

SPI-Water Cluster

Science-Policy Interfacing in Water Management



ROADMAP

**FOR UPTAKE OF
EU WATER RESEARCH
IN POLICY AND
INDUSTRY**

**Jointly produced by
the 3 European funded projects:**



December 2012

Executive Summary

This Roadmap focusses on increasing communication efforts of EU water research projects to reach distinct targeted audiences, improving accessibility to water research results, speeding up their uptake and strengthening the Water Science-Policy-Industry Interface to become results-oriented.

This roadmap is the result of the work performed over two years by the three EU-funded projects of the SPI-Water cluster: STEP-WISE, STREAM and WaterDiss 2.0 to support the communication and dissemination of EU water-research project results. The roadmap is based on the assessments and recommendations made by the SPI-Water cluster and the conclusions of the final conference of STEP-WISE and STREAM projects.

Roadmap Recommendations:

Increase communication efforts of EU water research projects to reach distinct targeted audiences

Research funding organisations, as e.g. EC, should insist that their projects create a professional communication strategy targeting the necessary stakeholders for uptake of their results through:

- layman factsheets, which are entered into the WISE-RTD Water Knowledge Portal;
- tailored seminars to reach diverse stakeholders;
- stakeholder representation in the projects' consortiums;
- the creation of thematic conferences where projects present their results; these conferences are organised by professional organisers and are advertised on a central website;
- promoting e-Learning courses and summer schools allowing the audience to better engage in the topic.

Improve accessibility to water research results and speed up their transfer

Relevant flexibility in resources planning with respect to dissemination activities should be allowed for dissemination also shortly after the project ends. The production of layman reports focusing on the results of the projects should be made obligatory. The use of online tools, which can present information on various projects at the same time and disseminate the research results as widely as possible, web platforms, e-learning, webinars and social media should be encouraged.

Strengthen the Water Science-Policy-Industry Interface to become results-oriented

Research projects should write, in a standardised-format, a policy statement for each reporting period to demonstrate how results are relevant for EU and national politicians. These policy briefs should be shared on a central website; WISE-RTD is ideal for this purpose.

Thematic conferences of projects from the different EU funding schemes should involve the EC and EP units or committees and also local and regional policy makers and implementers. Thematic conferences with input from a number of projects are believed to be more attractive to participants from SMEs and industry than smaller conferences based around a single research project. Specific Water Science meets Policy and Industry events should be organised by the EC on a regular basis with specific focus on themes that will be of relevance for the policy implementation in the following years.

Introduction

Over the past few decades, the European Union has invested considerable resources to support water research and the development of new water technologies by funding European projects. Since 2006 alone, more than 450 projects related to water research were supported in the main EC programmes LIFE, FP7, CIP and INTERREG.

Unfortunately, the dissemination and uptake of the results of these projects is limited. The main reason for this limited uptake is due to insufficient awareness of both the projects and their results among potentially interested parties. A specific challenge is to bring together researchers and politicians to make sure politicians make best use of the available knowledge and research is policy-driven.

To remedy this situation, in 2010 the EC launched a call for proposals for projects to support the communication and dissemination of EU water-research project results. As a result of this call, three projects were granted: STEP-WISE, STREAM and WaterDiss2.0, which together form the SPI-Water cluster¹.

This Roadmap is based on the work performed and the experiences of the three projects.

Key Elements of the Roadmap:

- **Increase communication efforts of EU water research projects to reach distinct targeted audiences.**
- **Improve accessibility to water research results and speed up their transfer.**
- **Strengthen the Water Science-Policy-Industry Interface to become results-oriented.**

Roadmap Background:

This Roadmap is the result of the joint efforts of the science-policy-industry interface 'SPI-Water Cluster'. The Roadmap is based on three experiences:

- the assessments made by the SPI-Water cluster projects
- the conclusions of the Final Conference
- the recommendations presented by the SPI-Water cluster projects for improving the water research uptake in policy-making and industry

¹ FP7 Environment (Grant Agreements STEP-WISE: 265308; STREAM: 265309; WaterDiss2.0: 265167)

Major Challenges

Increase communication efforts of EU water research projects to reach distinct targeted audiences

The SPI-Water cluster has analysed several hundreds of water related projects in detail with respect to improving their accessibility and transfer of their results. The main observations are described below.

