Progress

➤ ***WG PoM Meetings:***

- ❖ September 2013: Background provided by COM- proposal for the deliverable to be a high-level policy paper
- ❖ November 2013: Started discussion on NWRM, agreed to have a short paper as deliverable, to form drafting team to further define scope and contents
- ❖ March 2014: discussed different issues related to NWRM, provided Input to Drafting Team, agreed on scope of paper "Policy Document"
- ❖ October 2014: will discuss and finalise the Policy Document to be approved by SCG & Water Directors in Nov-Dec 2014

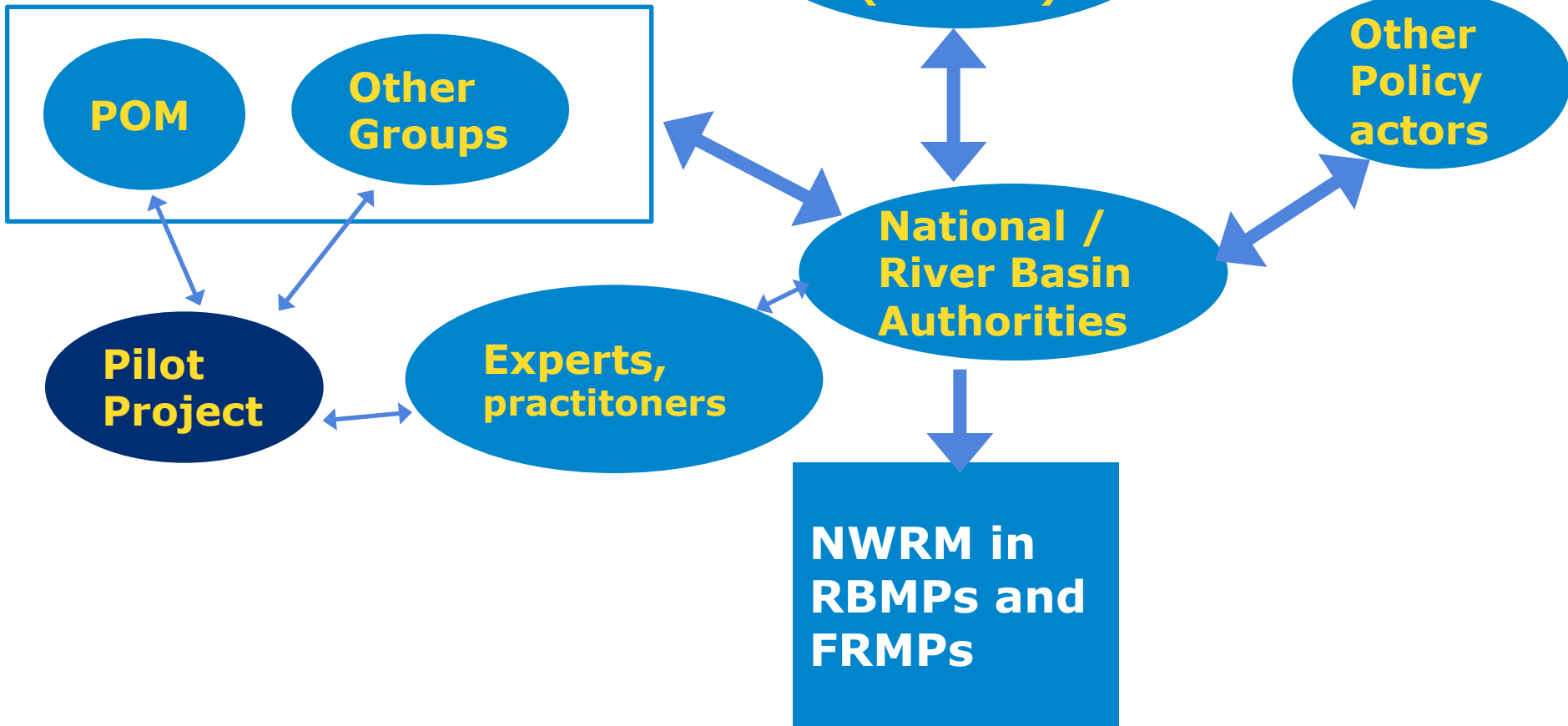
➤ ***WG PoM Drafting team (DG ENV, DE, FR, IT, NL, UK, EEB, WWF, WI, NWRM PP and WFD CIS support consultants)***



