

COMMON IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR THE WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE (2000/60/EC)



Carrying forward the Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive

-Progress and Work Programme for 2003 and 2004-

AS AGREED BY THE WATER DIRECTORS

17 June 2003

Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	2
2	BACKGROUND	2
2.1	 Activities under the strategy.....	2
2.2	 Progress of the CIS.....	5
2.3	 Lessons for the future	6
3	REINFORCING THE STRATEGY	8
4	REVISED STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION	8
4.1	 Transition from the exiting to the new Working Groups	9
4.2	 Other supporting groups	10
4.3	 Expert Advisory Fora (EAF).....	11
4.4	 Relationship between the different working levels.....	11
5	NEW FOCUS FOR 2003/2004	12
6	TRANSITIONAL PERIOD	16
7	LINKS TO OTHER POLICY AREAS	17
8	CONCLUDING REMARKS	18
ANNEX 1 - ORGANISATION AND TASKS OF WORKING GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES UNDER THE WFD COMMON IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY IN 2003/2004		19
ANNEX 2 - APPROACHES FOR MAINTAINING THE NETWORK OF THE FORMER WORKING GROUPS.....		49
ANNEX 3 - WORK PROGRAMME AND JOINT TIMETABLE UNDER THE WFD COMMON IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY IN 2003/2004 (SHORT VERSION, DETAILED TIMETABLES ARE FOR ALL ACTIVITIES ARE INCLUDED IN ANNEX 1)		51
ANNEX 4 - WORKING STRUCTURE UNDER THE WFD COMMON IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY IN 2003/2004 (OVERVIEW).....		52

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1 Introduction

Two years ago, the negotiations on the Water Framework Directive¹ came to a successful conclusion. The Directive provides for a sustainable and integrated management of river basins including binding objectives, clear deadlines, comprehensive programme of measures based on scientific, technical and economic analysis, including public information and consultation.

Whereas the political European decision-making process ended, it became soon clear that the successful implementation of the Directive will be, at the least, equally as challenging and ambitious for all countries, institutions and stakeholders involved.

Hence, a strategic document establishing a Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) for the Water Framework Directive (WFD) was developed and finally agreed under the Swedish Presidency in the meeting held in Sweden on the 2nd to 4th May 2001.

Despite the fact that it was recognised that implementing the WFD is the full responsibility of the individual Member State, there was a broad consensus amongst the Water Directors of the Member States, Norway and the Commission that the European joint partnership is necessary in order to:

- ✓ Develop a common understanding and approaches;
- ✓ Elaborate informal technical guidance including best practice examples;
- ✓ Share experiences and resources;
- ✓ Avoid duplication of efforts; and
- ✓ Limit the risk of bad application.

Furthermore, the Water Directors stressed the necessity to involve stakeholders, NGOs and the research community in this joint process, as well as to enable the participation of Candidate Countries, in order to facilitate their cohesion process.

Following the decision of the Water Directors, a comprehensive and ambitious work programme was started including ten Working Groups and three Expert Advisory Fora. Further details on the activities and the organisation of the strategy are presented in the following chapter. The complete text is available on the internet².

2 Background

2.1 Activities under the strategy

The European Community and the Norwegian Water Directors identified a number of elements for a Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) of the Water Framework

¹ European Parliament and Council Directive 2000/60/EC of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22/12/2000, p. 1) as amended by European Parliament and Council Decision 2455/2001/EC (OJ L 331, 15/12/2001, p.1)

² Final CIS document available under: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/water/water-framework/implementation.html>

Directive (WFD) such as the need to **integrate activities** on different horizontal issues for the effective development of river basin management plans and implementation of the WFD and the need to establish **working groups** and develop **informal guiding and supporting documents** on key aspects of the WFD.

A modular structure has been chosen for the overall strategy. The main modules are the key activities for the implementation process based on the elements identified by the Water Directors. Each key activity was subdivided into one or more specific projects which were phased into three parts:

Phase 1 – Guidance development (2001/2002);

Phase 2 – Pilot testing (2003/2004); and

Phase 3 – Manual for integrated river basin management (2004/2005).

In summary, the following activities were agreed:

Activity 1 - Information sharing:

Several ways of improved information exchange were established amongst which the most relevant is the internet-based information exchange platform “WFD CIRCA – Implementing the WFD”³. In addition, each country and the Commission intended to start various initiatives such as conferences, workshops and public information in order to raise awareness on a wider scale.

Activity 2 - Develop guidance on technical issues:

Nine working groups were identified and mandated to develop a common understanding and approaches for key technical issues in relation to the annexes II, III and V of the Directive. Their task was to develop informal, practical Guidance Documents for support of the overall implementation process and for testing in the pilot river basins (cf. Activity 4). An overview of the different working groups is given in Table 1.

Activity 3 - Information and data management

The information exchange and reporting under the Water Framework Directive is partly based on geographical information systems (GIS). As a consequence, the activity on information and data management focused on the harmonisation of the various systems, the development of a Guidance and the testing of a prototype. A working group (WG 3.1) led by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission was established involving experts from Member States, Candidate Countries and the EEA.

Activity 4 - Application, testing and validation

A key element of the implementation strategy was the integrated testing and validation of the Guidance Document developed under Activity 2. The approach was to identify specific river basins as pilots in order to test several Guidance Documents at the same time under real conditions. A number of criteria were established and Member States were invited to nominate suitable river basins for testing involving regional and local authorities. By 2002, a pilot river basin network was established including 14 national or international (sub-)river basins (cf. Figure 1). The testing exercise will take place in 2003 and 2004.

³ <http://forum.europa.eu.int/Members/irc/env/wfd/home>

Table 1: Working Groups under "Activity 2 – development of guidance" of the Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive

No. of WG	Acronym	Name	Main tasks	Planned deadline for completion
2.1	IMPRESS	Analysis of pressures and impacts	Guidance Document	12/2002
2.2	HMWB	Heavily modified water bodies	Guidance Document and case studies	12/2002
2.3	REFCOND	Reference conditions in inland waters	Guidance Document	12/2002
2.4	COAST	Typology, reference conditions and classification of transitional and coastal waters	Guidance Document	06/2002
2.5	IC	Intercalibration	Guidance Document	12/2002
2.6	WATECO	Economic analysis in the context of the Water Framework Directive	Guidance Document	03/2002
2.7	Monitoring	Monitoring of surface and groundwaters	Guidance Document	12/2002
2.8	Groundwater tools	Tools for assessments of groundwater trends	Report and analysis tools	12/2001
2.9	PROCLAN	Best practices in river basin planning (including the work packages on river basin districts, planning process and public participation)	Three documents	12/2002

Policy development

The Water Framework Directive stipulates the need for new Community law for specific areas such as revision and updating of the list of priority substances, setting controls and environmental standards for priority substances (Article 16), criteria for assessing good groundwater chemical status, criteria for identification of significant and sustained upward trends and criteria for definition of starting points for trend reversals (Article 17). Moreover, the Commission plans a revision of the Reporting requirements which improves and facilitates the reporting under existing water-related directives⁴ and integrates and harmonises them into the reporting under the Water Framework Directive (Article 15). Hence, the Commission established three multi-stakeholders' Consultative Fora, one on priority substances, one on groundwater and one on reporting. These fora include participants from Member States, stakeholders, NGO's and outside experts.

Supporting activities

In addition, a number of supporting activities were identified. The co-ordination with research funding on national and Community level and the further development of integration of water policy into other policy areas such as agriculture and regional funding was initiated.

⁴ such as the directives to be repealed by the Water Framework Directive (as listed in Article 22) and Directives 91/271/EEC (urbane wastewater), 91/616/EEC (nitrates), 76/160/EEC (bathing water) and 98/83/EC (drinking water).

The detailed structure, organisation, activities and tasks are laid down in the final strategic document (cf. footnote 2).

2.2 Progress of the CIS

Despite the fact that some individual projects had already started when the strategy was agreed, it was a particular challenge to make the overall work programme under the strategy operational. After an initial phase of setting up organisational structures and modes of operation, the CIS work gained momentum in late 2001 and 2002. The expert network was expanding, the number of meetings increased and the first outputs were produced (Table 2 provides some figures for illustration). At the same time, the organisation was getting more complex and the activities became more and more inter-related.

Table 2: Overview on some indicators of the progress in the WFD CIS process since May 2001

	May – Oct 2001	Nov 2001 – May 2002	June – Nov 2002
Number of members in WFD CIRCA	~ 250	~ 600	~ 700
Number of meetings of WGs and EAFs	25	32	20
Number of final “products” from the CIS process	0	4	9

In June 2002, one year after the strategy started, the Water Directors stated on their meeting under Spanish Presidency in Valencia that:

“the implementation of the CIS is, so far, successful and generally within the time schedule foreseen. Furthermore, significant improvements were made since the last meeting.”

On the meeting in Valencia, the following products could be finalised:

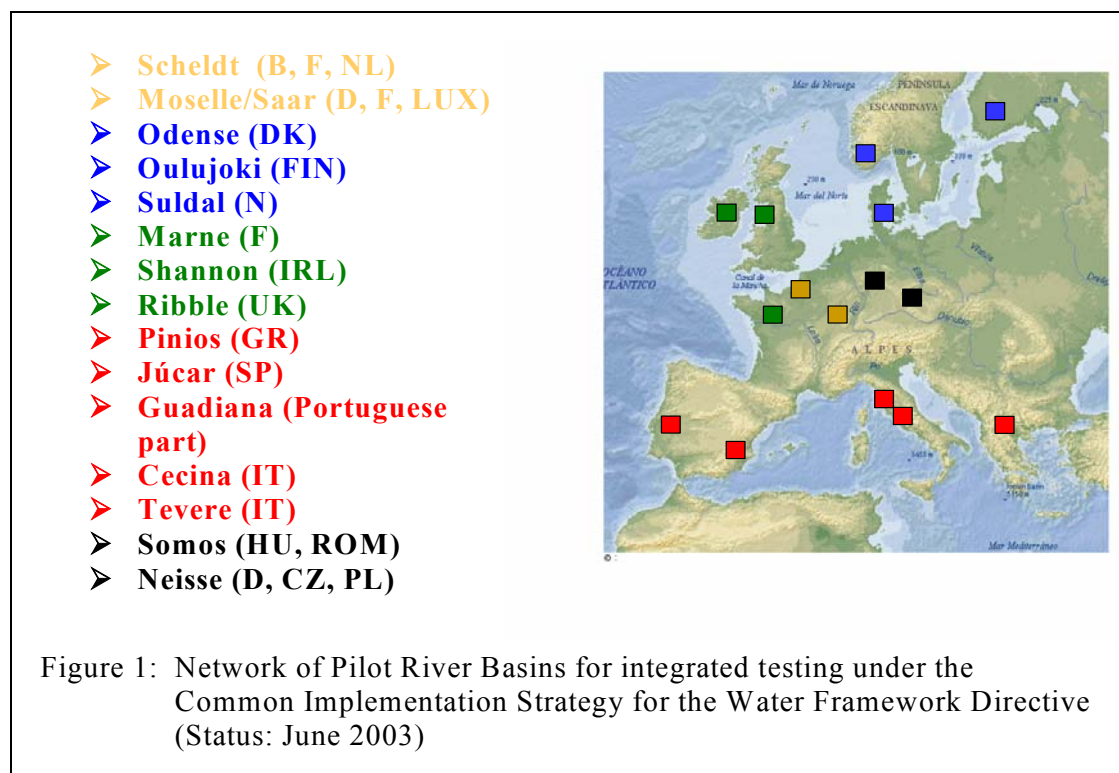
- ✓ Guidance document on economic analysis (output WG 2.6);
- ✓ Report on the identification of river basin districts (output WG 2.9);
- ✓ Establishment of the pilot river basin network (Activity 4.1).