The STREAM project has identified that a large number of EU projects lack a targeted communication strategy focused on reaching those stakeholders, who actually need the results and those who would benefit most from their uptake. The focus is mainly put on reaching a certain number of people, instead of reaching the right people. Evaluation takes place based on this number and not on the actual effect these decision groups have for the project and on the water issues.

Most EU projects use the same standard channels for communication: website, newsletters, workshops and a final conference. Each project has its own channels leading to a large number of events, websites and newsletters. More than 450 water related projects have been supported by the EC since January 2006. On average each of these projects organised two workshops and a final conference. This means a total of more than 1300 events on water research in 7 years, or about 1 event for each working day. The question is how many of the participants had a significant uptake of results from these events? Did all of these events have an effect on sustainable water management?

Communication of EU projects is predominantly addressed towards the same audience. Organisations involved in EU projects often have a network of EU active organisations and information doesn't 'leave' this network. This is demonstrated by the fact that most events have the same audience and speakers.

Improve accessibility to water research results and speed up their transfer

Each EU funded project has its own website. There is centralised information on these projects for each funding program, but this rarely gives more than a general project description that is written at the beginning of the project. There is a need for an overview over the different funding programs with links to achieved outputs, results and experiences from these projects.

Research results are often presented in large reports, using scientific or technical language. The use of such language in dissemination of research results to other stakeholders creates a barrier in communication. There is a necessity to transform the scientific results into a more friendly and accessible language as well as presentation format. Projects should consider the distinct needs of their target audiences, including policy, from the start of the project. Analysis of these needs, will determine the information dissemination format(s).

The STEP-WISE project has identified that the majority of the project websites of EC funded FP4 and FP5 projects have ceased to exist or are inaccessible to the public. For nearly all LIFE projects information is accessible on the LIFE website, and nearly all FP research projects are present in CORDIS (all projects funded under ERA-NET are lacking). However, the quality of the project information on CORDIS is low: abstracts are usually from the proposal phase and achievements are rarely indicated. Furthermore, most of the project research results are not in the public domain of these websites. Knowledge translation and knowledge transfer has been proven difficult due to either proprietary rights or lack of continuing and wider dissemination.

In the last decade, several hundreds of water related projects were funded by different funding schemes (FP, Life, Interreg, Cost, ...) for billions of euros. In the past 10 years alone, 1.8 billion Euros were invested in water.² However, there is little record of how this investment has led to the development of knowledge, technologies, etc. in order to increase the sustainability of our environment and to create economic growth and social welfare.

There is little structured follow up by the funding organisations on research results that are interesting for further exploration and specific targeted further development. Therefore opportunities to speed up the transfer of research results are missed and knowledge might even get lost. This is indeed in contrast to other EC programmes i.e. Eurostars, which requires projects to provide a cost-benefit analysis of their results and are required to bring their development to the market.

Strengthen the Water Science-Policy-Industry Interface to become results-oriented

The traditional linear model of communication of scientific knowledge to policy makers is too simplistic to deal with complex processes between science and policy that intersect with multiple relations and lack common reservoirs of knowledge, intermediaries and knowledge-brokers. Scientists and policy-makers must understand and distinguish actions between three types:

- classic decision-making: trying to get the answer to what to do and how to do it
- advocacy: determining an evidence base in order to have a position accepted or rejected
- marketing: understanding how the argument should be explained and illustrated for other stakeholders to understand the key points.

² World Water Day – EU research on Water **MEMO/12/203 Event Date: 22/03/2012**

There is a need for consolidating an intermediate step just after research in close relation with stakeholders. Therefore research projects need support with respect to:

- Assessment of information generated from the project in order to respond to the policy and industry needs.
- Communication of those findings to policy and industry in a re-packaged form fitting policy and industry needs. Support to the existing dissemination activities focusing on this science-policy-industry interfacing.
- Facilitating the uptake of the selected output. For example by using mediators that write summary reports for projects in layman's English.
- Enabling scientific result uptake through dedicated knowledge-brokers.
- The above mentioned suggestions will also ensure and improve the communication with the 'demand'-side, as well as identify their current needs and try to see if the new solutions offered by the research projects would match their needs.

