
Common Agricultural Policy and Water Framework Directive Rural development

Project

Duration

Apr 2008 - Apr 2009

The successful implementation of the Water Framework Directive depends strongly on the future development of agriculture, which is mainly influenced by the Common Agricultural Policy. Rural development programmes play a crucial role in this context. The main objective of this project is to assess the EU 27 Rural development programs as regards to water issues.

The Water Framework Directive aims to improve the status of water quality and availability in EU. The successful implementation of the Water Framework Directive depends strongly on agricultural land use, which is mainly influenced by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The CAP is implemented at national level through rural development programmes. These national programmes allow Member States to shape policy in a way that can have ambiguous results on water quality and scarcity. The new upcoming Rural Development Regulation (RDR) for the period 2007-2013 directly supports the WFD objectives (Art. 38 RDR). In addition, the four axes of the upcoming RDR contain measure that offer the ability to protect and enhance natural water resources (e.g. agri-environment and agro-forest payments, natural handicap payments, use of advisory services).

Three years after starting to put national Rural development programs into place, there is the need to assess the extent to which Water Framework Directive issues have been considered. The objective of this project is to identify the gaps between Water Framework Directive requirements and the implementation by the 27 Member States of the Common Agriculture Policy.

To this end, an in-depth assessment on the place of Water Framework Directive issues in the Rural Development Programs was carried. The results of the assessment was cross-compared and compiled in a report. A [workshop](#) was also organised to discuss the results of the in-depth assessment, as well as other relevant issues in the field of agriculture and water management. The workshop allowed all relevant stakeholders to exchange their views on the various issues related to the Common Agriculture Policy and the Water Framework Directive.

This assessment will help to design of specific implementation rules of Art 38 RDR, which focus on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive, and also to draw lessons learned for the development of EU agricultural and rural areas policies.

The [final report](#) [pdf, 838 KB, English] is available for download.

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