Already, earlier in 2002, the report on tools for the assessment of groundwater (output WG 2.8) was published.

On the Water Directors meeting under Danish Presidency, most other Guidances were finally agreed. Only the Guidance Document of reference conditions for inland waters (WG 2.3) and the work package on the “planning process” in WG 2.9 have been delayed. They will be finalised in written procedure during April 2003. In total, there were nine Guidance Documents, four reports and the pilot river basin network finalised by the end of 2002.

In conclusion, the first phase of the Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive has been completed successfully by producing many useful outputs within a challenging timeframe. The joint European work programme elaborated concrete and helpful results, promoted a common understanding and created synergies by avoiding duplication. There is a clear added value for all involved and established an invaluable expert network across Europe.

Following this initial phase, the subsequent activities will focus on testing of Guidance Documents, refining some technical details and filling the gaps. This is elaborated in more detail in the subsequent chapters.



2.3 Lessons for the future

The considerable progress and the achievements within the Common Implementation Strategy were described above.

Despite this overall positive evaluation, there are a number of obstacles which prevent a further enhancement of the efficiency and the integration of the process, in particular:

- **Organisation of Working Groups and cross-cutting issues**

The high number of groups and experts put a considerable resource pressure on all involved parties. At the same time, the inter-linkages became more complex. Although the Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG) was the main forum to discuss these inter-linkages, there was no direct mechanism to resolve such links and cross-cutting issues between working groups without awaiting the next meeting of the SCG. Such joint and flexible initiatives were relying mostly on the proactive action of the Working Group leaders which puts additional resource and time pressures on them.

Furthermore, the integration CIS working groups and Expert Advisory Fora (EAF) was not well-developed. On one hand, the EAF require support from experts on specific technical issues (e.g. analysis and monitoring of priority substances). On the other hand, cross-implications between policy development and ongoing implementation were only discussed in the last stages of the Guidance development (e.g. role of priority substance in ecological status, monitoring for groundwater, reporting of pressures and impacts).

- **Time constraints**

Certain basic elements for the development of the Guidance Documents, such as the agreement on a common understanding and the investigation of the data availability was more time-consuming than expected. In addition, other unavoidable factors added to the time pressure such as broad consultation, language (barrier) and data collection.

In consequence, certain parts of the Guidance Documents are of a more general nature. The work on more detailed Guidance needs to be continued in certain areas (e.g. classification).

- **Emerging issues**

With the progress in the different activities, it became apparent that a number of additional issues needed to be addressed (e.g. horizontal Guidance of water bodies). Although the Strategic Co-ordination Group and the Water Directors discussed and addressed those emerging issues in a flexible manner, it added to the resource pressure and it prevented certain groups from progressing their original tasks. Some other emerging issues were not addressed yet due to the immense workload under the strategy.

- **Decision-making process**

On some occasions, the Common Implementation Strategy decision making process - from expert drafting of a Guidance Document until its final endorsement by EU Water Directors – raised questions which led to a discussion on the process of reaching agreements. In the case of disagreements, the general "consensus-based" decision-making process led to a situation that participants in the process could "veto" a finalisation of the Guidance Documents by disagreeing with the "majority's view".

The reasons for such situations to occur were manifold. On one hand, the issues for discussion were not only of technical nature but also related to legal interpretation and political considerations. This situation was complicated by the fact that the aim of the CIS process is to promote "best practices" of implementation which may, in some cases, go beyond the legal requirements of the directive. On the other hand, the description of clear and concrete guidance may limit the flexibility that is necessary to develop different approaches for the specific national, regional or local circumstances.

Whilst emphasising again that the CIS process is based on consensus, only increased transparency and a clear distinction of the different aspects of the discussion and decision-making process will reduce the situations described above.

In conclusion, this review of the strategy and, in particular, the organisation and the work programme shall address these obstacles, take note of the "lessons learnt" and enable the continuation of the joint process with the same level of success and ambition.

3 Reinforcing the strategy

The Common Implementation Strategy is a joint and voluntary process agreed between the Member States, Norway and the European Commission. In addition to the numerous activities mentioned above, the Water Directors agreed a number of principles and approaches for the Common Implementation Strategy of May 2001, in particular:

- the informal process and the non-legally binding nature of the outputs;
- the transparency and openness of the process;
- the relationship to the formal committee procedure (as foreseen under Art. 21 of the WFD);
- the full involvement of stakeholders and NGOs;
- the involvement of Candidate Countries;
- the role of the Water Directors and the Strategic Co-ordination Group;
- the integration aspects of water policy.

This follow-up strategy does not replace or re-negotiate these agreed principles but rather strengthen the commitment of all involved parties towards these agreements. In the first phase of the CIS, the principles have been made operational and filled with life. The only major difference to the original strategy is that the Water Directors agreed on their meeting in Valencia of 10th June 2002 to fully incorporate the Candidate Countries into the joint process and enable their participation as equal members at all levels.

Apart from this amendment, the partners in the Common Implementation Strategy confirm their willingness to continue the joint work programme for 2003 and 2004 on the basis of the same spirit and principles as set out in the agreed strategy of May 2001. The present document is therefore targeted to review the structure and the organisation and to agree upon the priority areas for future work. The document does complement rather than replace the agreed strategic document.

4 Revised structure and organisation

The focus of the work programme 2003/2004 as described below (cf. Chapter 5), makes it necessary to review the current working structure. In addition, it is the interest of all involved parties in the Common Implementation Strategy to reduce the workload and focus the resource input on the most important key activities. In consequence, the reduction of the number of working groups and the total number of meetings will be the most important measure to achieve the above-mentioned objectives.

The result of an informal enquiry amongst the existing working groups showed that some working groups consider that they have delivered what they were mandated for and they do not see a need to continue in the present form (e.g. WG 2.8 on groundwater tools or WG 2.2 on heavily modified water bodies). Other WGs suggest to re-structure the working groups and to merge their group with other groups in order to ensure sufficient integration (e.g. WGs 2.9 and 4.1 or WGs 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5). Another experience in the first phase of the CIS was that a large number of distinct groups makes it difficult to address the overlapping issues.

In conclusion, the Water Directors decided on their meeting in Copenhagen (21/22 November 2002) to reduce the number of working groups considerably by grouping most of the issues together. The new group structure intends to streamline the work

and to address the inter-linkages between various activities in a better, more flexible way.

It was agreed to set up **four new Working Groups** which incorporate most activities identified below:

- **Working Group on “Ecological Status” (WG 2.A);**
- **Working Group on “Integrated River Basin Management” (WG 2.B);**
- **Working Group on “Groundwater” (WG 2.C); and**
- **Working Group on “Reporting” (WG 2.D).**

The first two Working Groups are a merger of a number of existing working groups (see Section 4.1) whereas the latter two are a continuation of the respective Expert Advisory Fora. However, the Expert Advisory Forum on Groundwater will continue until the Commission comes forward with a proposal for a Groundwater Directive. Only thereafter, the new WG 2.C will be established. Further details on the integration of the existing Expert Advisory Fora is presented below (cf. Section 4.3).

Most activities and tasks as identified below (cf. Section 5) will be attributed to either one or the other Working Group. All countries and stakeholders will have the opportunity to participate in the WGs and the representatives in the WGs will be nominated by the SCG members by the end of February 2003. Memberships of the working groups will depend on issues being addressed.

In the existing working groups, it was common best practice to identify a “drafting group” out of the working group members which would assist the leader of the working group to prepare and develop documents for meetings. In addition, such “drafting groups” ensured that the written comments by WG members were taken into account in a balanced way and that the burden of work is shared more evenly.

There is a risk that the new concentrated structure will increase the number of these “drafting groups” and therefore introducing a fourth working level (in addition to Water Directors, Strategic Co-ordination Group and Working Groups) by turning “drafting groups” effectively into working groups.

In order to avoid this from happening, the Water Directors agreed that no more than four parallel activities should be ongoing in a Working Group at any one time. In addition, some formal arrangements are being made for the establishment and working methods of drafting groups (see Section 4.2). It will be the Strategic Co-ordination Group which will monitor the establishment of “drafting groups” and take the necessary decisions to ensure a balanced approach between the need to create small efficient units which are actually preparing documents and the risk of creating a fourth working level.

Detailed mandates for the Working Groups and the activities are enclosed (cf. Annex 1).

4.1 Transition from the exiting to the new Working Groups

As mentioned above, the new working groups will integrate all the mandates and the expertise of the existing working groups. The issues which were addressed by the following former working groups will be dealt with by the new WG 2.A “Ecological Status”:

- WG 2.2: Heavily modified water bodies (only part on high and good ecological potential);
- WG 2.3: Reference conditions of inland surface waters;

- WG 2.4: Typology, reference conditions and classification of transitional and coastal waters;
- WG 2.5: Intercalibration; and
- WG 2.7: Monitoring (with the exception of groundwater).

The issues which were addressed by the following former working groups will be dealt with by the new WG 2.B “Integrated River Basin Management”:

- WG 2.1: Analysis of pressures and impacts;
- WG 2.2: Heavily Modified Water Bodies (except issues regarding high and good ecological potential);
- WG 2.6: Economic Analysis (WATECO); and
- WG 2.9: Best practices in river basins.

The WG 4.1 for the pilot testing will also be attributed to the new WG 2.B. Within that WG 2.B, the practical organisation of the work programme for the pilot testing will involve the establishment of a Steering Group which builds on the arrangements under the former WG 4.1.

In consequence, the mandates for the existing groups will be terminated. However, the new Working Group should draw from the experience and the expertise of the former working groups.

Recognising that it will be up to the countries, stakeholder and NGOs groups to nominate experts for the new group, it is recommended that the former leaders of the above-mentioned Working Groups participate in the new WG. Moreover, it is recommended that the members of the new working group should be mainly recruited from these groups and a mechanism should be identified to enable a balanced representation of expertise on the various technical issues.

In addition, other experts can contribute to the “drafting groups” even if they are not members of the new WG provided that these other experts have been nominated by the countries' or stakeholders'/NGOs' representative in the Strategic Co-ordination Group.

4.2 Other supporting groups

As discussed above, the new working groups will be supported in practical terms by other supporting groups such as “drafting teams” (or ad-hoc expert workshops), expert networks or steering teams. These different working procedures have been established in the first phase of the Common Implementation Strategy and will be continued as best practice during the work programme 2003/2004. A clearer definition and distinction between the different types of groups is given in Annex 1. Such definitions are used in the preparation of the mandates.

I.e. the actual preparation of documents in relation to the various technical issues would be carried out by individual members or small numbers of experts which are being mandated by the Working Group. In addition, such “drafting teams” would take care of the consultation process in the working groups and deal, e.g., with the collection and consideration of written comments.

This approach has many advantages, in particular, the burden of work would be distributed more evenly within the WG and not rely solely on the leader(s) of the working groups. However, in order to ensure that such “other supporting groups” (in particular drafting teams) do not develop to be effectively working groups (and therefore result in the same or even an increase in workload compared to the current

situation), some clear arrangements as regards the relation between working groups and “other supporting groups” are being introduced and are set out in Annex 1.

The Working Groups will report regularly to the SCG on the setting up and operation of the “other groups”. Further arrangements for other supporting groups may be agreed by the Strategic Co-ordination Group, if necessary.

