

Welcome to the 5th newsletter of Watersketch!

Dear Reader! The 5th Newsletter reflects the project outcomes of 2007. The Watersketch project was successfully finalised at the "Symposium on Spatial Planning Approaches towards a Sustainable River Basin Management" in Finland. Read more about this conference and other activities below.

Spatial Planning Approaches towards Sustainable River Basin Management

Final Watersketch Symposium in Lapland

On 14-15 May 2007 the symposium was held in Rovaniemi, Finland, close to the Arctic Circle. Altogether there were 85 participants from 14 different European countries including river basin managers, environmental and spatial planners, consultants, researchers, and authorities.

The overall aim of the symposium was to present and discuss some of the cross-cutting issues on spatial planning approaches in relation to sustainable river basin management, as well as to present the results of the Watersketch project. Main themes presented and discussed in the seven sessions of the symposium included:

1. Legislation analyses
2. Practical River Basin planning approaches
3. Watersketch tools

4. GIS and Environmental Data Management
5. Tools and Models
6. Decision support systems
7. Public Participation

Being aware of the fact that meeting the goals of the EU Water Framework Directive is not an easy task, participants were informed about the progress of implementation in the EU member states. Best practice examples from the Watersketch case studies in Finland, Poland, Germany, Denmark and Lithuania were presented by the partners. Different tools for authorities and planners were described in the toolbox (toolbox.watersketch.net) and explained in detail at the symposium.

Furthermore, other selected water projects on European and national level were presented.

What Watersketch is all about

Rivers and lakes have numerous different functions such as traffic routes, electricity supplies, habitats for animals and recreation areas for people. The Watersketch partners want to develop strategies for sustainable river basin management in order to do justice to different economic, ecological and social functions. Case studies in the partner countries will cover the most relevant challenges.

The results of Watersketch will support decision-making of spatial planners. A final web-based toolbox will make the results available to others. Project time is July 2004 - June 2007.

The project is part-financed by the European Union within the BSR INTERREG IIIB Neighbourhood Programme.



Symposium participants in the Arctic Centre in Rovaniemi. Foto: Milla Maenpaa, SYKE

ted. A poster exhibition in the Arctic Centre of Rovaniemi illustrated in a colourful way the objectives and results of many European projects. International experts discussed scientific and practical approaches in the symposium. By exchanging knowledge, the complexity and future challenges of sustainable river basin management became very clear.

During the conference a wider network could have been created between the participating groups. Organisers and audience agreed on the big success of the event. A big step towards sustainable river basin management for Europe was made. The project consortium of Watersketch looks forward to continuing the work within the next Baltic Sea Region programme period.

Watersketch at the Baltic Sea Day 2007 in St. Petersburg

On March 21-23 2007, the VIII International Environmental Forum „Baltic Sea Day“ took place in St. Petersburg. The basic themes were mainly the Baltic Action Plan and the Water Framework Directive (WFD) in transboundary waters, the Russian-Finnish-Estonian cooperation in the Gulf of Finland, as well as the North-European Gas Pipeline construction project in the Baltic Sea.

The conference was organised by the Secretariat of HELCOM (Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission). Watersketch was presented by the Finnish lead partner SYKE and the Polish partner Lodz University. There were about 400 participants at this conference from all the Baltic Sea countries, including government officials, diplomats, scientists and business leaders, as well as representatives of

the European Commission, major regional organisations, and NGOs, giving presentations and leading discussions in six separate sessions.

The representatives of Interreg IIB WATERSKETCH took part in the round table discussion devoted to the application of the WFD principles in transboundary waters. Seppo Hellsten, SYKE, presented the main aims, structure and results of Watersketch. Mirosław Imbierowicz, Lodz University, gave a presentation titled “Examples of problems in Baltic Sea river basin ecological status of Jeziorsko reservoir, impact-pressures and problems with the implementation of the programme measures of the WFD” and illustrated an example application of Watersketch tools to solve real problems in the field of sustainable river basin management in Poland.

The problems concerning spatial planning and WFD implementation in countries of the Baltic Sea Region were widely discussed during the forum, as well as joint international actions necessary to reduce pollution of the Baltic Sea and restore its good ecological status.

The VIII International Environmental Forum “Baltic Sea Day” in St. Petersburg was a great opportunity to present the results and experiences collected during the realization of Watersketch. The project partners had the chance to discuss and exchange new ideas with participants from Russia and Belarus.