There is a lack of contact between science and policy, each having their own world of publications, funding schemes and events with limited attendance of policy makers to research disseminating events and vice versa. Also the involvement of politicians in dissemination events, research or demonstration projects, etc. is limited, specifically on a local or regional level. However, there are sporadic examples identified where researchers work closely with local municipalities in defining research needs this ensures a fast uptake for the social and environmental good.

Update on progress made so far ...

SPI-Water project actions

Increase communication efforts of EU water research projects to reach distinct targeted audiences

The STREAM project has mediated with the coordinators of 439 projects from the main European support programmes (FP6, FP7, LIFE, LIFE+, INTERREG and CIP; started after 1/1/2006) to draft easy-to-read factsheets providing concise information on their projects accessible for all stakeholders. This resulted in 140 research project factsheets that were provided by these projects and that form the basis for the activities of STREAM to disseminate the results of European projects on water, including:

- An e-learning course consisting of modules on EU Legislation, Innovation and Research and concluded with a final Self-Assessment module. This e-learning program provided a selection of learning material supported with videos and presentations in an interactive learning platform and attracted about 50% researchers from universities, private companies and public agencies and 50% equally divided among policy advisors and project managers.
- Summer Schools which focused on bringing young researchers together with participants of SMEs to discuss European research efforts on water.

- Policy Seminars which focused on bringing together researchers and politicians to make sure politicians are able to base their activities on the latest research results and research is policy driven. The topics were on 'Urban Water Management', 'Innovative technologies to reduce water consumption' and 'Climate Change and Flood Risk Management'. Each of the Seminars attracted participants from (EU and national) policy, researchers and business representatives.
- A selection of EU water research projects were supported by developing short videos that provide easily-accessible communication of the projects' outcomes. A series of interviews were organised with water experts, especially those involved in water research projects.
- Conferences of selected EU projects on water research were broadcast live on the internet in the form of webinars to allow for a much broader audience.
- Policy factsheets were prepared to give an easy-to-read overview of EU policies, which are crucial for research and business activities. These Policy factsheets were further developed to include an overview of the impacts of the policies on industry. The factsheets were distributed to policy-makers and policy implementers, among others using WISE-RTD.
- In order to reach a wide audience, communication was done by newsletters to a wide number of e-mail contacts including the various categories of stakeholders: policymakers, researchers, industry, science communication and media and by utilising social media tools (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube).

Recognising the diversity of the audiences STEP-WISE has created two types of guided searches in the WISE-RTD Water Knowledge Portal which intelligently links research projects with water policies; one for the policy interested that starts from the water policies to find research results and one for the research/consultant that is a thematic based on major water issues.

STEP-WISE developed a communication strategy targeting different stakeholders for its WISE-RTD. Since the science-policy-industry communication gap not only depends on the language terminology differences between them, but also on understanding the perspective of each group in seeing the same water issues. Thus, the STEP-WISE project, as part of its Communication Strategy created a highly interactive e-learning programme with a role-play between a researcher, a policy-implementer and an industry consultant in helping the learner understand the issue from different perspectives. STEP-WISE received very positive feedback on this approach in bridging the science-policy-industry gap.

WaterDiss2.0 has developed the Individual Dissemination Strategy (IDS), a procedure which gives guidelines and protocols on how to plan and implement dissemination strategies, adapted to the specific needs of each research project. The IDS is being trialled in a wide number of on-going projects.

Additionally, WaterDiss2.0 is organising sessions around Europe in water related topics aimed at communicating analysed research results. The purpose of this communication is to maximise the value and uptake of the science/technology through the application of results whenever and wherever appropriate, in order to secure social, environmental and economic return for the EU. With these activities it is the intention to implement knowledge exchange, public engagement and communication and dissemination of the research results by developing dissemination tools and organising events.

