



EurAqua statement on Instruments for Targeted Research under FP7

November 2008

APPROPRIATE INSTRUMENTS FOR TARGETED RESEARCH

The recent EurAqua Conference (Oslo, 23-24 October 2008) considered "**How can climate change be incorporated in River Basin Management plans under the WFD?**"

(<http://www.euraqua.org/content/activities/eurquaconference2008>)

The meeting focussed on:

- Climate change and the WFD: status and uncertainties
- Modelling tools and technology: uncertainties and future challenges
- Adaptation to climate change

The meeting highlighted significant progress from a scientific perspective in understanding the potential impacts of climate change. Much of the new understanding related to climate change impacts results from EU and national research funding, especially under Integrated Projects. EUROLIMPACS is an example of a successful Integrated Project, with over 400 scientific publications resulting from the research activity. The meeting, however, also raised a number of key issues regarding the practical 'implementation' of recent scientific findings.

For example, research on the following is urgently required for the 2nd cycle of the WFD:

- How will climate change impact on: pressures on water bodies (nutrients, hazardous substances, hydromorphology); reference conditions; ecological thresholds used to set the good/moderate boundary and thereby the WFD objective?
- How will this impact be reflected in terms of water body status and classification?
- How can uncertainty in climate change impacts be incorporated in the RBMPs?
- How should the 'measures' be assessed for 'no regrets'?

Such questions would benefit from targeted research projects. An excellent example in this respect was the REBECCA project; a Specifically Targeted Research Project or STREP (policy support project). Such funding instruments for policy support seems to have been dropped from FP7. EurAqua strongly recommends that this instrument, or something similar, be urgently introduced to address the specific issues associated with the continued implementation of the WFD.

Euraqua members are developing extensive research in support to water-related policies. They are fully aware of the needs to further increase science—policy interfacing, for co-designing and orienting research activities on one hand, and for ensuring smooth and efficient transfer of research results to decision makers and practitioners on the other hand.

EurAqua strongly recommends that instruments for policy support are reintroduced in FP7 to address issues associated with policy development or implementation of European legislation, such as the Water Framework Directive.