



European Centre for River Restoration  
Secretariat:  
Italian Centre for River Restoration  
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30173 Mestre – Venice, ITALY



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# European Centre for River Restoration

## NEWSLETTER – January 2008

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**REPORT: EUROPE INBO 2007 – INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE - 8-10 November 2007, Rome, Italy**



The meeting organized by EUROPE-INBO was attended by 191 representatives from 33 countries of governmental administrations in charge of water resource management, of basin organizations or district authorities. Three round tables were focused on three main topics about the Water Framework Directive's implementation in the European River Basin Districts in 2007:

1. **Cost of the Water Framework Directive**
2. **Consequences of global warming**
3. **Public participation**

As the meeting took place in Italy, special attention was paid to the issues specific to water management in the Mediterranean region. As a consequence, the conference of EURO-INBO

was organized simultaneously with the General Assembly 2007 of the Mediterranean Network of Basin Organizations (MEMBO).



### 1. ROUND TABLE ON COST OF THE WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

It was focused on: cost of procedures, preparation of Management Plans and Programs of Measures and their financing, economic studies, water price, etc.

#### Outcomes

**Economic studies are essential for WFD implementation.** The economic studies must meet practical needs such as the settlement of objectives and actions to be implemented within the program of measures in order to achieve its goals. Although these studies are progressing, the data are still too often incomplete and uncertainties remain on the methodologies that must be used. Some Member states and basin organizations have developed practical tools, but they're different from one district to another.

**Disproportionate costs (article 4 WFD).** The WFD does not define this concept and thus each basin can take a different definition. This may cause a problem of competition, mainly in international river districts, especially for the industrialists who, according with their geographical location, can see themselves imposed measures for 2015 or taking advantage from delays.

The **rate of cost recovery of the services related to water use (art.9 WFD).** The different countries do not use the same method for calculation: therefore, there are significant



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disparities in the recovery rate. So the **impact of water price** changes according to the current level of taxes and water charges, but an increase in the water price is however to be foreseen in most cases.

### **Recommendations**

Although we are in the beginning of the management plan processes and the programs of measures required by the WFD for 2009, many interesting recommendations arise from the presentation:

- Needs of joint efforts at the European level for: sharing experience, harmonization of methods, developing socioeconomic indicators and threshold values common to all the Member States. Moreover, as concerns the water price, it would be useful to build a “European water price” indicator in order to have comparative data.
- Consolidation of all the information already gathered (creation of databases) and training economists specialized in the water field.
- Involvement of local stakeholders in the cost actions’ evaluation, trying to give them and the consumers a necessary explanation in order to make the increase in the water price acceptable.

### **More:**

- Do not forget measures related to hydromorphology!
- Better coordination with agricultural and sanitation measures, which are linked to the hydromorphology changes in rivers, the main factors of unachieved good status.

## **2. ROUND TABLE ON CONSEQUENCES OF GLOBAL WARMING**

It was focused on: prevention and management of extreme climatic phenomena of floods and droughts, situation in the Mediterranean Region.

### **Outcomes**

It was underlined that climate changes are undeniable and they are especially demonstrated by the increasing in the frequency of extreme phenomena (drought, floods) even if the effects are different according to the areas and climate scenarios. The Mediterranean Basin is likely to be one of the areas most affected of the world, with an increasing of “water stress”. It could be useful to create an observatory of water resources and their uses, with the coordination between all the Mediterranean countries: feasibility studies have already started within EMWIS (Euro-Mediterranean Water Information System).

The WFD does not directly take climate change into account but provides the tools necessary for sustainable water resources management, and can contribute to better preventing and managing the effects of climate change.

Increasing in the frequency of extreme phenomena, fresh water resource will be directly affected not only by the quantity but also by the quality e.g.: increase in the concentrations of polluting and toxic substances (nitrate) in water, groundwater recharge, water stress. So it is extremely important to adapt the policies for water management, by taking into account the elements of climate change for water quality and quantity management.

### **Recommendations**

- Taking into account the constraints related to the climate change in the WFD implementation with a common approach at the European level.
- Developing specific monitoring networks for temperatures and river flows, among other topics, such as news fish species and new pathologies.