Improve accessibility to water research results and speed up their transfer

The WISE-RTD Water Knowledge Portal provides EU water research project information in layman's English so that it can be easily understood by non-scientists. Water research results have been linked to policy guidelines (e.g. Directives) making it easy to search and understand their inter-relation. Furthermore, once specific research results have been identified, WISE-RTD displays to the user related policy and research material. In this manner, the user independent of his background can easily access other, related information.

In populating the WISE-RTD portal with water related research projects and their results, the STEP-WISE project identified 618 relevant projects (Framework Programme and LIFE), and updated information on 392 projects that were already in WISE-RTD before STEP-WISE. In total 248 policy projects, 3285 policies, 880 policy guidance documents, 739 policy experiences, 682 research projects, 720 research experiences, 342 research guidance documents, 227 research tools, 6 technology tools have been interlinked in WISE-RTD. Thus WISE-RTD has become a valuable knowledge portal in bridging the water science-policy-industry interface. Not surprisingly, when searching for EC funded project information often the WISE-RTD portal has a high ranking on Google and other internet search engines.

Most projects – notably the more recent FP6 and FP7, LIFE+ – have prepared a project website and some dissemination material (e.g. flyers). However, in many instances research results were not available other than in the scientific literature, hence in less accessible formats for the non-scientific audience. Even when projects had work packages on dissemination the majority failed to translate research findings into easy accessible information on their web sites.

Unfortunately many of the project websites cease to exist (shortly) after the projects had been completed, and hence results were no longer accessible via the internet. For example, the STEP-WISE project has identified that today about 12% of the FP6 project websites have become obsolete. As WISE-RTD basically links information and it is not, at first instance, a repository of research results, valuable RTD information tends to become difficult to obtain. Until now, project information found in CORDIS usually copies the information from the project proposal stage, and is not updated with real achievements and results. There is progress being made in asking proposal writers to focus on the sustainability of their websites after the project, but even that has limited effect and often websites will not be updated with any more information after the project. The fact that no budget can be foreseen for sustainability actions after a project's end is a major barrier to maintaining project websites beyond the project duration.

Within the STEP-WISE project, the WISE-RTD Water Knowledge Portal has been extended to include all EU Water Directives and the US Clean Water Act and to link these to about 1000 EU water research and policy projects and their results and experiences.

The STREAM project focused on ensuring better awareness of the European projects carried out and making sure the results of these projects were easily accessible for those people without specific expertise in the subject. A number of activities were carried out to make the results of these projects more accessible:

- The production of Research project factsheets which highlight the current results of each project in an accessible language. These factsheets serve to make the audience aware of the results produced and where to find the detailed results.
- Videos and interviews were produced to provide an attractive method to communicate results of a project to a broad audience. They serve to point interested stakeholders to more detailed results in reports, etc.
- The e-learning modules, specifically the module on research, provided the opportunity to EU research projects to communicate their results in an accessible way to a large audience. These modules used the project outcomes (documents, presentations, videos) and Research project factsheets as learning material and specifically the research module was enriched by the involvement of project coordinators of several water research projects which were available to answer participants' questions.

WaterDiss2.0 has developed the European Water Community (EWC) as a tool to spread research messages to the target audiences. EWC is a platform connecting science with policy and innovation to improve water management in Europe. EWC aims at providing dedicated space to water stakeholders (managers, researchers, policy makers, consultants, etc.) to disseminate research outcomes, exchange on needs and existing and forthcoming solutions for water management.

The EWC interface, easy to use, gives quick access to European research outputs on water. This is the first innovative aspect of this platform: it is indeed focused on research results and not on the projects themselves. Water stakeholders therefore have easy access to these outputs through documents, videos and policy briefs. Access to this information is according to multiple criteria in order to meet the exact needs of the user: a key word, a date, a user or a European Directive.

The second innovative aspect of EWC is that researchers can promote their scientific results and ensure they reach the operational area. EWC provides an opportunity for each researcher to complete an online output information form. Thus, giving access to new research results to other water stakeholders and speeding-up the transfer of European water research outputs to end users.