4.3 Expert Advisory Fora (EAF)

It has been recognised that the Expert Advisory Forum on Priority Substances shall continue its successful work due to the nature of the ongoing tasks provided for under Article 16 of the Water Framework Directive.

Regarding the two other fora, the Water Directors agreed to take their work related to implementation under the umbrella of the Strategic Co-ordination Group.

The EAF Groundwater will continue until the finalisation of the proposal of the Commission for a groundwater directive. Thereafter, a Working Group on “Groundwater” (WG 2.C) will be established which may, or may not, consist of the experts of the EAF. The lead of this WG 2.C will have to be decided at a later stage. The main task of the new WG is the preparation of a Guidance on “characterisation and monitoring of groundwater” which will assist the implementation of the Water Framework Directive. The EAF may start preparing a detailed mandate and a timetable for the Guidance. Another task of the new WG is to give advice on groundwater-related issues to the other WGs and ensure that the aspect of groundwater-surface water interaction is considered appropriately under the other activities.

As regards the EAF Reporting, the Water Directors agreed to transform it into a Working Group under the Common Implementation Strategy in order to refocus the way of working and to improve the interactions with other relevant working groups. The new WG shall take on board the issues dealt under the GIS group (WG 3.1). Given the link to the formal reporting requirements, the Commission will continue to be the lead of the WG Reporting. Member States and Candidate Countries will be invited to review and possibly extend their participants in the EAF in order to cover all technical aspects appropriately (e.g. GIS). The new WG will continue the work programme established under the EAF Reporting including the establishment of five Drafting Groups which have already been identified in the last meeting of the EAF.

4.4 Relationship between the different working levels

In the agreed Common Implementation Strategy, three working levels have been established, the Water Directors, the Strategic Co-ordination Group and the Working Groups. With the revision of the organisation, the role and the relationship of these three levels will continue to be the same. The Working Groups will prepare technical document and will ensure the necessary consultation on the technical level. The Strategic Co-ordination Group will discuss the outcome of the Working Groups, ensure the co-ordination between the different activities and prepare the Water Directors meetings. The Water Directors will continue to steer and drive the process.

In addition to these general arrangements, the new working groups will be invited to report regularly their progress to the SCG. This applies also as regards their drafting groups where specific part of the report shall address the application of the arrangements as set out above.

It will still be necessary to review the joint work programme regularly and to develop it further. In order to ensure an effective co-ordination of the various activities, the Strategic Co-ordination Group will be mandated by the Water Directors to decide upon refinements and changes in the mandates, timetables and priorities as long as

these changes recognise the overall agreed priorities in the work programmes. New working areas, substantial changes to this work programme and the establishment of new working groups will need to be decided by the Water Directors.

5 New focus for 2003/2004

The original strategy foresaw that the main emphasis in the years 2003 and 2004 should be the testing of the Guidance Documents in the pilot river basins. In addition, the working group on intercalibration was mandated to continue its work and the GIS group would test a prototype. At the time, no further activities were identified for such key areas such as classification, economic analysis and others.

In the finalisation of the Guidance Documents, most of the working groups came to the conclusion that further work is needed for various reasons. Some of the aspects could not be elaborated in great detail within the given timeframe (e.g. harmonisation of different tools or approaches). Other issues need to be tested or extensive data is being collected on national level first (e.g. European typology system for transitional and coastal waters). Moreover, new issues emerged which require technical Guidance (e.g. wetlands).

It is evident that now that a considerable expert network has been established, it is most effective to draw on this expertise in the future. Such a pool of expertise will provide many advantages for the further implementation process, such as to provide a certain support of the pilot testing of their Guidance. At the same time, the pressure on resources on all partners requires the reduction of the overall work load by focussing on key activities where there is a mutual benefit to be gained by working together at European level.

Given the importance of the open issues that were identified and successful collaboration within the working groups, a new mandate for “Activity 2 – Development of Guidance” projects needs to be agreed. This provides an opportunity to re-focus and re-organise the work under the strategy in order to ensure that the work is efficient and targeted. Such reviews and adaptations were anyway foreseen under the strategy, however, without giving a concrete timeframe.

Whilst accepting the need to continue the successful work, it is clear that the number of working groups, meetings and the additional burden of the involved people needs to be reduced since the challenge of the national implementation becomes increasingly resource intensive. For this reason, a streamlined structure with a fewer number of working groups has been described in the Section above (cf. Section 4). Taking account of this new structure, the technical priority areas described below are being attributed to the new working groups.

Following a wide consultation within the CIS network, the Water Directors agreed in November 2002 that the focus of the work of technical work in the years 2003 and 2004 is as follows:

1) Carrying out the pilot testing exercise

The established pilot river basin network will start off the testing exercise in 2003 at the latest. Terms of references have been agreed and a work programme has been elaborated. On this basis, the main part of the testing exercise should be finalised by the end of 2004.

The pilot river testing will be associated with the new Working Group 2.B on “Integrated River Basin Management”. However, the WG will concentrate on the overall co-ordination, the monitoring of the progress and the development of the approaches. In addition, separate initiatives, activities or events (such as workshops) will take place which are specifically targeted to the pilot river testing involving the

leaders and participants of the pilot river basins. The participants of the different events may vary, depending on the needs to ensure a successful and meaningful pilot testing.

As agreed previously, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission will act as a focal point for the pilot river testing and will report to the WG about the progress. The JRC shall be in charge of the Technical Secretariat and thereby maintain direct contact with the coordinators of the pilot river basins. The JRC will be assisted in the practical organisation of the work programme by a Steering Group including the JRC, DG Environment, the co-leaders of IRBM WG (2.B), i.e. Spain and France, and other interested members of WG 2.B. In order to successfully test the various Guidance Documents, the former and the new working group experts will need to support the use and the practical application of the Guidance mainly through the platform of information exchange (PIE⁵) and the workshops.

2) Facilitating the intercalibration

By the end of 2004, the intercalibration network must be established. The first Guidance on the intercalibration process provides details on the selection of intercalibration sites and sets out an appropriate process.

Under the new organisational structure, the work on intercalibration will be the key task of the Working Group 2.A on “Ecological Status” on the basis of the detailed work programme as part of the Guidance. The Working Group will implement the Guidance and develop it further in order to prepare a proposal for a formal decision as provided for under the Article 21 Committee.

In order to support the WG on intercalibration, expert input will be required which will be organised similar to drafting groups, i.e. the WG will decide upon time-limited groups with a particular mandate to provide advice on and support the intercalibration work. The expertise and the network of the former working groups will be used as much as possible in order to provide such advice.

As agreed previously, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission will act as a focal point for the intercalibration and as co-leader for the new Working Group.

3) Developing technical Guidance on specific outstanding or new issues

As mentioned-above, there are a number of proposals for issues where further technical Guidance should be developed. In order to set priorities amongst these proposals, the following issues have been identified by the Water Directors in Table 3 which also provides the attribution to a working group and a timeframe.

The above-mentioned tasks will be limited in time and scope. The priority issues are distributed according to their urgency over the coming two years in order to spread the workload evenly. At any one time, in general, no more than four parallel activities should be ongoing. This approach should contribute to reduce the overall work load and intensity of the CIS work programme and should prevent a concentration of work and output peaks as happened at the end of the first phase (November 2002) where 10 Guidance Documents had to be discussed at the same time.

As first and foremost priority areas, which should have already started in 2002, the Guidance on wetlands and on classification (including the use of physico-chemical parameters) have been identified.

More detailed mandates for these tasks as well as the establishment of the drafting groups, where possible, are enclosed in the Annex 1.

⁵ http://viso.ei.jrc.it/wfd_prb/index.html

The Water Directors, on proposal of the Strategic Co-ordination Group, may identify further tasks and issues, where appropriate, and agree mandates for any additional development of technical Guidance.

4) Maintaining the network

Since the extensive network of experts for a broad range of technical areas is now established, it would be most beneficial to maintain and strengthen this network in ways which complement the new CIS work. Although it will be impossible to continue with the same high frequency of working group meetings, working groups could be encouraged to organise meetings or workshops at regular intervals (e.g. once a year). In addition, without generating new Guidance, the working groups could arrange for an informal, dynamic mechanism for providing information about new tools and additional best practices examples as they emerge. Several working groups had already suggested to provide and regularly update such information on the internet. In practice, the networks should decide for themselves how to progress, with the new CIS structure providing the focal point for such interest networks, to avoid duplication of effort.

In addition to the proposals of the WGs, other initiatives (such as one-off workshops) may emerge which address certain technical areas and which should be linked to the former and new working groups.

In conclusion, the approaches for maintaining the network should not lead to the continuation of the existing WGs. The approaches may differ considerably for the different WGs. Annex 2 sets out some concrete initiatives to maintain the networks. The new WGs should co-ordinate all such activities and should be informed regularly about initiatives for maintaining the networks.

5) Reviewing the Guidance Documents for inclusion in a comprehensive “EU Manual for Integrated River Basin Management”

All Guidance Documents were drafted on the basis of available knowledge at the time. In addition, the experiences of the pilot testing and the implementation work in the Member States and Candidate Countries will provide further input for reviewing and updating the Guidance Documents. Hence, the Water Directors recognised that the Guidance Document had to be considered as “living documents”.

Moreover, the agreed implementation strategy had already identified work packages on preparing a manual for best practices in river basin management in the mandates for WG 2.9 and in a similar way for the pilot river basin testing (Activity 4.1). However, no clarification was given in the strategy as to what the different content of the two different manuals should be.

The Water Directors agreed that the preparation of a manual should be a key working area under the Common Implementation Strategy which may start at in early 2004 and be finalised in the end of 2005. However, the scope, the detailed content and the organisation of the work will need to be specified at a later stage.

Taking into account the first results of the new WG 2.B on Integrated River Basin Management, including the pilot river basins exercise, the Commission will present a proposal to the SCG on how to organise and carry out this compilation of the manual by October 2003 as a basis for discussion. The Water Directors will discuss and agree the terms of references for the manual activity by the end of 2003.

Table 3: Priority issues under the Common Implementation Strategy 2003/2004 including attribution to the new Working Groups and tentative timeframe for start and completion of work (WG: working group; EAF: expert advisory forum; IRBM: integrated river basin management; GW: groundwater).

No	Key activities	Working Group	Tentative timeframe
A	Intercalibration exercise (cf. point 2)	Led by JRC, associated with WG 2.A – Ecological Status	ongoing
B	Pilot River Basin Testing exercise (cf. point 1)	Led by JRC, associated with WG 2.B – IRBM	ongoing
No	Issues for developing Guidance	Working Group	Tentative timeframe
1	Management of wetlands in the context of the WFD	WG 2.B – IRBM (drafting group already established)	Start: Nov 2002 End: May 2003
2	Classification of ecological status including the use of physico-chemical and hydromorphological parameters	WG 2.A – Ecological Status (drafting group to be established)	Start: Feb 2003 End: Oct 2003
3	Harmonisation of typology (in particular for transitional and coastal waters)	WG 2.A – Ecological Status	Start: 2004
4	Assessment of eutrophication in the context of different European directives	WG 2.A – Ecological Status	Start: 2004
5	Integration of economic issues in new Guidance Documents (baseline scenario, scale)	WG 2.B – IRBM	Start: Feb 2003 End: May 2004
6	Addressing of economical methodological aspects (such as the assessment of environmental costs or the assessment of the incentive dimension of pricing)	WG 2.B – IRBM	Start: Feb 2003 End: Nov 2004
7	Preparation of river basin management plans and programmes of measures including the integration of different river basin management tasks	WG 2.B – IRBM (link to EAF Reporting)	Start: Sept 2003 End: Dec 2004
8	Guidelines for reporting under the WFD	WG 2.C - Reporting (for preparation of Art. 21 Committee)	Start: already End: Jan 2004
9	Characterisation and monitoring of groundwater	EAF GW and after termination of EAF, new WG 2.C Groundwater	Start: Sept. 2003 End: Sept. 2004

6 Transitional period

Following the successful completion of the first phase of the Common Implementation Strategy, the Water Directors recognised, on their meeting in Valencia in June 2002, that a re-organisation and a re-focussing of the work programme for 2003 and 2004 should take place. Since the second half of 2002 was the period of highest work intensity since the beginning of the strategy, the time was too short to complete this task in all details. On the Water Directors' meeting in Copenhagen, the general elements of the CIS 2003/2004 were agreed, in particular the new working groups and the key tasks in the work programme.