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- Establishing a national information systems to be coordinated with a warning systems for extreme events.
  - Launching pilot projects to define baseline scenarios for the basins following the example carried out in France on the Meuse and Loire river basins.
  - Integrating preventive and adaptation measures in the management plans and programs of measures.
  - Taking actions to preserve/restore balance between water offer and demand on a basin scale; Moving from a “policy of offer” to a “policy of demand”.
  - Promoting a better use of water resources that would save, in 2025, 24% of the foreseen demand, thus avoiding the building of almost 100 dams.
  - Encouraging water stakeholders to take actions –now, on their area- for anticipating the consequences of the climate changes.
  - Prevention must be planned in the long term.
  - As for WFD, is recommended joint work between Member States on the floods directive adopted in September 2007.

**More:**

- The EUROPE-INBO group applauds the initiative of the European Commission, which launched, in June 2007, a debate on the adaptation of the European Union to climate change (Green Book).
- It is important to take the opportunity of the necessary adaptation to the climate change to evolve towards sustainable development.
- Again, the participation of the local stakeholders and the public on these issues is essential.

**3. ROUND TABLE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

It was focused on the outcomes of the first enquiries of 2005 and 2006 and on the lessons learned for the next enquiry in 2008.

**Outcomes**

The involvement of the basin organization in participatory process should go further than the organization of official times for public consultation planned by the Directive.

The success of the consultation of the general public depends on the degree of mobilization of the local stakeholders. NGOs could be very effective in this.

**Recommendations**

- Ensuring transparency in decision-making process also communicating on uncertainties, in a non-institutional way, having an adapted and clear language and combining various information tools.
- Continuing in the long term public information.
- No limits in writing enquires: it is important to organize forums and public debates as well.



## CONCLUSIONS

Some members express the wish to improve the convergence of water legislation between the European Union and the Mediterranean countries, especially to take the main WFD principles into account and to adapt them by developing specific project and twinning arrangements.

It was underlined the quick development of MENBO that since 2002 gathers 28 members from 13 Mediterranean countries, in addition to an important collaboration with international Mediterranean organizations, the European Commission and NGOs. Mr. Walter Mazzitti (Italy) will be the new MENBO president up to its next General Assembly in 2009.

Moreover Mr. Roberto Grappelli, Secretary General of the Tiber Basin Authority (Italy) will chair the "EUROPE-INBO" group until its next plenary assembly in 2008.

Mr Mazzitti ended in the hope that the two important positions given to two Italian could improve the implementation of WFD by Italian Government.

More information and all the presentation can be found on the [INBO webpage](#) dedicate to the conference.

## SAND PROJECT: FINAL CONFERENCE – 12-13 June 2008, Paris, France



The SAND project developed an integral concept of flood management based on developing and redeveloping mineral extraction sites, dealing with flood damage alleviation, spatial quality and water quality.

Five pilot projects along the rivers Seine, Oise/Aisne (France), ERFT (Germany) and Rhine and Meuse (The Netherlands) have worked together for 5 years. This project is partly EU-funded by Interreg IIIB NEW.

In 2008 the SAND project finishes: to celebrate this, a two days event has been organized and the SAND Book will be presented.

SAND Final conference will be held in France on 12-13 June 2008:

- 12 June 2008: Presentations results mineral extraction, spatial quality and public-private cooperation (PARIS)
- 13 June 2008: Field Visit Retention Reservoir Compiègne project (COMPIEGNE)

For more news on the closing event, visit SAND website: [www.sandproject.nl](http://www.sandproject.nl)

## PUBLICATIONS (find more on the ECRR website!)

### LIFE and Europe's wetlands - restoring a vital ecosystem

(<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/publications/lifepublications/lifefocus/nat.htm#wetlands>)



Wetland ecosystems hold an important part of Europe's biodiversity. They provide ideal conditions for a vast diversity of habitats and species, and are especially important for birds providing vital nesting and migratory flyway areas. Despite their importance, however, wetlands are disappearing at an alarming rate and are among Europe's most threatened ecosystems. This brochure presents a selection of wetland projects that have received LIFE co-funding since 1992. The majority of case studies focus on the restoration and management of wetlands, while a number also target key wetland species.

