

Manual of European Environmental Policy

The following pages are a section from the Manual of European Environmental Policy written by the Institute for European Environmental Policy.

The Manual was published by Earthscan/Routledge from 2010 to 2012. It was designed as an on-line interactive reference work and annual printed versions were also produced.

This section is the text of the Manual as published in 2012. It is therefore important to note the following:

- The contents have not been updated since 2012 and no guarantee is given of the accuracy of the contents given potential subsequent developments.
- The sections include links to external websites (e.g. to legal texts). These links continue to work as long as those links are not broken by those websites.
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The European Union Water Initiative

Date	The European Union Water Initiative
2002	EUWI Background Document at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg. European Commission, August 2002

Purpose of the Initiative

The EU Water Initiative (EUWI) is a joint process of the European Commission, Member States and stakeholders to co-ordinate development assistance to third countries regarding water projects and to analyse and enhance the identification of priorities and means of delivery for individual countries and regions.

Summary of the Initiative

The EUWI was launched at the 2002 WSSD in Johannesburg¹. Its aim is to co-ordinate the financial support policies of the Member States towards water development projects in third countries (as well as the EU's own support projects within the EU Water Facility launched in 2004, see [link](#)). The purpose of this policy is to achieve water outcomes outside of the EU. However, the policy is (partially) directed at the Member States.

The EUWI is not only a process of the EU institutions, it is designed as a multi-stakeholder process to support improved water management, including providing better co-ordination of funding programmes from the individual Member States to recipient countries. The EUWI has the following five specific objectives:

- Strengthening political commitment to action and innovation-oriented partnership.
- Promoting better water governance, capacity building and awareness.
- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of water management through multi-stakeholder dialogue and co-ordination.
- Strengthening co-operation by promoting river-basin approaches in national and transboundary waters.
- Identifying additional sources of funding and mechanisms to ensure sustainable financing.

The EUWI operates through different working groups. Four of these have a regional focus – Africa; Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA); the Mediterranean; and Latin America. Others address cross-cutting thematic issues (research and finance). There is also a Co-ordination Group and an Annual Multi Stakeholder Forum that oversees the EUWI. The Secretariat of EUWI is managed by the European Commission. The Secretariat produces regular reports on the progress of the EUWI².

In order to shape the financial strategy of the EUWI, a Financial Working Group (FWG) was formed, with representatives from the public, private and civil society with special expertise or interest in the financing of the water sector. The FWG has the following key objectives:

- To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing and future EU aid flows to water, including encouraging innovation, the development of institutional and regulatory frameworks and capacity building.
- To enable the use of development funding as a catalyst to leverage other forms of finance, including donor, user and private finance, to improve access of the poor to water and sanitation services.

EECCA Component

The EUWI Component for Eastern European, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) targets the 12 EECCA countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Partners are government authorities and NGOs in the EECCA countries, government authorities in the EU Member States, selected non-EU Member States and international organizations active in the region within the water sector, such as European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), European Bank for Investment (EIB), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The EECCA Component focuses on two main areas – water supply and sanitation, including financing of water infrastructure, and integrated water resources management, including transboundary river basin management and regional seas issues.

The objectives of the EECCA Component are to:

- Improve the institutional and regulatory framework.
- Ensure financial viability of utilities.
- Ensure investment in water supply, sanitation and rehabilitation.
- Ensure access of the poor to water services as a basic human right.
- Safeguard public health.
- Protect the environment.
- Establish and implement national policies for integrated water resource management.
- Develop the inter-state co-operative structures for river/lake basin management.

Most of the work of the EECCA Component is taken forward through National Policy Dialogues. These aim to develop country-specific activities concerning water supply and sanitation and integrated water resources management and involve high-level representatives of the key partners in the country – governmental and non-governmental. Each National Policy Dialogue results in a policy package addressing the identified issues. National Policy Dialogues were launched in Armenia (2006), Georgia (2007), Kyrgyzstan (2008), Moldova (2006) and Ukraine (2008); they are all ongoing. In 2010 and 2011, National Policy Dialogues were initiated in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In September 2010, Kazakhstan requested the initiation of a National Policy Dialogue on IWRM.

Africa

The Africa initiative of the EUWI addresses sub-Saharan Africa and is taken forward by the Africa Working Group (AWG). The AWG developed from the EU-Africa Strategic Partnership on Water Affairs and Sanitation, which was signed in September 2002 by the Presidents of South Africa, Nigeria, the European Union and the European Commission. The

AWG has members from the Technical Advisory Committee of the African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW-TAC), the EU Member States, the European Commission, civil society, financing institutions, the private sector and others. The countries of Africa vary significantly – some having strong structures to allow for policy and donor dialogue and others having poor structures. Therefore, the EUWI has focused on strengthening the basis for dialogue.

