

Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in South Eastern Europe

Strengthening regional cooperation/networking in the forestry and water management sector and sustainable development in the river basins of the South-Eastern European Countries

SWG Head Office/Secretariat

Aim of the feasibility study

- ✓ **To assess the current situation and responsibilities of different institutions in the water and forestry sector and**
- ✓ **To assess the feasible opportunities for development of a functional network or Commission on sustainable forestry and water management in the SEE region**

including aiming to

- ✓ Create a potential for encompassing integrated water, forestry and land management, supported by national governments, institutions and international community in SEE countries where cross-border river basin areas exist.
- ✓ Promote stakeholder participation in development of a joint action and coordinative efforts for effective implementation and enforcement of agriculture, forestry and water policies, and improving the current level of enforcement of existing agriculture, forestry and water legislations.

The Identified Problem

Lack of cooperation between the forest sector
and the water sector in the SEE region.

The Proposed Solutions

to strengthening the regional cooperation between the water sector and forest sector and creating an enabling

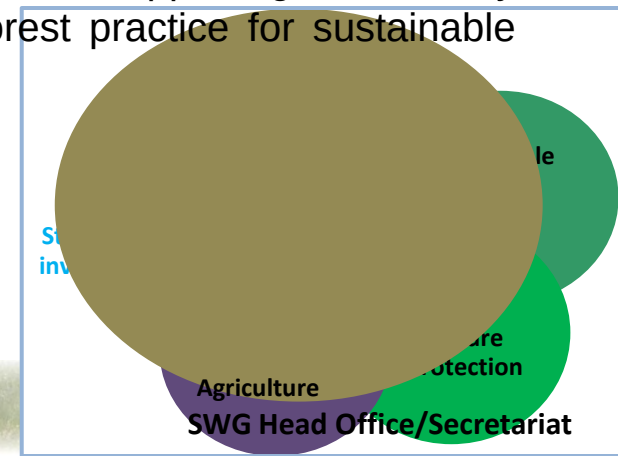
- Establish a **working group within SWG** that facilitates cooperation between the two sectors
- Establish a **new Commission** on Forest and Water Management outside the SWG

The Activities

- **Country Baseline Reports** on water and forest issues by national experts following a prescribed format (Feb to Sept 2011)
- **Country Workshops** with the water and forest sector discussing base line reports (May to Sept 2011)
- **Questionnaires** for interviewing representatives from ministries, agencies and stakeholders (Summer 2011)
- Two **International Technical Workshops** organised by SWG (Nov 2010 in Andrevlje and March 2011 in Herceg Novi)
- One **International Workshop** organized by SWG to present draft findings and discuss opportunities (Nov 2011, Ohrid)
- Preparation of **feasibility study report** (Oct 2011 – Feb 2012)
- Presentation of the results at **the final conference** (March 2012).

Why is cooperation needed?

- To harmonize national water and forest policies, legislation and regulations and improve their implementation in accordance with EU directives and policies
- To improve forest management to serve the demands of integrated water management
- To improve water management to serve the demands of sustainable forest management
- To coordinate efforts for erosion control and flood prevention, incl. development of measures for management of steep slopes to prevent erosion and counteracting clear-cutting and illegal logging along water resources functioning as protective forests for soil and water
- To coordinate monitoring programmes, e.g. on assessment of ecological status and classification of water bodies, use of natural resources and protection of biodiversity, including cooperation related to the use of forest springs and other water sources
- To coordinate management and protection of water basins including reservoirs for hydropower plants, irrigation and rehabilitation of degraded areas around water basins
- To create better possibilities for access to information provided by the two sectors
- To explore the idea of “Payment for Ecosystem Services” as a tool for supporting the forestry sector, as well creating awareness of financial benefits of good forest practice for sustainable water resources management
- To design joint (research) projects.



EU calls for cross-sector cooperation

- The EU Water Framework Directive calls for Integrated River Basin Management Planning ; coordinated planning of land use and water management
- The Common Agricultural Policy calls for comprehensive rural development plans
- The EU Natura 2000 policy requires coordinated target setting for terrestrial and aquatic habitat types and species
- The new EU FLEGT and EU Timber Regulation require actions against illegal timber
- The EU calls for coordinated planning of climate adaptation and mitigation policies.

Specifics in EU policies for forest and water

Protection against flooding and draught: Assessment of water bodies at risk from flooding and mapping flood risks and to take adequate and coordinated measures to reduce the risk, including measures for forestry.

Combating erosion and sedimentation. Through soil stabilisation, forests minimise erosion and reduce the impairment of water quality caused by sedimentation.

Biodiversity conservation: The Habitats Directives requirement to map, monitor and designate Natura 2000 sites with water bodies and forest habitat types and species.

Combating climate change impacts. Developing policies and strategies for forest and water management that contribute to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Public participation: Public participation means giving the public and stakeholders the opportunity to influence plans and working processes.

The feasibility study proposes

- Establishment of a formalized cooperation on Ministerial level for strengthening cooperation on integrated water and forest management such as through a memorandum of understanding;
- Strengthen regional cooperation by establishment of **regional expert advisory group** – regional working group on forestry and water management.

As a best solution for strengthening the cross-sectoral and regional cooperation among the water and forestry sectors in SEE countries

Working Group Structure

The working group (the “Water and Forestry Committee”) is recommended to be facilitated by the SWG secretariat but to have its own working group structure.

The “Water and Forestry Committee” will supervise and guide the work of a number of technical working groups.

It is recommended to establish four technical working groups:

- **Policy group** responsible for the policy dialogue
- **Capacity building group** responsible for the capacity building programme and for bringing in technical assistance
- **Technical group** responsible for defining relevant activities for setting up methodologies and monitoring exchange programmes.
- **Networking group** responsible for securing sharing experiences and information relevant for the two sectors

Aim of this workshop

- The planning workshop is a follow-up on the future steps out to be taken for the regional coordination of joint water resource and forestry management in the region of South Eastern Europe.
- The propose of the workshop is to discuss and evaluate the methods on making the proposed regional working group in becoming visible a leading, pro-active initiative on regional level for joint water resource and forestry management.

What are the expected outputs from the workshop

- discussion and formulation of regional project schemes on joint WR and Forestry management in SEE;
- drafting of a road map towards enhanced regional planning and coordination as well as project design and implementation;
- inclusion of all possible players, stakeholders and donor community.

Thank you!

Contact:

SWG Head Office/ Secretariat

Address:

"III Makedonska Brigada bb"
Makedonija Tabak Building 2nd floor
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
Tel: +389 2 3 217 708
Fax: +389 2 3 217 244

E-mail:

swgsecretariat@swg-seerural.org

www.seerural.org