

European Analytical Quality Control in support of the Water Framework Directive via the Water Information System for Europe - EAQC WISE

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Newsletter Issue 2

Editorial

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The EAQC-WISE project enters into its 3rd and last year. Over the last two years, the consortium focused on assessing the current situation regarding Analytical Quality Control (AQC) tools and systems in the light of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) implementation, standardisation, research needs, and training services. From this state of the art, a first set of **recommendations** on gaps to be fulfilled has been drafted with the ultimate objective of providing a blueprint of an efficient and potentially sustainable pan-European AQC system in support of the WFD monitoring networks.

This last year of the project will be dedicated to the preparation of this blueprint. The challenge of this document is to propose to the Member States a new European AQC scheme which is based on scientific results while remaining realistic for policy makers. In this context, particular attention will be paid during the following months to ensure interactions with policy makers, laboratories and other bodies involved in the WFD monitoring chain. In accordance with the Chemical Monitoring Activity mandate, the EAQC-WISE consortium will go on supporting the development by the European Commission of a common strategy for quality assurance and control of WFD chemical monitoring data (Activity CMA-2). In order to have an in-depth discussion, a **public workshop** will be organised on the 17th and 18th of June 2008 in Brussels where draft recommendations of the blueprint will be discussed. I invite all of you, scientists, laboratories or policy makers, to attend this event, express your views, and contribute to the establishment of a pan-European AQC system. Building harmonised monitoring networks providing comparable data is essential for an efficient implementation of the WFD and related decision-making.

Policy context

The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) requires Member States to monitor surface and groundwater chemical status. These monitoring programmes are operational since the beginning of 2007 and will be revised every six years. Data from these networks will allow the European Commission assessing whereas Member States have met the WFD environmental objectives. The effectiveness of this implementation highly depends on the ability of Member States laboratories to measure chemical, biological and ecological changes of the quality of Community waters. For this purpose, an appropriate analytical quality control system has to be established across all European monitoring laboratories to ensure the reliability and comparability of these data.





Project objectives and progress

To support Member States implementing the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and designing water monitoring networks, the **EAQC-WISE project** was built with the **ultimate objective to provide a blue print of an efficient and potentially sustainable pan-European Quality Assurance / Quality Control (QA/QC) system** in order to guarantee data reliability and comparability at river basin scale as well as at European scale.

The first year of the project was dedicated to the **evaluation of the current status** of QA/QC tools and systems, of standardization and research needs, of current practices within the WFD information chain and of current practices within training services, in the frame of the WFD implementation. The survey performed for this purpose has pointed out that a lot of products/services/practices exist in the field of QA/QC across EU. The consequence is that the practices arise from isolated guidance rather than a whole QA/QC system. Two main gaps have been highlighted:

- **A lack of appropriate tools** in the frame of the WFD implementation,
- **A low level of EU-wide harmonisation** of different aspects related to the WFD in the current QA/QC systems.

Based on these results, the second year was dedicated to provide **a first set of recommendations** for the different fields of interest which will be gathered in the blue print.

The project is now focusing on the development of the blueprint that will be published by the end of 2008.



Focus on the blueprint



The **blueprint** aims to develop a **sustainable system for QA/QC in WFD monitoring up to the European level**. It includes a summary of the identified gaps and the associated recommendations especially for the following aspects:

- QA/QC tools (i.e. proficiency testing, reference materials, validated methods);
- Training and education on QA/QC and related issues;
- Standardisation and accreditation;
- Research needs;
- Awareness of QA/QC issues, setting of expert groups.

A particular attention will be paid to ensure the final recommended process described in the blueprint will be practical and realistic enough for people responsible for managing WFD monitoring networks. In particular, answers to the following questions will be addressed:

- How to implement the process for each topic?
- Should the process be mandatory, does it need to be put into legislation? Should it be voluntary? Will it happen then?
- Who is responsible for this process? This responsibility is awarded by whom?
- Who checks compliance, whether this process is currently in place?
- How to ensure the sustainability of the process? (regarding funding, people, institutions, responsibilities, interests etc.)?
- How to guarantee the interaction/link between all the processes?

The system, which will make maximal use of existing activities complemented by some new ones, will **accommodate the needs and the input of the different actors in the WFD monitoring**, the monitoring labs, the competent authorities and river basin



managers, as well as those of data users (again, competent authorities and river basin managers, as well as the European Environment Agency, DG ENV and other stakeholders).

Other actors to be considered in the system are accreditation bodies (represented by European Accreditation), standardisation bodies, providers of research funding (national funding bodies as well as DG RTD and others), training providers, reference material producers, proficiency testing organisers etc. Realistic suggestions for clearly identified responsibilities at European level, national level and river basin level will be proposed.

A key role in the system will be given to **an expert panel(s)** that will present the focal point for collection of input from Member States, for delegation of tasks to sub-committees and communication to relevant actors in the system and for harmonization of best practice across the EU.