The AWG multi-annual work programme (2006–2009) included the following groups of activities:

- Organizing policy dialogue and thematic discussions on water supply and sanitation and integrated water resource management.
- Strengthening accountability and transparency mechanisms.
- Stimulating the development of national policy frameworks through a multi-stakeholder approach.

Important outcomes have included the mapping of EU aid to Africa in the water and sanitation sector and a role in the future preparation of sanitation support endorsed by an Africa-EU statement on sanitation adopted during the July 2008 African Union Summit. In 2010 the implementation of the AWG workplan 2010 began.

Mediterranean

The Mediterranean component focuses on the following sectoral and cross-cutting themes:

1. Water supply and sanitation, with emphasis on the poorest part of the societies.
2. Integrated water resources management, with emphasis on management of transboundary and national water bodies.
3. Water, food and environment interaction, with emphasis on fragile ecosystems.
4. Non-conventional water resources.
5. Transfer of technology, transfer of know-how, capacity building and training.
6. Education.

Its aims are to:

- Reinforce political commitment to action and raise the profile of water and sanitation with view to poverty reduction.
- Promote better water governance arrangements including stronger partnerships between public and private sectors and local stakeholders and build institutional capacity.
- Improve co-ordination and co-operation moving towards sector-wide approaches, assisting multi-stakeholder processes to reinforce partnerships for action.
- Develop regional and sub-regional co-operation by assisting in the application of integrated water resources management including transboundary waters to contribute to sustainable development and conflict prevention.
- Develop additional and innovative funding mechanisms and catalyze additional funding.

These themes and aims have been translated into objectives in the Activity Plan, such as support for sustainable water use in agriculture, improved knowledge transfer, etc. Long-term

actions are focused on reducing the vulnerability of water supply systems to drought, improving the reliability of each system to meet future demands under drought conditions by a set of appropriate structural and institutional measures, such as water conservation and demand management, efficient use and resource protection, educational programmes, public information and awareness, research. Short-term actions are those relating to a specific drought event within an existing framework of infrastructures and management policies and comprise a contingency plan, which aims to limit the adverse impacts on the economy, social life and environment.

Links are established through a number of related programmes, such as those of the UNEP Global Environmental Fund. For example, a formal mechanism called the 'Joint Process between the Water Framework Directive [2000/60/EC](#) and the MED EUWI' has been established. This aims at making Mediterranean non-EU partners benefit from the principles, approach and experience of Directive 2000/60/EC and to improve integrated water resources management in the region, including a specific thematic topic on water scarcity. One example of this is the MED Joint Process WFD/EUWI water scarcity drafting group which published a policy document on 'water scarcity management in the context of the WFD'.

The EUWI has also assisted in developing the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean (SWM). This has the following four themes:

- Water governance.
- Water and climate change adaptation.
- Water demand management.
- Water financing.

The SWM was not formally agreed at a Ministerial meeting in Barcelona in April 2010 for high level political reasons, but it still forms a focus for work under the EUWI.

Latin America

The Latin America component of the EUWI is headed by Spain, Mexico and Portugal. The component includes the two general areas of Water and Sanitation and Integrated Water Resource Management as well as two additional areas – one on the Prevention of Extreme Water-related Events and Mitigation of their Consequences and the other on Sustainable Use of Water in Agriculture. The EUWI is collaborating with regional organizations to support training programmes. Other thematic issues which are being addressed include:

- Integration of gender issues and issues concerning indigenous populations.
- Intraregional co-operation and technology transfer.
- Education and availability of know-how for the public.

Review of the Initiative

A review³ of the EUWI was undertaken from 2006 to 2007. It concluded that 'the Initiative has failed to meet the high expectations that accompanied the launch in 2002', noting that there has been 'an increasing belief that the EUWI was constrained by a lack of clarity surrounding its objectives as well as cumbersome governance arrangements'. The review stated that 'the most discernable achievements of the EUWI to date are its contribution to the

creation of the EU Water Facility and the increased support to research'. However, although some Member States had increased their allocations for the sector, 'it is not yet possible to attribute to the EUWI any increases in official development assistance flows from the Member States to the water sector'. Also it noted that most effort was focused on Integrated Water Resource Management and many Member States were reluctant to engage outside of Africa. The review made suggestions for change, but ultimately it stated that 'our judgement at this stage is that it is too early to assess whether the EUWI will achieve its ultimate goal'.

Related Legislation

There are a number of related EU legislation and policies related to the EU Water Initiative:

- Water Framework Directive [2000/60/EC](#).
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive [91/271/EEC](#).
- [Communication](#) on Water Scarcity and Droughts.

References

1 For information on the EUWI, visit the EUWI webpage, <http://www.euwi.net>

2 EU Water Initiative Annual Report 2010. [[link](#)]. Annual Report 2011 [[link](#)]

3 EUWI (2007) *Review of the European Union Water Initiative: Volume I: Main Report*, http://www.euwi.net/files/euwi/926_tmpphpgO1rFo.pdf, Accessed 20.01.2010