Since finalisation of the new mandates and the final approval by the Water Directors' will not take place before Spring 2003, certain arrangements for the transitional period of December 2002 to June 2003 have been agreed in order to ensure that ongoing work can be continued and new high priority areas can be started as soon as possible. In particular, the following transitional provisions were agreed:

- The four new Working Groups shall be established as soon as possible and shall arrange their first meeting within the first three months of 2003;
- The drafting group on "wetlands" shall start operating as soon as possible with the aim of presenting a first draft of the Guidance on the first meeting of the new WG 2.B. On this issue, it was agreed to endorse the conclusions reached by the Strategic Co-ordination Group and the terms of references as presented;
- The drafting group on classification of ecological status shall be set up as soon as possible with the aim of preparing a first outline of the Guidance for rivers; lakes, transitional and coastal waters and the working procedure for the first meeting of WG 2.A. Germany and UK expressed their intention to take the lead on this issue;
- WG 2.9 will continue its work as planned until the finalisation of the work package 2, the Guidance on planning process. The WG leaders will report on the first meeting of the WG 2.B and the WG 2.9 will be associated to this WG until the completion of the Guidance;
- In order that the transition from the existing to the new working structure ensures the continuity of the work, the following existing groups have the mandate to meet for a final time in the first three months of 2003: WG 2.5-intercalibration, WG 2.6-WATECO and, if necessary, WG 2.3-REFCOND;
- The following workshops will take place in the first three months of 2003 in addition to the above-mentioned activities in order to finalise ongoing work or to prepare for new working areas:
 - Workshop on transitional and coastal typology (organised by WG 2.4);
 - Workshop on pilot river basins – kick-off meeting involving all PRB leaders and all former WG leaders (organised by JRC).

These transitional arrangements should ensure that there is a smooth transition from the existing to the new working structure. Delays in the progress of the key working areas, by the setting up of new working structures, should be avoided.

7 Links to other policy areas

The strategic document of May 2001 identifies a number of other Community policy areas which are of relevance for the WFD implementation such as research, agriculture and others (cf. Section 2.6 and 2.7 of the Strategic Document of 2 May 2001). The subsequent section shall complement these arrangements of the original strategy by focussing on some links to selected Community environmental policies such as the EU Marine Strategy, the Urban Wastewater and the Nitrates Directive and the EU initiatives on flooding.

Although there are many other relevant policy areas for which inter-linkages exist, these areas were selected specifically following an intensive discussion which took place during last year.

In October 2002, the Commission adopted the Communication “Towards a strategy to protect and conserve the marine environment” (COM (2002) 539 final of 2.10.2002) also known as the “**EU Marine Strategy**”. Since the WFD covers coastal waters and, to some extent, territorial waters, it is important to co-ordinate the monitoring, assessment and management on the interface to the open seas. In particular, the work of the various international marine conventions is related to various aspects of the CIS work.

The Commission is currently setting up the organisational structure for the further development and the implementation of the “EU Marine Strategy”. It is the intention to use synergies with the WFD CIS process as much as possible and to avoid a duplication of work. In addition, dedicated events in 2003 or 2004, such as a workshop, will address the interactions between the WFD implementation and the EU Marine Strategy.

The Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC) and the Nitrates Directive (91/616/EEC) are two major water policies, for which implementation is still ongoing. In particular the issue of “**eutrophication**” is essential for some key elements of these directives. At the same time, the Water Framework Directive will integrate the current approaches into the classification systems for the “ecological status” where eutrophication plays an integral part. In order to harmonise the approaches for monitoring and assessment under these relevant European directives, it has been agreed to start a key activity under the new Working Group on “Ecological Status” (cf. Section 5).

Given the recent flood events in Europe, the Water Directors agreed to take an initiative on **flood prediction and prevention**.

The organisation and timetable for such an initiative is as follows:

1. High level meeting on flooding in Budapest (30 November and 1 December 2002);
2. Short report to the Environment Council (9/10 December 2002) responding positively to its proposal for the Water Directors to take an initiative on flooding;
3. EU Commission meeting on 12 December 2002 on environmental risks (including flooding); and
4. Germany will organise a working-level meeting on flooding on 5/6 February 2003 in Bonn. All Member States and Accession Countries will be invited.

A core group led by the Netherlands and France (many delegations indicated their desire to be included in this work) will, in the light of the meetings in Budapest and Bonn and available information and experience, prepare a “best practice document” to be presented to the next Water Directors meeting in Athens in June 2003.

It has been agreed that the initiatives in relation to floods are formally outside the Common Implementation Strategy. However, the infrastructure and the network under the CIS will be used in order to create as many synergies as possible.

8 Concluding remarks

The Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive is entering its second phase in 2003 and 2004. Following the successful completion of most of the Guidance Documents in the end of 2002, it was necessary to re-focus the activities and re-organise the working structure.

The presented document describes the progress under the CIS in 2001 and 2002 and lays down the work programme for the coming years. Given the past experience, the work programme should be understood as a general framework which allows for specific adaptations or further developments, where necessary. The work under the CIS should continue to be output-related. It is more important to agree “what” should be delivered and by “when”, rather than “how” this should be achieved.

The enclosed attachments specify the mandates of the new Working Groups and terms of references for certain key activities. However, the mandates for some activities, such as the Working Group on Groundwater and the activities on eutrophication and programmes of measures will only be defined at a later stage. The Strategic Co-ordination Group may also decide upon new activities which have not been foreseen under the current work programme.

The Commission will continue to report the overall progress to the SCG and the Water Directors. Unless it becomes necessary beforehand, a discussion on the necessity for a review of this work programme and the agreed working structure should take place on the Water Directors meeting under Irish Presidency in June 2004.

Annex 1 - Organisation and tasks of Working Groups and Activities under the WFD Common Implementation Strategy in 2003/2004

The new working structure 2003/2004 under the WFD Common Implementation Strategy is more streamlined in comparison to the first phase. In addition, certain pragmatic working experiences and procedures have been established in 2001/2002 which were necessary so that the Guidance Document could be prepared. The former working groups have thereby established a number of additional groups such as steering groups, drafting groups and expert groups.

For the new work programme 2003/2004, the main change is that one working group will run several activities in parallel. This Annex sets out the mandates for this work programme and in particular for the following working groups and activities:

1. Mandates for Working Groups “Ecological Status” (2.A), “IRBM” (2.B) and “Reporting” (2.D). The mandate for Working Group on “Groundwater” (2.C) will be prepared and presented to the SCG at a later stage since work will not need to start before October 2003; and
2. Mandates for activities “intercalibration” and “classification” (both WG 2.A), “wetlands”, “pilot testing” and “economics” (all WG 2.B) and “guidance for reporting under the WFD” and “state of the environment” (both WG 2.D).

This focus of activities is well below the threshold set by the decision of the Water Directors to limit the number of activities to a maximum of four in parallel.

As set out in Sections 4 and 5, the new structure shall avoid the situation that additional groups or sub-groups are established on a permanent basis. However, additional supporting groups are essential for the Working Groups in preparing the agreed deliverables within the short time and the high quality envisaged. Hence, a distinction should be made between permanent Working Groups and ad-hoc supporting groups, which are established on a temporary basis to support the Working Groups. Thereby, it is important to get a common understanding of the terms and the mandates of the different permanent and ad-hoc groups.

In order to facilitate the distinction between permanent and ad-hoc structures, the supporting structures are named as “teams”, “workshops” or “network” rather than “groups”.

The Working Group have the possibility to establish such other groups including Steering Teams, Expert Workshops and Drafting Teams in support of their tasks if it is necessary to fulfil the mandate that is set out by the Work Programme of the Common Implementation Strategy. It is the responsibility of the Working Group to report on a regular basis to the SCG on the different other groups, their progress, their way of operation and their work intensity.

The following different “groups” are mentioned in this Annex:

Permanent structures

Working Group (WG): The key group or plenary which is preparing, discussing, consulting and agreeing the documents or deliverables for the Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG) which were agreed by the mandates. All Member States, other countries in the CIS, stakeholders and NGOs can nominate experts to these groups which leads to an average size of 30 – 40 members.

Working Group leaders (WGL): The experts from countries, European bodies or organisations which have committed themselves to take the lead and be responsible for the implementation of the work programme for the group. Given the broad range and scale of the tasks for each of the new WGs, between two to three co-leaders have been identified in order to share the burden of organisational and preparatory work.

Ad-hoc structures

Steering Team (ST) The team of WG leaders is sometimes joined by some individuals of the WG who would like to be more actively involved in the preparation of the WG meetings and the steering of the work. Given that the WG leaders may already be up to five individuals, a ST may include up to 10 participants of the WG. The establishment of a ST is an internal working arrangement of a WG. The ST normally meet just before or just after a WG meeting (for preparation of arrangements or follow-up).

Example: A Steering Team for the pilot river basin exercise has been established out of WG 2.B to support the JRC in the management of the PRG Co-ordinators.

Drafting Team (DT) A number of active members of the Working Group are invited to prepare a specific document for the Working Group meeting. Often, a specific activity or task requires the preparation of a Guidance or working document (e.g. classification). A drafting team is assisting the WG leaders to do the necessary preparatory work in order to ensure that the WG can deliver its agreed outputs within the timetable foreseen and with the high level of quality necessary. The drafting group is not a permanent sub-group of the WG but a temporary (or ad-hoc) preparatory group to assist the WG (see criteria for establishing DT below).

Example: A Classification DT has been established to prepare the documents for the WG 2.A. Further two Drafting Teams exist within the WG on Reporting.

Expert Network or
Expert Workshops

External experts mainly from Member States and other countries are gathered on an “ad-hoc” basis if and when the necessary in-depth expertise on a certain subject is not available in the WG. The WG defines the task for the experts and the members of the WG are invited to nominate the appropriate expert.

Example: Such arrangements were made for the intercalibration work where specific expertise on lakes, rivers, transitional and coastal waters is regularly needed. Also the Expert Advisory Forum on Priority Substances works successfully with a number of Expert Groups.

Criteria for ad-hoc supporting structures

In order to ensure that, in particular, the drafting teams and other supporting structures are working within defined limits that avoid them becoming full, permanent WGs, the following criteria should be considered by the Working Groups when establishing an ad-hoc or supporting group:

- First, the “supporting groups” are limited in scope and time. Their mandate should be, in principle, less than one year. If it is considered necessary by the Working Group to give a mandate longer than one year, the Strategic Co-ordination group should finally decide upon the mandate for this “drafting group”;
- Second, the Working Group prepares a precise mandate or terms of references (ToR) for each “supporting group”;
- Third, the “supporting group” should present a table of contents and an outline to be agreed upon by the relevant Group before it starts drafting the document;
- Fourth, the “supporting group” should work with the highest possible level of transparency in order to enable the members of the Working Group to follow and, if necessary, contribute to the work of the “supporting group” at any time;
- Fifth, the “supporting group” should present regularly the latest draft documents to the Working Group and invite for comments (at the meeting or in writing). The “supporting group” should provide feedback on whether and how the comments were taken into account; and
- Sixth, all WG members would in principle have the right to propose a member for a “supporting group”, provided they made an active contribution to the drafting process. In practice, it is unlikely that all members of the CIS process would want to be involved in the drafting but could be consulted on technical level through the WGs. Ideally, “drafting teams” should have less than 10 members. If the interest for a “drafting teams” exceeds 10 participants, it should be the Strategic Co-ordination Group which finally decides upon the establishment of that “drafting team”.