Agreed WG PoM Deliverable

- *A short Policy Document aiming:*
 - ❖ **To explain the policy relevance of NWRM, stimulate their uptake as effective means for achieving water and other environmental policy objectives.**
 - ❖ **To be used as tool by water directors to persuade other policy makers for joined action**
- *Targeting Water Directors and decision-makers at the National Competent Authorities for WF/FD and local and regional catchment-scale decision-makers.*
- ***Ensure coherence with tools and documents of the NWRM pilot project. The project will be providing the knowledge base, experiences, technical background and practical guidance tools to complement this document.***

WFD CIS





Financing

EU funds

➤ *ESIF*

➤ *LIFE*

❖ Funding being decided nowopportunity to influence the inclusion of NWRM now



THE EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS 2014-2020

(ESIF) comprise the following EU funding mechanisms:

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- * European Social Fund (ESF)
- Cohesion Fund (CF)
 - **NWRM fit within both TO5 and 6 (climate, environment))**
 - **5 % ring-fenced for urban issues – eg SUDs**
- European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)
 - **Used in DK to remove fish barriers – other uses ?**
- * European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)



ESIF - Thematic objectives Linked to Multifunctional Measures

Among the 11 thematic objectives, 3 on sustainable growth:

(TO 2)Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors

(TO 5) Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management

(TO 6)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 CAP Pillar I

- ❖ **GAEC: buffer strips , soil protection**
- ❖ **Significant ability to improve on the implementation of these**

Q: do you know what the rules are for these in your MS?

- ❖ **Greening *new**

Ecological focus areas - should/could promote NWRM?

Q: do you know what the rules are in your MS? They may not be decided yet

Links with CAP PILLAR 2 - EARDF (1/3)

Rural Development Programme:

Priority:

- *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 CAP PILLAR 2 - EARDF (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 CAP PILLAR 2 - EARDF (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)*
- **Guidance on how to use RDP to implement WFD**
<https://circabc.europa.eu/d/a/workspace/SpacesStore/5223df97-5434-4942-8bff-2418b9dc5da1/WFD%20%26%20CAP-%20greening%20and%20RDP%20opportunities%20210214.doc>
- EC comments on draft RDPsopportunity to integrate more NWRM



LIFE - overview

- first call under new LIFE programme launched in June.
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/>
- Integrated projects for water, air, nature, waste
- Water IP prioritises NWRM in selection criteria
- Approx 12m in funding for large scale implementation of NWRM to address significant pressures in one RBD
- *Traditional projects - submission Oct '14, Grants July '15*
- *Integrated projects- concept note Oct '14, full proposal Apr '15 , Grants Sept 15*

Tools: Integrated projects (IPs)

For whom?

- *Public administrations or other entities active in the field of environment and climate protection, **capable of coordinating, besides the IP, complementary actions** co-funded by additional private, public (preferably EU) funds.*

What?

- *Implementing Union environmental and climate plans and strategies (LIFE MAWP for 2014-2017); big scale; complementary actions with additional co-funding; involvement stakeholders*

Average size?

- *2 to 10 beneficiaries; EU contribution: €10 mio. to €15 mio.; about 3 IPs per Member State.*

Co-funding rate? 60 %

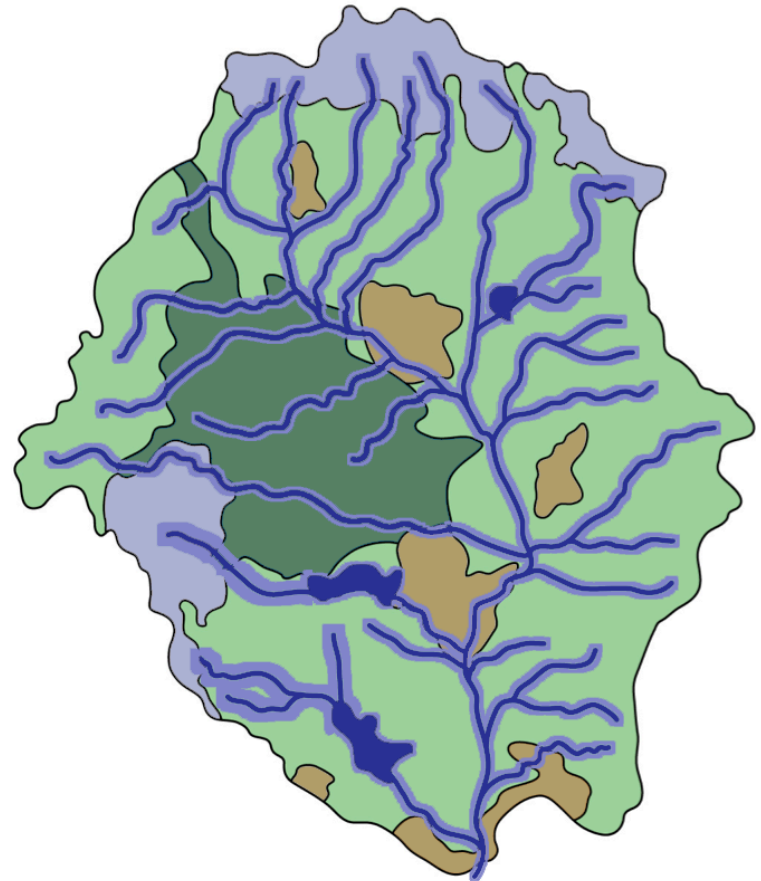
LIFE –Water IPs should...

