



Bordeaux declaration

On European public water management

EUWMA, the European Union of Water Management Associations, represents public local and regional water management organizations from, currently, eight EU member states, covering a surface of around 50 million hectares.

EUWMA members are:

- Public entities, involving stakeholders with an interest in water management, performing their tasks operationally autonomous, under varying degrees of administrative supervision;
- Authorized by national law to perform water management tasks, including water supply, waste water treatment and discharge, flood and coastal protection, water quality management, drainage regulation and irrigation – integrating protection of the environment, biodiversity and wetlands;
- Based on public participation and thereby contribute to more effective collaboration and design in sustainable water management;
- Using available scientific and technical data on both ecological and economic aspects to contribute to coherent ecological, economic and social development and identify all potential benefits and costs of action or non-action;
- Committed to the objectives of the European Water Framework Directive and have tasks and responsibilities in achieving realistic objectives;

EUWMA members identify the following challenges for water management:

- The publishing of the river basin management plans, describing the programme of measures to realize WFD objectives, starts a new era of water management with obligations in assessment, setting realistic objectives and measurement strategies in 6 year planning cycles.
- Climate change adaptation linked to coastal and flood protection, water scarcity and droughts, brings increasing pressures to water quantity and quality management with strongly varying regional consequences throughout Europe;
- Cultivated landscapes are a reality in many areas in Europe, which include mostly artificial and heavily modified water bodies. These require an EU-wide coherent procedure for setting normative values for their ecological potential;
- Regional and local water management organizations cooperate to implement the WFD programme of measures and share the financial obligations; whereas discussions on water management issues and resulting decisions are often dominated by actors without these responsibilities;

- Diverging interests in various national as well as EU policy areas constrain a coherent strategy to achieve the most efficient combination of measures and environmental objectives;
- The required international coordination on the river basin management level still needs to be further developed to become fully effective and serve as a platform where also regional water authorities can participate;

Dealing with the water management challenges, EUWMA members offer:

- Institutional and technical expertise to deal with water management issues;
- Ecological and cost efficient solutions to achieve realistic objectives;
- A tradition of involving stakeholders, acknowledging and using the insights of those that will be effected by the measures and creating common ownership of water issues;
- Proven experience in pragmatic and accountable performances on the realization of enhancement strategies, integrating nature conservation;
- An exchange of ideas, knowledge and experiences in water management issues throughout Europe, to strengthen our ability to meet objectives and improve our functioning;
- Compilation of knowledge on water management issues to contribute to a better common understanding on, among others, environmental objectives, performance compliance, reporting requirements, cost recovery and disproportionate costs;

To carry out their tasks and responsibilities, EUWMA members ask:

- Under the commonly agreed EU principles, more attention for the importance of the subsidiarity principle with regard to proposed measures, implementation of measures, monitoring duties and reporting requirements;
- Increased acknowledgment of the importance and benefits of transboundary cooperation and coordination in international river basin management;
- Prioritization of water management issues in the allocation of European funds, with limited administrative requirements, to develop and carry out WFD related projects;
- The development of coherent European policy to minimize constraints for water management organizations to reach realistic objectives;
- The opportunity to share our knowledge and experiences with European decision makers with regard to water management issues.

Bordeaux, 22 December 2009

EUWMA members: *Belgium/ Belgique - Vereniging van Vlaamse Polders en Wateringen (VVPW) / l'Association des Wateringues Wallonnes (AWW); France – wateringues & Association Syndicales Autorisées (ASA); Germany - Deutscher Bund der verbandlichen Wasserwirtschaft (DBVW); Hungary - Vízgazdálkodási Társulatok Országos Szövetsége (VTOSZ); Italy - Associazione Nazionale Bonifiche, Irrigazioni e Miglioramenti Fondiari (ANBI); Spain - Federacion Nacional de Comunidades de regantes de Espana (Fenacore); The Netherlands – Unie van Waterschappen (UvW); United Kingdom - Association of Drainage Authorities (ADA)*