Annex 1.1 Working Group 2.A – Ecological Status (ECOSTAT)

• Introduction

At the meeting of Water Directors in Copenhagen in November 2002, it was decided to continue the work on ecological status as a cluster of the former CIS working groups on Intercalibration, Monitoring, Reference conditions and classification of inland waters (REFCOND) and marine waters (COAST). The Joint Research Centre, Germany and the UK were identified as the leads for the ECOSTAT WG.

The following sections outline the objectives, key activities and timetables for 2003-2004 for Working Group 2.A on Ecological Status.

• Objectives

The main objective for Working Group 2.A on ecological status is to provide Member States and Accession Countries with Guidance on intercalibration of ecological quality ratio scales and ecological status classification. The WG has to ensure the delivery of the products as agreed by the SCG/WDs.

The main focus of the work in 2003-2004 is the establishment of the register of the intercalibration network. The intercalibration process will commence with selection of the sites for the draft register for submission by December 2003. This register will be subsequently revised in time for submission of the final register by the deadline of December 2004. Other key activities are set out below.

• Key activities

Key activities under Working Group 2.A Ecological Status are:

1. Develop draft register of intercalibration sites;
2. Develop a final register of the intercalibration network;
3. Develop further Guidance on the process of the intercalibration exercise;
4. Develop further Guidance on ecological classification;
5. Develop Guidance on eutrophication;
6. Common typology framework for the intercalibration network; and
7. Provide recommendations on: (a) monitoring methods for which standardisation is needed; and (b) which standardised methods should be added to Annex V 1.3.6 of the Directive.

More detailed activity sheets are presented below for those activities which are already ongoing such as intercalibration (Activity 1, 2 and 3) and classification (Activity 4). For the future activities, specific activity sheets will be prepared by the WG for discussion and agreement in the SCG.

- **Overall timetable**

The timetable below specifies the activities for which the Working Group will prepare concrete deliverables. Activity 6 on typology and Activity 7 on standardisation will be an ongoing information exchange to support the implementation work. These two activities are two implicit tasks within all the other work packages.

Activity/ task	Issues	Duration				Main Deliverables
		2003		2004		
1	Intercalibration – preparation of draft register of sites					Draft proposal for register for Art. 21 Committee by end 2003.
2	Intercalibration – review and finalisation of register of sites					Final register for Art. 21 Committee by end 2004
3	Intercalibration – IC methodological Guidance					Guidance document
4	Classification					Guidance document
5	Eutrophication					Guidance document

- **Lead countries/body**

The working group is lead jointly by the UK, Germany and the EC JRC IES.

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Wouter van de Bund	JRC-IES	wouter.van-de-bund@jrc.it
Anna-stiina Heiskanen	JRC-IES	anna-stiina.heiskanen@jrc.it

- **Participants**

All Member States, other countries in the CIS, stakeholders and NGOs can nominate experts to this group through their representative in the Strategic Coordination Group. To start with, the former Working Group 2.5 on Intercalibration will form the membership of Working Group 2.A (ECOSTAT) unless new or other members are nominated by Strategic Co-ordination Group.

- **Links with other activities**

The activities of Working Group 2.A (specifically intercalibration and development of classification Guidance) are linked to the pilot river basin testing exercise of Working Group 2.B. The working group leaders are responsible for ensuring that any key issues identified by the working group are co-ordinated within the activities of Working Group 2.B.

- **Type and intensity of work**

Working Group 2.A will meet approximately two to three times per year. In addition, working group leader meetings and expert workshops are foreseeable but will be kept to a minimum.

In order to complete the above mentioned Tasks 3, 4 and 5 for Working Group 2.A small drafting teams may need to be mandated in order to prepare specific Guidance on the various technical issues and present draft documents to the plenary WG and SCG. These drafting teams will be of a temporary nature to undertake the tasks specifically mandated by the WG. Such meetings of designated groups will ensure that appropriate documents and discussion papers are prepared prior to the WG meetings. The working group leaders will facilitate the co-ordination and exchange of information for related activities to all relevant networks, including the arrangement of workshops or presentations.

In addition, two Expert Networks, one on rivers and lakes and one on coastal and transitional waters, have already been established to facilitate the establishment of the draft register of the intercalibration network (refer to Activity Sheet 1).

In 2003, the kick-off meeting of the Working Group will be in Brussels on 1 July 2003, with a second meeting scheduled for October, at JRC, Ispra, Italy. In addition, one meeting of the drafting group on classification took place on 3 June and a second meeting is scheduled for 10/11 September 2003. Moreover, expert network workshops for lakes, rivers, coastal and transitional waters (possibly one or two separate meetings) are required for the evaluation of the metadata from the draft intercalibration network in September 2003 as an input to the Working Group meeting in October. Such expert workshops are necessary in order to deliver the first draft register to the Article 21 Committee by the end of 2003.

WG 2.A – Ecological Status

Activity sheet 1 - Intercalibration

i. Objectives

The objective of the intercalibration exercise is to ensure comparable biological quality assessment systems and harmonised ecological quality criteria for surface waters in Member States and Accession Countries.

The Directives objectives for the intercalibration exercise are to ensure that the class boundaries (for good ecological status) that are established are (a) consistent with the normative definitions in (Annex V) Section 1.2 and are (b) comparable between Member States and Accession Countries.

This ensures a harmonised approach to define one of the main environmental objectives of the WFD, the 'good ecological status', by establishing:

- Agreed ecological criteria for good quality sites, setting the targets or protection and restoration;
- Agreed numerical Ecological Quality Ratio (EQR) values for two quality class boundaries (high/good and good/moderate).

Further information can be obtained from 'Towards a guidance on establishment of the intercalibration network and the process on the intercalibration exercise'.

ii. Tasks and expected outcomes

To enable the intercalibration exercise to be carried out in 2005 and 2006 a draft register of the intercalibration network must be established by the end of 2003, and a final register in 2004. This register may then be adapted in accordance with the procedures laid down in Article 21 of the Directive.

The draft register of the intercalibration network will be developed by Member States and Accession Countries under the following process:

1. Establishment of expert network for lakes, rivers, and coastal and transitional waters;
2. Proposal of water body types for the intercalibration (expert network);
3. Proposal of pressures and biological quality elements (expert network);
4. Selection of types, pressures, and quality elements for the intercalibration network (WG Intercalibration/Ecological Status);
5. Selection of sites for the draft intercalibration register (Member States and Accession Countries);
6. Metadata analysis (facilitated by JRC, information supplied by MS and AC);
7. Evaluation of the proposed intercalibration sites (expert network);
8. Finalisation of the draft register;
9. Presentation of the draft register to the Article 21 Committee.

The draft register will be revised in 2004, in agreement with the decisions of the Article 21 Committee.

WG 2.A – Ecological Status**Activity sheet 1 – Intercalibration (Continued)**

Further Guidance on the process of the intercalibration exercise that will be carried out in 2005 and 2006 will be developed in 2004, based on the metadata analysis that will provide an overview of the data that can be expected for the selected intercalibration sites. A drafting team will be established for this purpose (see below).

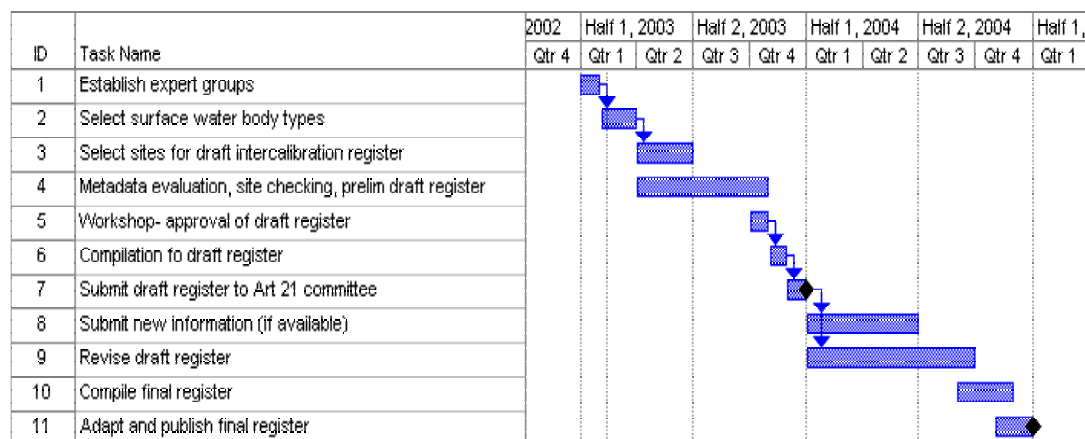
Specifically the longer term tasks of this Activity are to:

- Assess whether the boundaries for good status for the biological quality elements indicated by Member States and Accession Countries are consistent with the Directive's normative definitions and comparable between Member States and Accession Countries;
- Recommend consistent and comparable values for the boundaries of good status, as measured by relevant monitoring systems.

Further, in the final meeting of the WG 2.5 Intercalibration (17-18 March 2003), it was proposed that an overview of the national and international methods and standards, and the needs for methodological harmonization and standardisation should be identified within the CIS Working Group WG 2.A.

ii. Detailed timetable and milestones

The timetable below sets out the milestones for the preparation of the network of intercalibration sites. In addition, the elaboration of a Guidance on the intercalibration process will start in late 2003 and being finalised by the end of 2004. A more detailed timetable and milestones will be presented at a later stage.

**v. Contact person/s**

The Institute for Environment and Sustainability (IES) of the EC Joint Research Centre (EC JRC) will be leading this activity through the EEWA (European Centre for Ecological Water Quality and Intercalibration). The contact persons are:

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Wouter van-de-Bund	EC JRC-IES	wouter.van-de-bund@jrc.it
Anna-Stiina Heiskanen	EC JRC-IES	anna-stiina.heiskanen@jrc.it

v. Participants

On the preparation of the intercalibration network, no drafting team is being established. The plenary of WG “Ecological Status” will discuss all aspects related to intercalibration. It will be assisted through expert networks as set out below. Members of the Expert Networks have been nominated already under former WG 2.5 on Intercalibration.

On the development of further Guidance for the intercalibration exercise, a drafting team will be set up later in 2003. This work will be based on the information obtained from the metadata analysis of the selected intercalibration sites. So far, members of WG 2.A from Austria, Denmark, France, Latvia and Spain & JRC have been nominated (Status: June 2003).

vi. Type and intensity of work

Expert Networks have been established to address the intercalibration issues for rivers, lakes and transitional and coastal waters. The expert network members have been proposed by Working Group 2.A and will meet as required in order to achieve the objectives of the intercalibration exercise.

The expert networks are specifically mandated to undertake the following main tasks:

- Propose the water body types for each surface water category and (eco)region included in the intercalibration network;
- Agree on the pressures and biological quality element for each selected intercalibration type;
- Evaluate intercalibration sites proposed by Member States and point out possible inconsistencies; and,
- Review the metadata and agree on the data that should be collected / made available for the intercalibration exercise.