### 4<sup>th</sup> SedNet book published

The recently published SedNet book "Sediment Management at the River Basin Scale" reviews some of the key requirements and challenges facing scientists, river basin managers, and policy makers for sustainable sediment management at the river basin scale, and puts forward important recommendations.

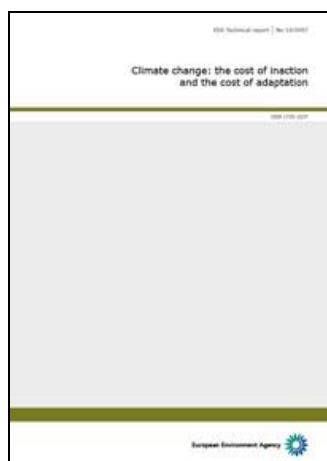
This volume is also available as part of the 4-volume set, ISBN 0444519599.

Contents:

- Chapter 1 - Sediment behaviour, functions and management in river basins (P.N. Owens).
- Chapter 2 - Conceptual and assessment frameworks for sediment management at the river basin scale (S. White, S. Apitz).
- Chapter 3 - Regulatory frameworks for sediment management (S.T. Casper).
- Chapter 4 - Sediment and contaminant sources and transfers in river basins (K.G. Taylor et al.).
- Chapter 5 - Decision support tools for sediment management (M. van der Perk et al.).
- Chapter 6 - Costs and benefits of sediment management (A.F.L. Slob et al.).
- Chapter 7 - Sediment management and stakeholder involvement (A.F.L. Slob et al.).
- Chapter 8 - Sediment management at the river basin scale (P.N. Owens et al.).

## REPORTS

### [Counting the cost of climate change](#)



The report, *Climate change: the cost of inaction and the cost of adaptation*, looks at the economic costs of climate change (impacts) at a European level. These costs are increasingly shaping the climate policy debate but the report highlights the fact that methodological issues and uncertainties remain in cost estimation.

### [CLC2006 technical guidelines - Update of Corine land cover \(CLC\) for the reference year 2006](#)



The first three chapters of the report describe the background, organization and main technical parameters of the CLC2006 project. Chapters 4–9 provide guidelines for producing CLC changes and CLC2006 databases. Chapter 10 provides guidelines for delivery of the products. The intended readers are the members of CLC national teams and other organizations involved in the production.





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## TOP NEWS (find more on the ECRR website!)

### [Agreement Reached on the Bali Roadmap](#)

It was one day late but countries achieved a major breakthrough on international climate change action at 2:31pm Bali time on Saturday. It was not without high drama featuring plenty of twists and turns along the way on a day when many delegates had planned to catch flights home. The Bali decision sets out an agenda that frames the discussions that will take place over the next two years and sets a deadline of 2009 to complete the negotiations.

### [2007 Top News on the Environment in Asia](#)

IGES is pleased to announce this provisional version of the "Top News", a compilation of important environmental news topics selected by experts from the Asia-Pacific region. The 2007 edition brings 94 articles from three international organisations and 17 countries.

## EVENTS (January 2008 – February 2008)

### [Water and Environmental Exchange](#)

28 January/1 February 2008, Malaga, SPAIN

### [World Wetlands Day Conference](#)

29-30 January 2008 – London, UK

### [Water Loss Seminar and Workshop 2008](#)

30 January/1 February 2008, Marbella, SPAIN

### [11<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on the Interactions between Sediments and Water](#)

17-22 February 2008 – Esperance, Australia



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## BECOME A MEMBER!

### **Joining the ECRR is FREE!**

Acting as an international network the ECRR is pleased to get contributions from its members: they are all very welcomed to provide us information on projects, events, news, training courses, etc.

The ECRR newsletter, for example, is thought as a tool (available to all members) for advertising to an international platform the outcomes of the project, important events worldwide, new publications, etc.

As a member of the ECRR, you will:

- keep on receiving a monthly newsletter with the most recent international information related to river restoration (conferences, projects, policy document, funding opportunities...);
- have the opportunity to share your experiences and spread the results of your projects;
- become a part of a network of people and institutions involved in river restoration and sustainable river management at European level, find partners for your project proposals and develop joint activities;

**To Become a member of the ECRR fill in the [application form](#) in our website.**

For request of information please contact

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