The third innovative aspect of EWC is the possibility to create thematic discussion groups associated with each of the outputs. Thus, all the people working on the same issues can easily get in contact, discuss, exchange ideas and documents or create partnerships with members and non-members of the community.

The platform thus allows an integrated approach of European research on water inviting all types of stakeholders and covering all stages of promotion and implementation, from the availability of information to the support of partnerships.

Strengthen the Water Science-Policy-Industry Interface to become results-oriented

Acknowledging that science, policy and industry actors are not only divided by the difference of language but also of different thinking perspectives and timing horizons, the WISE-RTD e-learning program enables the learner to understand how a water issue can be addressed in a co-ordinated manner from different perspectives (research, policy and industry) to reach a sustainable solution. This is done by showing a film with a crisis highlighting the water issue and asking the learner to understand the different questions posed by the researcher, policy-implementer and industry-consultant for solving the water issue posed by the crisis situation. Furthermore, the STEP-WISE project has performed a gap analysis between water policy and research issues based upon the content of the WISE-RTD Water Knowledge Portal. The gap analysis is a tool for directing future research and policy initiatives for all target groups.

In order to disseminate the results of earlier EC projects to all stakeholders, including politicians, specific activities were set up by the STREAM project to bring together politicians and research:

- Policy Seminars were organised focusing on bringing together politicians, research and business representatives in a short session of a couple of hours on one specific topic, in order to make sure politicians can base their activities on the latest research and research is policy driven. These seminars were organised within larger major water related events such as the World Water Forum and the International Water Week to ensure that a wider audience could be reached and synergies could be created.
- The e-learning module focusing on policy, enabled stakeholders from all backgrounds to get easily informed about EU politics and current policy developments.

WaterDiss2.0 has provided a deep analysis of a large number of finished projects (FP6) in order to gather more knowledge on dissemination and uptake processes, consequently is in the process of not only analysing but also supporting with a consolidated 'knowledge-transfer' step on-going FP7 water related projects: this step is named the Individual Dissemination Strategy (IDS). The systematic collection of information from FP research project on dissemination and uptake of the output has resulted in a list of barriers and facilitators, which is under validation in the fieldwork of applying IDS's to existing water research results.

SPI-Water Conference Conclusions

The SPI-Water Cluster's projects STEP-WISE and STREAM organised a joint final conference, including input from the on-going WaterDiss2.0 project. This took place in Brussels on 3 and 4 December 2012. On the first day of the conference the workshops were held with 67 participants from 12 countries representing 16 from Policy, 21 from Research and 17 from Industry and Consultancy and 13 from other areas (NGOs, media, communication, education); the small majority among the participants of the conference were female. Separate workshops were held on these three topics in order to discuss these themes in depth with a wider audience than only within the SPI-Water cluster projects.

The main outcomes / recommendations of these workshops are listed below.

Increase communication efforts of EU water research projects to reach distinct targeted audiences

- Identify (alternative) stakeholders who may benefit from your research results. Involve all concerned stakeholders at the beginning of research projects or even at the definition of it in order to both provide input to the research process and to have easy access to the knowledge created. Keep stakeholders involved through progress reports and engage them in the end products of the research.
- Empower the stakeholders to take action by stressing the water messages making it a public priority subject and adapt the messages to the different stakeholders.
- It is important to communicate what has been already achieved by science in solving water issues and what these mean for the quality of life. Show the benefits/results to society and stakeholders through communication campaigns. Use new media, simple videos / animations to spread the results widely. Also traditional media can still having large impact, i.e. TV, newspapers, public meetings in popular local locations.
- Maintain a flexible approach to dissemination activities.
- Be aware of the timing issues as policy-cycles differ. Take advantage of the "policy windows of opportunity". As for example, SMEs are focusing mostly on the policies that have a short implementation cycle, because these allow their faster market development.

Improve the water research results accessibility to diverse audiences

- Face to face contact should be initiated by researcher/projects. Go to your target audiences, don't expect them to come you.
- Synergies between research projects must be looked at and project results should be disseminated thematically. Use high profile speakers and good networking opportunities to create impact.
- Disseminate the benefits of your research, not only the results. Translate the benefits to financial and societal results interesting for the stakeholders.