All proposals made by the expert networks will be discussed and finalised by the plenary of the WG 2.A.

WG 2.A – Ecological Status

Activity sheet 2 – Classification Guidance

i. Objectives

The main objective of this activity is to provide guidance on how the Directive's surface water classification schemes should work (e.g. how to combine monitoring results for individual quality elements to determine the status of a water body as a whole). In producing the Guidance, the Drafting Team should take account of the advice already provided by the CIS. The working group is required to agree the list of contents for the Guidance, specifying the issues that should be addressed. **The approach will be to develop an overall ecological classification Guidance including the role of physico-chemical quality elements in the assessment of the ecological status and potential. A drafting team has been established for this purpose.**

ii. Tasks and expected outcomes

The following tasks will be undertaken:

- Develop Guidance on how the Directives surface water classification schemes should work;
- Develop a common understanding and a practical approach on how to use the general physico-chemical parameters for the classification of ecological status and potential.

iii. Detailed timetable and milestones

The activity started immediately and a final Guidance should be available at the end of 2003. A more detailed timetable is set out below.

ID	Task Name	2nd Quarter				3rd Quarter			4th Quarter	
		Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
1	Presentation on issues and way forward									
2	Preparation of issues papers									
3	Drafting group meeting									
4	Preparation of contents									
5	Progress report									
6	Presentation of annotated TOC to WG									
7	Preparation of documents									
8	Drafting group meeting									
9	Finalisation of draft guidance									

iv. Contact person/s

Name	Organisation	E-mail
Peter Pollard	UK TAG	Peter.Pollard@sepa.org.uk
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Volker Mohaupt	UBA (Germany)	volker.mohaupt@uba.de

v. Participants

Austria, UK, Germany, Spain, Finland, France, Norway, Latvia and JRC (Status: 3 June 2003).

vi. Type and intensity of work

The first drafting team meeting was held on 3 June 2003 in Brussels, and the second will be held on 10/11 September. A preliminary annotated table of contents for the Guidance will be presented and discussed at the first Working Group 2.A meeting July 1-2, 2003. Final draft of the Guidance to be presented at the second Working Group 2.A meeting in October. All other correspondence will be via e-mail or phone.

Annex 1.2 Working Group 2.B - Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM)

• Introduction

At the meeting of Water Directors in Copenhagen in November 2002, it was decided to merge the activities relating to economics, pilot river basins, wetlands and former Working Groups into a horizontal Working Group 2.B on “Integrated River Basin Management” (IRBM WG).

The following sections outline the objectives, key activities and timetables for 2003-2004 for “Working Group 2.B on Integrated River Basin Management” (IRBM Working Group). Additional information can be found in ‘IRBM Working Group 2.B – Terms of Reference Version 04.02.03’.

• Objectives

The IRBM Working Group has three main objectives:

- To identify gaps and to ensure coherence between Guidance Documents;
- To define possible sets of methodologies to assist the development of river basin management plans (RBMP) and program of measures (PM);
- To share experience and build capacity (to elaborate and disseminate training technical products as well as to provide new inputs in unexplored fields, for example environmental costs and pricing).

• Key activities

1. Role of Wetlands in implementation of the WFD (Horizontal Guidance);
2. Integrated Pilot River Basin Testing;
3. Integration of economics in other technical areas (e.g. baseline scenarios);
4. Addressing economic tools (assessment of environmental costs);
5. Define methodologies for the development of RBMP and PM;

More detailed activity sheets are presented below for the Activities 1 to 4. As regards Activity 5, it will be presented to the SCG at a later stage.

• Overall timetable

Provisional issues to be handled by the drafting teams, their duration and their expected deliverables can be summarized as follows:

Activity	Issues	Duration		Main Deliverables
		2003	2004	
1	Management of wetlands in the context of the WFD			Guidance Document
2	Pilot river basin testing			Electronic platform; Intermediate progress reports; Final report of the PRB exercise with a proposal for update of the GDs.
3	Integration of economic issues (baseline scenario, scale, cost effectiveness analysis, etc.) Including training products			Thematic workshops Training products
4	Addressing of economical methodological aspects (such as the assessment of environmental costs or the assessment of the incentive dimension of pricing) Including training products			Thematic workshops Training products
5	Preparation of river basin management plans and programmes of measures including the integration of different river basin management tasks			Guidance Document(s)

- **Lead countries/body**

France and Spain will be leading the IRBM Working Group.

Name	Organisation	E-mail
Coralie Noël	France (Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, Water Department)	coralie.noel@environnement.gouv.fr
Manuel Menendez	Spain (CEDEX- Ministry of Public Works- Ministry of Environment)	manuel.menendez@cedex.es
Bernard Kaczmarek	France (Representative of Water Agencies in Brussels)	agences.eau@euronet.be
Jose Maria Pinero	Spain (Representative of the Ministry of Environment in Brussels)	jose.pinero@reper.mae.es

- **Participants**

All Member States, other countries in the CIS, stakeholders and NGOs can nominate experts to this group through their representative in the Strategic Coordination Group.

Part of the former members of Working Group 2.9, 2.6 and 4.1 will form membership of the Working Group 2.B unless new or other members are nominated by Strategic Co-ordination Group.

- **Links with other activities**

The activities of Working Group 2.B are linked to Working Group 2.A (Ecological Status) and 2.D (Reporting) and other strategies developed at EU level. The group leaders are responsible for ensuring that any key issues identified by the Working Group or the Strategic Co-ordination Group are co-ordinated with the other relevant working groups.

- **Type and intensity of work**

The following groups will form part of the IRBM WG:

- The Plenary – the Working Group;
- The Drafting or Expert Teams;
- The PRB Steering Group.

The **Plenary WG** will have about two sessions per year and additional meetings should be organised depending on the progress of activities and specific needs. They will facilitate the co-ordination and exchange of information for related activities to all relevant networks.

The **Drafting Team on wetlands** was established in 2002 before the new working structure was agreed. This Drafting Team met three times and will presents its final results to the next WG and the SCG in the second half 2003. Thereafter, the work of the DG is terminated.

As regards the economic activities, it will have to be decided whether a new drafting team or an expert network will be established (see Activity Sheet). The economic groups will meet approximately two times per year.

Concerning Objective 1, the pilot testing, the practical organisation of the work programme will involve the establishment of a **PRB Steering Group** including the JRC, DG Environment, and co-leaders of IRBM WG Spain and France and other members of WG 2.B in order to assist the JRC which is in charge of the Technical Secretariat for the PRB exercise. The first meeting involving the PRB Co-ordinators was on 28 February 2003 and the following meeting will be on 8 July 2003. The Steering Group will meet approximately three times per year.

Additional information can be found in 'IRBM Working Group 2.B – Terms of Reference Version 04.02.03'.

WG 2.B – Integrated River Basin Management**Activity sheet 1 – Wetlands****i. Objectives**

The objectives of Activity 1 on wetlands are to:

1. Elaborate the common understanding on the requirements of the WFD regarding wetlands.
2. Identify the role of wetlands in the WFD and in particular in relation to the Programmes of measures.
3. Address problems and obstacles for the consideration of wetlands in the river basin management and elaborate solutions. Identify and take forward a process for integrating wetlands into the pilot river basin exercise and other future activities of the CIS.

ii. Tasks and expected outcomes

The Drafting Group has the main task to elaborate a horizontal Guidance Document on wetlands in the context of the Water Framework Directive. The Guidance should be presented to the Water Directors meeting in Athens in June 2003.

iii. Detailed timetable and milestones

ID	Task Name	1st Quarter				2nd Quarter			3rd Quarter			4th Quarter			1st Quarter	
		Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
1	Prepare a common text for inclusion in guidance documents															
2	Present common text at WD meeting	19/11														
3	Agreement on table of contents															
4	Set up the working group and prepare a kick-off meeting															
5	Prepare 1st draft															
6	Present 1st draft at SCG				21/02											
7	Revise document															
8	Present revised document at SCG meeting															
9	Prepare final draft															
10	Present final draft to WFDs															17/12

iv. Contact person/s

Italy has taken the lead on this activity. The contact person is:

Name	Organisation	E-mail
Giorgio Pineschi	Ministry of Environment and Land Protection	Minamb.tai@mclink.it

v. Participants

The participants in the Drafting Group are Austria, Belgium (Flanders), Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Romania, Spain, United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway, Commission and WWF, EEB, Eurelectric, and RTD project (Evaluwet). (Status: May 2003).

vi. Type and intensity of work

The Drafting Group (DG) started in late 2002 and had already meetings on 29 January and on 24 March 2003. Following a transitional phase, the DG is now reporting to the IRBM Working Group. A draft version of the Guidance has already been presented to the SCG on 5 May 2003. Another DG meeting in June and a workshop with a wider participation is planned to finally complete the Guidance. Once the final Guidance is presented to the Water Directors, the work of the Drafting Group will be completed.

WG 2.B – Integrated River Basin Management

Activity sheet 2 – Integrated testing in Pilot River Basins

i. Objectives

The overall objective of integrated testing is to ensure coherence amongst the different Guidance Documents in the selected pilot river basins leading to the long term development of river Basin Management Plans. For further information refer to 'Terms of Reference, version 22nd November 2002.

ii. Tasks and expected outcomes

Integrated testing is organised in two phases:

Phase 1a covers the period of 2002 to the third quarter of 2003 and focuses on testing of *Key Issues* related to the Guidance Documents which relate to the requirements provided for under Article 5 WFD. In addition, this phase is to set up an on-line dynamic feedback and information exchange, and identify new *Issues* as the testing process evolves and additional cross cutting problems appear. The end product will be a document based on the elaboration of the experiences dealing with the *Key Issues* addressed during the testing phase.

Phase 1b will concentrate on the Guidance Documents not included in Phase 1a. This work will run in parallel with Phase 1a. However, it will extend until mid-2004.

Phase 2 will further develop integrated testing to contribute to producing Program of Measures and a River Basin Management Plan. The work envisaged during this Phase would initiate during the second half of 2004.

iii. Detailed timetable and milestones

Time	2002			2003				2004				2005				2006			
Actions	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Information Exchange																			
Testing related to Article 5 commitment (Phase 1a)																			
Integrated testing of other GDs (Phase 1b)																			
Programme of measures/RBMP (Phase 2)																			
Deliverables	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
D1			X																
D2						X													
D3										X				X					
D4																			?

- **D1.** Electronic platform for on-line dynamic feedback and information exchange;
- **D2.** Intermediate progress reports concerning specific issues that had to be addressed by the PRBs (Phase 1)
- **D3.** Comprehensive report concerning the testing of the technical Guidance Documents including also a proposal for update.
- **D4.** Programme of Measures/RBMP (to be agreed upon for delivery date)

iv. Contact person/s

Name	Organisation	E-mail
Giovanni Bidoglio	JRC-IES	Giovanni.bidoglio@jrc.it

v. Participants

The management of the PRB exercise is mainly done by the Secretariat, the Joint Research Centre. A Steering Committee will be set up including the Secretariat (JRC), IRBM WG leaders, PRB co-ordinators, Commission, and some other members of WG 2.B (currently, D, NL, WWF). The role of the Steering Committee is to co-ordinate the work and to draft the conclusions from the exercise.

vi. Type and intensity of work

A meeting of the PRB Co-ordinators took place on 28 February 2003 in Brussels. The meeting reviewed the progress and prepared the Pilot River Basins Workshop scheduled for 3-4 April 2003 in Ispra (Italy). Furthermore specific initiatives to support and facilitate the PRB exercise will be discussed. These include specific seminars in selected PRBs (e.g. the Mediterranean area), joint workshops (e.g. on water bodies, groundwater or coastal waters), participation in research projects and participation in the WFD Reporting. The Workshop in Ispra reviewed the status of the testing exercise in the Pilot River Basins, discussed and proposed solutions to encountered problems and plan the future process.