- ➔ **implement a/parts of a River Basin Management Plan (RMBP) in line with the Water Framework Directive,**
- ➔ **draw in and target supplementary funding from EU sources (e.g. EARDF), public funding sources (e.g. flood funds), private finance (e.g. water companies, local business) and commitments to implement the whole plan in a significant part of the catchment area,**
- ➔ **involve local stakeholders and NGOs in decision making**
- ➔ **offer a blueprint for how to integrate EU, national and local priorities on the ground**

Water IP – RBMP example:

Target whole river basin district

- Seek out synergies at the outset and plan for multiple benefits
- Plan and implement measures to restore to good status and achieve protected area objectives
- Focus on improving compliance with basic measures
- Targeted land use change to protect sensitive areas and achieve good status
- Remove hydromorphological barriers from source to sea



Water IP - example

Continuous 5 m buffer strips on all watercourses - protecting water and offering terrestrial biodiversity benefits

Competent authority

Regular management & control:
Local public authority

Drinking water protected areas: Target uptake of measures that reduce pesticides and nutrients in binding agreements (e.g. arable reversion, forestry)

NGO, competent authorities

Reduce pollutant loss from all agricultural land through targeted advice and inspections EU directive and WFD basic measures

Competent authorities, stakeholders

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

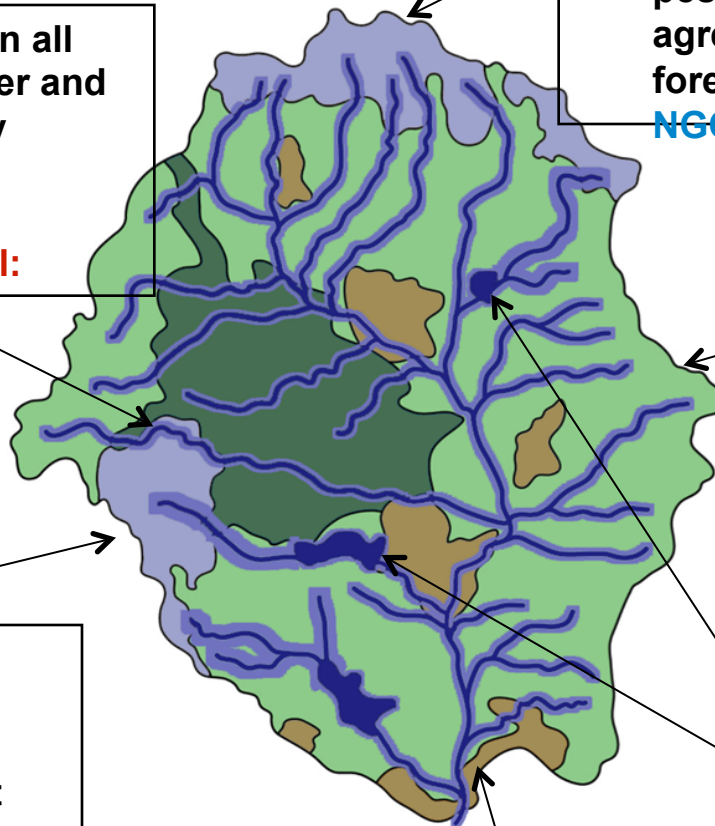
Remove all hydromorphological barriers

European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF)

Wetland creation/restoration
To reduce nutrients, recreate pre-existing wetlands, store flood waters

Pilot: NGO, competent authorities

Large scale: ESIF



Bathing waters (land hydrologically connected to bathing water):
Target uptake of measures that reduce likelihood of faecal pathogens entering waters

Local authorities

22/09/14

CONCLUSION

- *Many opportunities for funding*
- *Complicated structures to understand and influence*

.....timing is critical

.....act now to secure funds needed for 2nd RBMP

....while building towards more coherent integration of NWRM in other policies