Mirosław Imbierowicz
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Watersketch supports the implementation of the WFD in Poland

On 5 April 2007, a conference was organised by Lodz Technical University as part of the Watersketch project. The conference was held in the Lodz Branch of the Polish Academy of Sciences building. It was organised under the patronage of Stanisław Olas, President of the Lodz Region.

The objectives of the conference included:

- Assessment and characterisation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) implementation processes in Poland;
- Presentation of selected instruments supporting reaching of the objectives listed in the WFD;
- Determination of barriers and conditions which hamper completion of the RDW aims.

Approximately 60 participants, including researchers representing academic centres from Lodz, people from administration and self-government of the Lodz region, such as directors of departments and managers of organisation units, regional councillors, city mayors, spatial management specialists and representatives of the Ministry of Environment met on this conference.

It was opened and chaired by Ireneusz Zbiciński, followed by the presentation “The recent state of WFD implementation in Poland” by Dr Adriana Dembowska, Deputy Director of the Department of Planning and Water Resources in the National Water Management. The next paper entitled “Watersketch project as a tool supporting the implementation of Water Framework Directive (WFD)” was delivered by Jerzy Skrzypski from Lodz Techni-

cal University. The conference ended with the presentation of Mirek Imbierowicz on “Tools and systems supporting water resources management illustrated by Jeziorsko reservoir”.

The presentations and discussion at the conference enabled the assessment and survey of selected problems of the implementation of the WFD in Poland, taking into account the recent achievements and obstacles in reaching the aims specified in this Directive.

Mirosław Imbierowicz
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Stakeholder Workshop in Klaipėda

The workshop took place in Klaipėda, Lithuania on 7 June 2007 and was intended to present stakeholder attitudes towards the Water Framework Directive (WFD), visions of the Directive's implementation, and aspects of public participation in water resource management. The elaboration of the common position on extensive public and stakeholder involvement in river basin management was a goal of the workshop.

The participants of the workshop were presented with the results of the Watersketch project and given the possibility for open discussion in order to come up with suggestions relevant for the sustainable development of the Minija river

basin. The discussion and analysis of development scenarios were supported by Web-HIPRE decision support tool. Experience showed that computer based decision support inspires vital discussion and acts as an excellent vehicle for the development of a consensus.

Due to the lack of dialogue between institutions it is not possible to initiate integrated decision making, functions and work of separate institutions overlap. Distribution and use of financial resources also become less efficient and transparent. Administrators and planners fully agree that co-operation between the interested groups is an important condition for sustainable water resource management.

Individuals have the least possibilities to participate in the various environmental activities and to express their wishes and opinion. Thus, an increase in public participation in river basin management through community or interest based organisations would improve this.

During the workshop experiences were shared regarding the dissemination of WFD related information using various forms of media. Since the popularity of the internet is constantly increasing, dissemination of information via the internet was an important point for discussion.

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Project resume: Interview with Watersketch lead partner SYKE



Dörte Krahn and Seppo Hellsten reflect the project outcomes. Foto: Veronika Schulte (TuTech)

Seppo, you have been in charge of the overall coordination of the Watersketch project. What was the main aim of the project and did you succeed?

- In short, our main aim was to help river basin managers to combine spatial planning aspects with river basin management. In practice these issues were divided into five different questions:

1. What are the main directives and conventions related to the use of river basins as well as river basin management?
2. How are these demands expressed at the regional level land use planning now and in future, especially in relation to development of river basin plans according to the WFD?
3. What are the most common problems in Baltic Sea river basins?
4. Are there any common tools to be utilized in river basin management?
5. How can we disseminate information on sustainable river basin planning?

We succeeded relatively well with our four first questions, but regarding the dissemination issues the answer should come from river basin managers, who are utilising our outcomes.

And what were the easiest task and the biggest challenge during the past 3 years?

- It is easy to find capable people to do the project, but sometimes it was very difficult to bring spatial planners and river basin managers into discussion with each other.

Different backgrounds and ways of thinking were something very challenging, although the European Water Framework Directive has clearly pointed out the importance of a full scale river basin approach taking into consideration all uses of a drainage area.

Watersketch was part-financed by the European Union, Interreg IIIB BSR programme, which ends in 2007. What makes this programme so special and what are your plans for the next period, 2007 - 2013?