- Older research outcomes are often not lost, but only reported in scientific literature, not easily accessible to everyone. The funding organisations should take the lead to keep research information available.
- Distributed storage of information is considered problematic. Therefore a web based repository for dissemination of projects, deliverables and documents or even of websites is encouraged. There should be fixed templates and guidances for their use. Ultimately there shall be one access point for uploading and access of information. Use existing communities, industry groups, ... rather than create your own.
- The main priority for researchers is dissemination in scientific journals. It is suggested to earmark in (FP) projects a part of the budget for dissemination of results, which can be used after results have become available. Change the scientific citation system, so that scientists receive a reward and have an incentive to address and reach out policy-makers and industry.
- For layman's texts on results an option could be the use professional writers, or to rely on consortium skills. If the importance of dissemination of results is demonstrated to the researchers, they will be more eager to cooperate in adequate dissemination.
- Ring-fence funds should be available for post-project dissemination activities with funds released based on checklist of completed activities.

Strengthen the Water Science-Policy-Industry Interface to become results-oriented

- Empower society to be involved directly in water issues and understanding their needs through need-identification workshops.
- There is a need to cooperate at all levels through face-to-face meetings, use of a 'water-parliament' as in France, fostering networking and dealing with organisational and trans-organisational discrepancies. Cross-border cooperation is needed for experience exchange due to common water issues.
- The role of knowledge brokers / translators / facilitators must be recognised. Make use of knowledge brokers with experience in research and industry activities to find the link between research-policy-industry, to enable knowledge from your results and have them implemented.
- Research proposals should be evaluated not only by researches but also by other stakeholders.
- Distinguish between different stakeholders. Identify what they have to gain (i.e. commercial benefit for SMEs). Create tinkering-events where industry, research and policy mingle and exchange ideas.
- To create efficient awareness and avoid complacency in water issues, we need to pass the message through crisis scenarios.

Recommendations and Future Steps

Increase communication efforts of EU water research projects to reach distinct targeted audiences

Research funding organisations, as e.g. EC, should insist that their funded projects set up a two page layman factsheet which has to be updated every reporting period with actual results. These factsheets should be made available on one central point (for instance in WISE-RTD for water related research) which allows for searching the latest research results based on topic, related policy, region, etc. Horizontal projects including communication professionals could serve to make these factsheets reach a wide audience.

Research funding organisations should insist that their funded projects create a professional communication strategy targeted at reaching those stakeholders needed to facilitate actual uptake of the project's results. Focus should be on reaching those stakeholders needed, instead of solely on reaching a certain number of stakeholders. Furthermore, the strategies should focus on reaching outside the usual crowd of people involved in EU projects. Horizontal projects including professional communication agencies should be set up by the EU to augment these communication strategies and projects should be strongly pushed to use their services.

Use of the same standard channels for communication: website, newsletter, workshops and final conferences.

Specific dissemination activities should be tailored to the specific group of stakeholders. This means that the programme, location, duration and format of each activity should be focused on the specific needs of the stakeholders. For instance, short debates or seminars as a part of large conference can be a good option to attract policy makers and industry representatives who are already taking part in the conference, longer workshops or summer schools can provide an informal atmosphere to gather researchers and water practitioners, etc.

The success of involving target audiences in the project consortium has proven extremely successful. Thus, choosing the right representatives who are able to uptake the results will define the success of the transfer of the research results.

There is a large overload of conferences and workshops on water, all trying to attract participants from the same 'usual crowd'. A structure should be set up in which each EU project doesn't have to organise its own separate conference, but conferences are organised by theme, including all running EC projects on these themes across the different DGs. Horizontal projects to organise these conferences should include professional conference organisers. These conferences should also be promoted on the central website.

Researchers should be encouraged not only to write papers in international journals, but also 'translate' their research results in common 'language' and local languages in order to disseminate these results at local events and in local media.

The uptake of e-learning courses and summer schools should be promoted as a communication tool of EU research projects, because these allow for:

- Involving a wider and more varied audience
- Providing a flexible tool to allow the audience to go into the results in more depth and thereby engaging them in the topic.