Another meeting of the Steering Group is planned for 8 July. In addition, the Secretariat will regularly report to the IRBM WG and the SCG on the basis of the reports from the PRBs.

A second workshop will take place at the end 2003 to analyse the results of Phase 1a and to prepare a summary document with the obtained results concerning the addressed Key Issues. Furthermore, the report will also try to identify gaps between Guidance Documents and analyse issues related to their internal coherence. Similarly, two workshops are planned for 2004.

WG 2.B – Integrated River Basin Management

Activity sheet 3 – Integrated of Economics in horizontal issues (techno-economic drafting group)

i. Objectives

The main objective of this activity is to fill the gaps the between technical and economic issues reflected in some Guidance Documents (IMPRESS, HMWB, WATECO), but not really achieved in the first phase of the CIS.

This group will have to provide practical advice on horizontal issues (initial status characterisation), baseline scenario, scale of data collection and analysis to facilitate both technical and economic analysis at the scale of river basins in the short term. A main part of the outputs will be delivered for the second half of 2003 the rest before mid 2004. The outputs of this activity should provide some practical advice in order to facilitate in the PRB activities and Article 5 expectations. The work will be mainly focused on helping practitioners to fulfil 2004 requirements (characterisation, baseline scenario).

A first draft of these products will need to be ready at the end of 2003 so as to be useful in the frame of river basin characterisation (Article 5) in 2004. The purpose of this activity is to produce short practical advice supplementing the existing Guidance Documents and not any new Guidance Document.

The main part of the outputs (scale, baseline) could be finalised in the end of 2003 and presented during workshops in the beginning of 2004. In order to deliver these outputs an ad-hoc Expert Network or a Drafting Team (DT) should be established within the IRBM Working Group (2.B) (see below).

The training products are prepared by a consultant in the frame of a call for tender launched by the commission in early 2003. They will be finalised in July 2003. For the training products, the Working Group 2.B and the related DT is expected to take part to their dissemination in Member States and Candidate Countries.

ii. Tasks and expected outcomes

The ad-hoc Expert Network will mainly have three tasks:

- To help for the dissemination of training products (Web, slides,...) for applying the economic analysis described in the WATECO Guidance (mainly dedicated to policy makers and water technicians and economists);
- To provide some practical advice for Article 5 requirements (characterisation), the outcomes expected are mainly practical examples to help for : data collection, building baseline, solving scale issues;
- To act, for 2.B WG leaders, as a helpdesk for PRB activities (participation to workshops, practical advice, dissemination of the advice written by the DG).

iii. Detailed timetable and milestones

<i>Time</i>	2002			2003				2004			
Actions	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Training products dissemination											
Practical advice for Article 5 implementation (see D1)											
Helpdesk for PRB activities											
Deliverables	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
D1							X				

iv. Contact person/s

France and the Commission will lead the activity. The contact persons are:

Name	Organisation	E-mail
Jean Pierre Rideau	French ministry	jean-pierre.rideau@environnement.gouv.fr
Thierry Davy	European Commission	thierry.davy@cec.eu.int

v. Participants

The decision as to whether an expert network or a drafting team will be established will be discussed in WG 2.B. According to the general definitions of these groups (cf. introduction of Annex 1), the following considerations apply.

Drafting Team: participants can be recruited solely from the members of WG 2.B and no more than 10 persons will be needed in accordance to the task, the mandate, and the deadlines of the task.

Expert Network: other experts outside WG 2.B are being involved, more than 10 persons are interested or will be needed in accordance to the task, the mandate, and the deadlines of the task.

The volunteers will have to contact the leaders of the activity. Both technical experts from former IMPRESS, HMWB and economists from former WATECO are expected to give to the expert network a horizontal dimension. The task of the group is to produce documents (guidelines, answer to specific questions coming from PRB, MS and CC). For each member of it a written contribution will be expected.

vi. Type and intensity of work

A meeting of the IRBM group has taken place on 10/11 March 2003 in Paris. After this meeting the drafting team will be constituted, on the basis of proposal coming from MS, CC and stakeholders. It will meet around twice a year and the main part of the work will be done by email. A support from a consultant will be given only for the realisation of the training products. In a few months it could be useful to organise a workshop with the former members of WG 2.5 - WATECO in order to share expertise and to present the new outputs of this activity.

WG 2.B – Integrated River Basin Management

Activity sheet 4 – Addressing Methodological Economic Issues

i. Objectives

The main aim of this activity is to develop practical guidelines on environmental and resource costing procedures in order to enable Member States and Candidate Countries to assess cost recovery including environmental and resource costs as prescribed in Articles 5 and 9 of the WFD. These guidelines are an important tool to assess environmental and resource costs in Members States and Candidate Countries at national and river basin level.

In order to be able to meet both short and longer term WFD deadlines, work on this issue has to start as soon as possible, especially in view of the fact that environmental and resource costs are not well researched and documented in most Members States and Candidate Countries:

- For the 2004 requirements assessing environmental and resource costs with currently available data in order to be able to report on cost recovery;
- For 2006 assessing environmental and resource costs related to the gap between the current situation and the WFD water quality goals (e.g. for possible derogation) and the identification of efficient programs of measures;
- For the 2009 requirements of reporting on cost recovery based upon improved knowledge and information about environmental and resource costs.

ii. Tasks and expected outcomes

The Expert Network's most important task will be to initiate and feed the discussion about the complex issue of environmental and resource costs in the WFD and propose appropriate costing procedures. The outcome of the Expert Network's work are practical guidelines for environmental and resource costing procedures, which are linked to the political realities of current water pricing procedures in Member States and Candidate Countries. In order to ensure the practical usefulness of the proposed work, the work of the Expert Network will be linked to a number of ongoing (international) river basin activities (pilot studies), looking at the implementation of the economic analysis of the WFD, in particular the assessment of cost recovery (Article 9).

To achieve the Expert Network's objective, three main activities will be undertaken during the next year and half:

- 1) Definition of environmental and resource costs (3 to 6 months);
- 2) Development of guidelines on how to assess environmental and resource costs based upon 4 national cases studies (3 to 6 months);
- 3) European synthesis of environmental and resource costs and the generation of key indicator values for potentially useful for reporting requirements (9 to 12 months).

vi. Type and intensity of work

Candidates will be expected to have an active input in the process of producing the documents in terms of advice and, if necessary, data and information provision regarding environmental and resource costs, cost recovery and current water pricing policies. Hence, the expert group leaders will be responsible for writing the documents with the active participation of the other members.

It is expected that the expert group will meet about twice in 2003 and twice in 2004. If possible a seminar on environmental costs related to water will be organised before the end of 2003. Contacts and communication between the leaders of the expert group and the other participants will be through telephone and email correspondence as much as possible.

Annex 1.3 Working Group 2.C – Groundwater

[This mandate is currently under preparation and will be presented to the Strategic Co-ordination Group in October 2003.]

Annex 1.4 Working Group 2.D – Reporting

- **Introduction**

The following sections outline the objectives, key activities and timetables for the “Working Group 2.D on Reporting” (Reporting WG).

- **Objectives**

The overall objective of the Reporting Working Group is to identify information and data to be transmitted and to prepare guidelines on the transmission and processing of information and data gathered in the frame of Directive 2000/60/EC. In the longer term, these guidelines should be extended to cover the reporting aspects resulting from other water directives.

These guidelines have to be drafted with the view of collecting targeted data and information, avoiding duplication and ensuring an efficient use of available data and information. They will, ultimately be submitted for approval to the Committee set up under the Water Framework Directive.

The initial concepts put forward by the EAF on reporting should be further developed and the document “Reporting for Water – Concept Report” should be used as a basis for the work.

In addition, the process developed should provide a better access to validated data and information at the relevant level for all relevant users across institutional barriers, including both national levels, within transboundary river basins districts, the Commission, the European Environment Agency and the public.

- **Key activities**

Five main topics have been identified which will need to be worked out by the WG:

1. Guidance for reporting under the WFD;
2. Assessment of State of the Environment;
3. Information needs from International Organisations;
4. Assessment of Policy Effectiveness;
5. Information for the public.

During one and half years, the WG will concentrate on topics 1 and 2 exclusively.

The other topics will need to be discussed at a later stage: in principle, the third topic should start to be addressed in the course of 2004 and the two remaining ones in 2005/2006.

For each of the subjects, the activities will be related to the definition of the data and information to be reported as well as of the processes to make them available:

More detailed activity sheets are presented below.

- **Overall timetable**

	2003				2004				2005				2006			
Tasks																
1. Guidance for reporting under the WFD																
2. Assessment of State of Environment																
3. Information for International organisations																
4. Assessment of Policy Effectiveness																
5. Information for the Public																

- **Lead countries/body**

The Commission / DG ENV will be the leader of WG 2.D. It will be assisted by a European Steering Team involving the following bodies: COM / JRC, COM / EUROSTAT, EEA

- **Participants**

In addition the Steering Team, all Member States, other countries in the CIS, stakeholders and NGOs can nominate experts to this group through their representative in the Strategic Coordination Group.

- **Links with other activities**

The WG has to take into account the ongoing activities on the revision of the "Reporting Directive" (91/692/EEC) as well as under the INSPIRE initiative.

- **Type and intensity of work**

In its work, the WG will be supported by topic drafting teams responsible for preparing working documents and preliminary guidelines to be discussed and agreed.

The WG and the topic drafting teams will have to deal with a wide range of technical issues (data exchange procedures, geographical information systems, web based applications etc...).

It will also need to maintain close interactions with other WGs to address the reporting aspects resulting from their work in an appropriate way.

WG 2.D – Reporting

Activity sheet 1 – Guidance for reporting under the WFD

i. Objectives

The objective of the guidance activity is to identify the information and the data that must be communicated to the Commission in order for the Member States to fulfil their legal obligations under the WFD. The ways of a harmonised and systematic communication between the member states and the Commission will also need to be worked out.

The reported data and information will enable the Commission to establish whether member States are in compliance with the WFD.

The principles put forward in the document “Reporting for Water – Concept Report” should be followed by the DG.

Guidelines will be developed to ensure that the information and data are comparable, plausible, and consistent and that cross-checking can be carried out (for example when two member States report on a common River Basin). They should also promote a harmonised level of implementation, by ensuring that common procedures are followed where appropriate e.g. on intercalibration and other methodologies. The result of the work of other WG has to be carefully taken into consideration to guarantee coherence and avoid duplication.

The existing national or international information systems or reporting mechanisms will be taken into consideration for developing the guidelines.

ii. Tasks and expected outcomes

A stepwise approach (in terms of tasks and time) will be followed for the work:

- a. Identification of information / data to be reported as well as their type (numerical, textual, maps);
- b. Definition of the level of aggregation / details;
- c. Establishment of technical formats.

Options will be examined for the 2004 reporting mechanisms. Guidance will be established, to be put before the Article 21 Committee (in the form of a draft decision). The 2004 reporting covers: competent authorities and the geographical coverage of River Basin Districts.

Guidance will further be developed on the reporting modalities for 2005/2006, to be put before the Article 21 Committee for discussion during 2004. This reporting covers:

- a. River basin characteristics, the impact of human activity on the status of surface water and groundwater and an economic analysis of water use - Article 5 and Annexes II and III of the WFD;
- b. Monitoring programmes - Article 8 of the WFD;
- c. River basin management plans - Article 13 of the WFD;
- d. Progress on the implementation of programmes of measures – Article 15 of WFD.