- Interreg IIIB BSR allows a relatively free combination of scientific aspects with practical applied issues, which means that both research institutes and people in charge of spatial planning can combine their skills and forces to one common approach. Bi-annual reporting is relatively frequent, but on the other hand more focused on results, not lengthy explanations. The BSR Secretariat in Rostock is a very flexible and fast reacting project organisation, which also enables smooth project coordination. Regarding the next period, we are ready to submit a proposal for Watersketch II maybe focusing on practical approaches of river basin planning.

European projects are sometimes hard to explain to the public. How would you describe its value of "transnationality"?

- Transnationality is an essential part of river basin planning. There are several transboundary river basins and at least our common sink of river outputs is the Baltic Sea, which cannot be managed without transnational aspects. It is also valuable to appreciate the different political and so-

Project outcomes in the internet

The Watersketch project developed and utilized several tools for spatial planners to evaluate the effect of different land use practices and especially to solve contradictions between different uses of river basins. Tools were developed also for the estimation of nutrient load, ecological status of physically heavily modified rivers and lakes and to gather public opinions.

Most of these tools are presented in a web based toolbox and in the handbook to allow further use when applying the WFD and other relevant directives.

Further information is available at:
www.watersketch.net,
toolbox.watersketch.net

cial backgrounds of different project partners to understand how sustainable river basin planning could be implemented.

Climate change is a widely discussed topic these days. Are the project results related to it and if so, could you briefly describe the relevance of sustainable River Basin Management to it?

- Most of the case studies are somehow related to hydrological issues, which are naturally connected to climate change. As an example, the RiverLifeGIS tool takes into account the amount of water and therefore all the results can be used in different climates. Sustainable river basin management according to my understanding takes into account increasing floods and droughts when a management plan is prepared. It does not neglect the use of green energy such as hydropower, which on the other hand can also harm the ecological status of rivers and lakes.

Your interest on water issues is certainly also reflected in your private life. When was the last time you have been at a river, seaside or a lake with your family?

- Last time I was skiing on the sea ice with my wife at the end March, but afterwards I have been boating at the Finnish Gulf to visit our summer cottage after winter. Practically all summer vacations have been spent on that small island and really in the middle of the water, which is also heavily suffering from recent eutrophication processes.

*Interviewee: Seppo Hellsten, SYKE
Interviewer: Dörte Krahn, TuTech*

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calendar 2006 - 2007

July 2006

12 - 14 WP3 Workgroup Meeting - Oulu, FIN

August 2006

6 - 9 Nordic Water 2006 - Vingsted Centret, DK,

20 - 26 Waterweek in Stockholm – Stockholm, SWE

September 2006

25 - 26 International Seminar of Collaborative Planning of Natural Resources Management - Helsinki, FI

27 Steering and Management Group Meeting Helsinki, FIN

October 2006

10 - 13 12th Magdeburg Seminar on Protection of Waters 2006 - Cesky Crumlov, CZ

30 - 31 Tool testing feedback seminar and excursion - Klaipeda, LT

November 2006

20 - 21 Trabant Workshop - Stockholm, S

December 2006

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February 2007

8 - 9 Final Watersketch Management Group Meeting - Copenhagen, DK

March 2007

21 - 23 VIII International Environmental Forum „Baltic Sea Day“, HELCOM - St. Petersburg, RUS

April 2007

5 Watersketch conference for local stakeholders – Lodz, PL

May 2007

14 - 15 Final WATERSKETCH Seminar: European Symposium on Spatial Planning Approaches to Sustainable River Basin Management - Rovaniemi, FIN

16 Project partner meeting, Rovaniemi, FI

June 2007

5 - 6 Watersketch final local seminar for Hamburg and Water visions for the future - Hamburg, D

7 Watersketch local stakeholder workshop - Klaipėda, Lithuania

Newsletter V

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partners

Lead Partner: Finnish Environment Institute SYKE

- TuTech Innovation GmbH (GER)
- National Environmental Research Institute (DK)
- County of North Jutland (DK)
- Lodz Technical University, Faculty of Process Environmental Engineering (PL)
- Kaunas University of Technology (LT)
- Coastal Research and Planning Institute (LT)
- Hamburg Ministry for Urban Development and the Environment (GER)
- North Ostrobothnia Regional Environment Centre (FIN)
- Kainuu Regional Environment Centre (FIN)
- University of Turku, Satakunta Environmental Research Institute (FIN)
- Regional Council of Satakunta (FIN)
- Northern Environmental Research Network (FIN)
- Council of Oulu Region (FIN)
- Regional Council of Kainuu (FIN)