Improve accessibility to water research results and speed up their transfer

Projects should plan human and economic resources according to the dissemination planning. However a certain level of flexibility is required as this process involves the social context, is very dynamic and could influence the project's needs. The EC should in their projects stimulate a relevant amount of flexibility in resources planning with respect to these dynamic needs, even after the project period.

A global identification should be performed of the communications channels/means that are used by EC funded projects on the one hand and on the other hand of those that really reach the audiences/users of the water research results.

Enhance the use of the Individual Dissemination Strategies in order to deliver continuity and sustainability in promising fields of research and technology.

The production of layman reports of the final results of EC funded projects should be a prerequisite where this is not yet the case. These reports should focus on the results of the projects and not only describing objectives and activities.

The use of online tools, which can present information on various projects at the same time and disseminate the research results as widely as possible: web platforms, e-learning, webinars, social media, etc., should be encouraged.

Strengthen the Water Science-Policy-Industry Interface to become results-oriented

Combined conferences by different projects on specific topics will provide a perfect opportunity for politicians to get informed and discuss the research results of a number of EC projects on one topic. These conferences should involve the EC and EP units or committees on the topics at hand, but also local and regional policy makers and implementers. These thematic conferences should bring together all relevant researchers in a specific domain and benefit from involvement of projects from the different funding mechanisms within the EC. Thematic conferences with input from a number of projects are believed to be more attractive to participants from SMEs and industry than smaller conferences based around a single research project. A sustainable Science-Policy-Industry dialogue system should be established, as uncertainty works counterproductively.

Research projects should write, in a standardised-format, a policy statement for each reporting period to demonstrate how results are relevant for EU and national politicians. These policy briefs should be shared on a central website; WISE-RTD is ideal for this purpose.

Specific Water Science meets Policy and Industry events should be organised by the EC on a regular basis with specific focus on themes that will be of relevance for the policy implementation in the following years. In these events all stakeholder groups should be involved. If the EC invites directly, there is more chance that members of the European Parliament and EC officers (and national and regional politicians) will show up. These events should encourage science-policy networking at the most appropriate level (from EU to catchment level). In order to reach the stakeholders at local level and in all Member States, initiatives should be taken to organise local events on Science-Policy-Industry interfacing with feedback from a general event and from developments at EU level (e.g. CIS working groups). Ideally this should lead to regional hubs that are the contact points and local steering actors in water related Science-Policy-Industry interfacing from where local dissemination is organised, e.g. using science-policy briefs.

Links

SPI-Water Cluster website: www.spi-water.eu

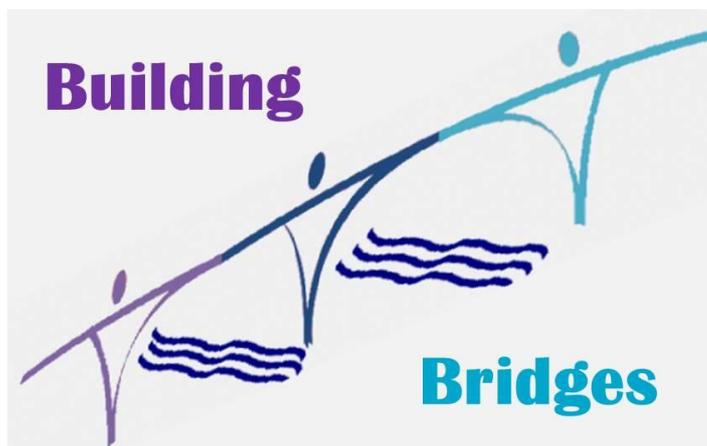
STREAM website: www.stream-project.eu

STEP-WISE website: www.spi-water.eu/step-wise

WaterDiss2.0 website: www.waterdiss.eu

WISE-RTD water knowledge portal: www.wise-rtd.info

European Water Community: europeanwatercommunity.eu

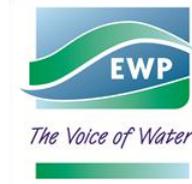


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Partners of the SPI-Water Cluster projects

STREAM



STEP-WISE



WaterDiss2.0