For each of these reporting requirements, the concept of an electronically based reporting system will be elaborated along the principles enunciated in the document ‘Common Vision for Future Reporting Structure’. Particular attention will be given to the

geographical scale at which data need to be reported and to the level of their aggregation. Another important consideration will be the degree of access needed by various users.

ii. Detailed timetable and milestones

	2003				2004				2005				2006			
Tasks																
1. Reporting on competent authorities																
Analysis of options paper for 2004 rep.																
Preparation of decision for Art 21 Cee																
2. Review of the Guidance Documents established by '2002' groups																
3. Reporting on RB characteristics																
Options paper drafted & analysed																
Discussion in Art 21 Cee + feedback																
Preparation of decision for Art 21 Cee																
4. Reporting on Monitoring Programmes																
5. Reporting on RBMP																
6. Reporting Progress in implementing programme of measures																

iii. Contact person/s

Name	Organisation	E-mail
Pierre Hecq	COM / DG ENV/B.1	pierre.hecq@cec.eu.int

iv. Participants

B, D, F, NL, Ö, P, UK

COM / DG ENV, COM / JRC, COM / EUROSTAT, EEA

v. Type and intensity of work

The drafting group on Guidance for reporting under the WFD will be established under the Working Group 2.D on Reporting, to carry out this activity. It will meet twice during 2003, in April and [September]. [The further meeting frequency and schedule is to be decided at a later stage by the Working Group 2.D].

The drafting team will specifically: define the modalities for drafting and analysing reporting options; prepare the inputs for discussion at the Article 21 Committee and draft decisions of that Committee.

WG 2.D – Reporting

Activity sheet 2 – State of the Environment

i. Objectives

Across Europe the costs of implementation of environmental legislation for water – not just WFD, but also for example the Nitrates Directive and Urban Waste Water – is estimated to be in the order of magnitude of several €100bns. The costs of monitoring programmes to assess how the environment is changing as a result are relatively much lower in the order of magnitude of up to €100m across all countries. The costs of analysing the information coming from monitoring networks and using it to establish the effects and effectiveness of policies are of orders of magnitude lower still (€100,000s).

This indicates the value of monitoring, assessing and reporting information to the European level for evaluation purposes. In addition, the more this same information is utilised for different purposes (e.g. assessment of implementation of Directives (DGEnv); for establishing causality between water, land use, biodiversity and climate change aspects (EEA); establishing the link between economy and ecology (Eurostat), to inform the public (ALL)) then the more enhanced is its value and hence the already relatively low costs of monitoring and reporting such information are reduced further in cost/benefit terms.

“State of Environment” (SoE) is the 2nd of the three purposes of reporting as described in the concepts report, the others being reporting under the WFD and evaluation of effectiveness of policies. In the context of the Water Framework Directive and other water legislation for which countries establish monitoring activities, there are overlaps in information needs for these three purposes making it possible to streamline the reporting burden and to use information provided by countries for more than one purpose, thereby enhancing the information’s value.

One of the overarching objectives of reporting under the Water Framework Directive and other water legislation still in operation (e.g.UWWT, Nitrates) is to establish their effectiveness in terms of delivering the environmental improvements for which they have been established. Monitoring and assessing over time the state of the environment and the associated driving forces, pressures and impacts, will significantly contribute to fulfilling this overarching objective.

There are two further aspects to consider as contributions to streamlining the burden of reporting on countries in the context of SoE:

- ✓ Firstly, several chemical parameters monitored by countries in water bodies are relevant not just to the Water Framework Directive but also to other legislation. For example, nitrates and phosphorus concentrations in rivers result from households/industry (UWWT Directive) and from agriculture (Nitrates Directive) and will also be relevant to status assessment under the WFD. Establishing the relative contributions of the Nitrates and UWWT Directives to improvements in concentrations will be a key challenge for evaluating effectiveness, and made more challenging with the addition of WFD implementation measures;
- ✓ Secondly, there are numerous indicator and other SOE analysis initiatives ongoing across Europe and more widely in OECD and UN bodies. All of the organisations involved have their own mandates and purposes for such assessments. Many of these initiatives are supported by country representatives often representing different ministries and public bodies and not always in a co-ordinated way. What is lacking is a common framework of what SOE data is needed. However several frameworks exist as a basis for establishing a streamlined approach e.g. EEA core set, Eurostat Pressure indices, Spring Council structural indicators, OECD environmental indicators.

The overall objective of the drafting group on 'State of the Environment' is to establish how the data and the information that is available in Member States can be most effectively used to report on the state of the environment and on trends therein, and how it can at the same time be linked to other reporting purposes to form part of the future harmonised data and information system foreseen in the Reporting Concepts paper.

ii. Tasks and expected outcomes

The first task under this activity will be to establish:

- ✓ A common understanding on the purpose of SoE data and its usefulness in relation to the three purposes of reporting;
- ✓ The relative value of reporting such information from member states for use and assessment at the European level.

A second task will be to establish current activities on SoE data and:

- ✓ To what extent the information and data that must be communicated to the Commission under the Directive contributes towards the assessment of the state of the environment and the analysis of trends;
- ✓ Where the data collected under other Directives, Agencies and other international organisations can usefully complement them.

To do this, an inventory needs to be set up of what is being/ will be reported; and for what purpose. In this respect it is suggested to address what is being requested or will be requested on SoE data through legislation (WFD and other legislation that will remain in existence) and what is being requested through other organisations which have their own legal mandate or member states' endorsement to proceed.

The third task will be to look at the completeness/ adequacy of the information and data that is already being provided through established data flows in Europe namely those managed by the EEA (EuroWaternet) and Eurostat (OECD/Eurostat Joint Questionnaire). The Drafting Group should also look at what information can be expected through WFD in the future and how this should impact on future indicator initiatives and data flows, including the timeframe in which they will be received.

The fourth task will then be to identify in concrete information terms the inter- linkages with the other reporting streams, i.e. for the other purposes: compliance, evaluation of policy effectiveness etc.).

By the end of 2003, Tasks 1 and 2 should be well advanced and then completed in early 2004. Tasks 3 and 4 will have a longer time perspective of late 2004, early 2005.

In parallel to these activities, the concept of an electronically based reporting system will be elaborated along the principles enunciated in the document 'Common Vision for Future Reporting Structure'. In this respect, particular attention will be given to the geographical scale at which data need to be reported and to the level of their aggregation. Another important consideration will be the degree of access needed by various users.

iii. Detailed timetable and milestones

	2003				2004				2005				2006			
Tasks																
State of Environment																
1. Inventory of information/data to be reported																
1.1 ecological status surface waters																
1.2 chemical status surface waters																
1.3 quantitative status groundwater																
1.4 chemical status groundwater																
2. Assessment of the completeness of the information for state/trends analysis																
3. Inter- linkages with reporting for other purposes																
4. Review of the Guidance Documents established by '2002' groups																
5. Reporting requirements for 2005/2006																
6. Preparation of discussion document																
7. Contribution towards an electronically based reporting system																

iv. Contact person/s

Lead: EEA

Name	Organisation	E-mail
Jock Martin	EEA	Jock.Martin@eea.eu.int

v. Participants

D, DK, F, A, PL, UK

EEA, COM / JRC, COM / EUROSTAT

vi. Type and intensity of work

A drafting group on 'State of the Environment' will be established under the Working Group 2.D on Reporting, to carry out this activity. It will meet twice during 2003, in June and [September], and at least once in 2004 [March]. [The further meeting frequency and schedule is to be decided at a later stage by the Working Group 2.D].

The drafting group will specifically:

- define the modalities for 2005/2006 reporting options for establishing the state of the environment;
- prepare the inputs for discussion at the Article 21 Committee [and draft guidelines / decisions to be approved at the appropriate level].

Annex 2 - Approaches for maintaining the network of the former Working Groups

As set out in Section 5 of the new work programme, there are a number of initiatives which should facilitate the maintaining of the network of the former Working Groups. Such activities shall ensure that best use is made of their experience and their expertise in the ongoing implementation process. The former Working Groups are therefore encouraged and invited to consider the following measures in order to maintain their network:

1. **Maintain contact database and exchange information** regularly (e.g. through newsgroups or email circulation). E.g. Working Group 2.4 has established a 'CIS COAST network' and the former WG leaders ensure that the members of the network are regularly updated about relevant developments.
2. **Organise regular workshops** of working group experts to exchange information on recent developments. Such workshops could take place every 12 – 18 months and the results could be disseminated through the new CIS Working Groups. The SCG should be informed about such events in order to ensure that they take place under the umbrella of the CIS. Some Working Groups had foreseen such workshops, e.g. WG 2.1.
3. Set-up informal, dynamic mechanism for providing information about **new tools and additional best practices examples** as they emerge. E.g. Working Group 2.1 – IMPRESS was considering the establishment of an internet site where new tools and best practices examples can be collected. Ongoing research project may be able to provide and maintain such platforms.
4. **Follow and support the pilot river basin testing** of the Guidance. During the testing of the Guidance Documents a number of questions will emerge which need to be addressed together with the members of the Working Groups who drafted the Guidance. The Joint Research Centre has set up a "Platform of Information Exchange" (PIE)⁶ and will organise regular workshops involving some members of the former WGs. In addition, the members of the WGs should get involved directly in their national PRBs. Moreover, additional events such as workshops may be organised in order to address the testing of one particular Guidance. E.g. DG Environment intends to initiate workshops on the testing of the water bodies, the economics and the coastal Guidance. In addition, the horizontal issue of testing groundwater aspects will be the subject of a particular workshop.
5. **Support new Working Groups** by fulfilling specific, defined tasks. During the work under the new work programme, specific issues may emerge which require the expertise from the former Working Group. Rather than setting up new groups, the former WG networks should be used to address these issues. E.g. for the intercalibration it is necessary to validate the selection of intercalibration sites by experts for the different water categories such as river, lakes and coastal waters. The new WG 2.A will rely on the already former experts groups and will, for example, invite the former WG 2.4 to review the data for transitional and coastal waters before the sites are being proposed to the Article 21 Committee. Since this may have some resource implications, the SCG should be informed in advance if certain emerging tasks are mandated to former Working Groups.

⁶ http://viso.ei.jrc.it/wfd_prb/index.html

For all the above-mentioned initiatives, the WFD CIRCA system may be used to facilitate the maintenance of the networks since all WG members will continue to have access and the WG leaders keep their administrative rights. In addition, the newsgroup function of the WFD CIRCA could be used more intensively for the above purposes.

The Commission (DG Environment) will support the maintenance of the networks and regularly report to the SCG and the Water Directors on the state-of-play of that cross-cutting activity.

Annex 3 - Work Programme and joint timetable under the WFD Common Implementation Strategy in 2003/2004 (short version, detailed timetables are for all activities are included in Annex 1)

Task Name	2003					2004				2005				2006				2007
	Qtr 4	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 1
Working group 2A - Ecological Status																		
Prepare site register and undertake IC exercise																		
Develop and finalise classification guidance																		
Working Group 2B - Integrated RBM																		
Develop and finalise wetlands guidance																		
Pilot River Basin Testing																		
Integrate economics in horizontal issues																		
Address methodological economic issues																		
Working Group 2C - Groundwater																		
Support implementation of WFD and GW Daughter Directive																		
Working Group 2D - Reporting																		
Fulfilment of legal obligations																		
State of the Environment and Trend Analysis																		

Annex 4 - Working Structure under the WFD Common Implementation Strategy in 2003/2004 (overview)