The terms of reference for such an expert panel(s) will be developed by the project. Moreover, consequences and specific recommendations for **further tailoring and harmonising competence assessment, namely accreditation**, to the European needs of WFD implementation and monitoring will be outlined.

EAQC-WISE public workshop 2008

"Today's data quality for tomorrow's decisions on water quality - Joining forces to build a sustainable European QA/QC system for WFD monitoring"

The final public EAQC WISE workshop will be held in Brussels on **June the 17 and 18th 2008**. The workshop is meant for those involved in water related activities across Europe, both users of monitoring data and decision makers such as monitoring experts, laboratory managers, QA/QC providers and assessors from accreditation bodies, local and national authorities.

The participants will be invited to explore the blueprint of the proposed QA/QC system, discover the impact they can have on the quality of monitoring data and provide feedback to the project. The workshop will have an **interactive format** with **plenty of opportunities for discussion and communication**.

Further information is available on the web site www.eaqc-wise.net.

Participation is free of charge and registrations are open until the 19th of May 2008.

Forthcoming events

- ❖ **International Workshop on Evaluating Climate Change and Development**, Alexandria, Egypt, May 10 -13, 2008, www.esdevaluation.org
- ❖ **Workshop on 'In-situ trailing for ecological and chemical studies in support of WFD implementation**, Pau, 15 May 2008
- ❖ **Eurachem Education and Training Workshop**, Athens, Greece, 19-20 May 2008. www.eurachem.org/events.htm
- ❖ **National Water Quality Monitoring Conference, Monitoring: Key to Understanding our Waters**, Atlantic City, NJ, United States, May 18 – 22 May 2008, www.wef.org/ConferencesTraining/ConferencesEvents/NatlWaterQualityMonitoringConference
- ❖ **Consoil 2008**, Milano, Italy, 3-6 June 2008. <http://consoil.ufz.de>
- ❖ **"Water resources management under extreme conditions" conference** INBO - Session » ECWATECH-2008, Moscow, Russia, 4 - 5 June 2008 www.inbo-news.org/friobang.htm
- ❖ **International Groundwater Symposium, Istanbul**, Turkey, 18 -20 June 2008, www.iahr-gw2008.net
- ❖ **14th International Congress of Metrology: Added value through better measurement**, Paris, France 22-25 June 2008. www.cfmetrologie.com/congres_en.php
- ❖ **13rd IWRA World Water Congress**, Montpellier, France 1-4 September 2008. www.wwc2008.msem.univ-montp2.fr
- ❖ **Water Framework Directive in relation to priority and emerging pollutants**, Koblenz, Germany, 22-24 September 2008. http://www.bafg.de/nn_162304/DE/05_Wissenstransfer/02_Veranstaltungen/22-09-08.html
- ❖ **6th Eurachem workshop on Proficiency Testing in analytical chemistry, microbiology and laboratory medicine**, Rome, Italy, 6-7 October 2008. www.eurachem.org/events.htm
- ❖ **"Use of Reference Materials and the Estimation of Measurement Uncertainty" training course**, 15 -16 October 2008, Geel, Belgium, Contact: jrc-irmm-rm-course@ec.europa.eu



- ❖ **Research need events: Identifying research needs, short, medium and long term**, June (Valencia), October (Stockholm), November 2008 (Bucharest). www.iwrm-net.org/spip.php?article105
- ❖ **EU Groundwater Policy Developments. Good status objectives and integrated management planning**, Paris, France, 13-15 November 2008. www.groundwater2008paris.fr

Project consortium

Participant name	Short name	Country
Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières	BRGM	FR
Joint Research Centre IRMM	JRC-IRMM	EC
Institut National de l'Environnement Industriel et des Risques	INERIS	FR
National Institut of Chemistry	NIC	SI
LGC Limited/Aquacheck	LGC	UK
WRc – plc Ltd	WRc - plc Ltd	UK
Ecologic – Institute for international and European Environmental Policy	Ecologic	DE
IWW Water Centre	IWW	DE
Umweltbundesamt, Federal Environmental Agency	UBA	DE
Environmental Institute, s.r.o.	EI	SK
Ente per le nuove tecnologie, l'energia e l'ambiente	ENEA	IT
University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna	IFA – Tulln	AT
Mermayde	Mermayde	NL
SP Swedish National Testing and Research Institute	SP	SE
WARSAW University	UNIWAR	PL
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam	VUA	NL

Project identification

STREP 6FP: Priority 8, Scientific Support to Policies, section 1.1.5 “Environmental assessment (soil, water, air, noise including the effects of chemical substances)”

Contract: N° 022603

Duration: 1st December 2005 – 30th November 2008

Budget of the project

- Total budget..... 1 711 904 €
- EC contribution 1 014 119 €

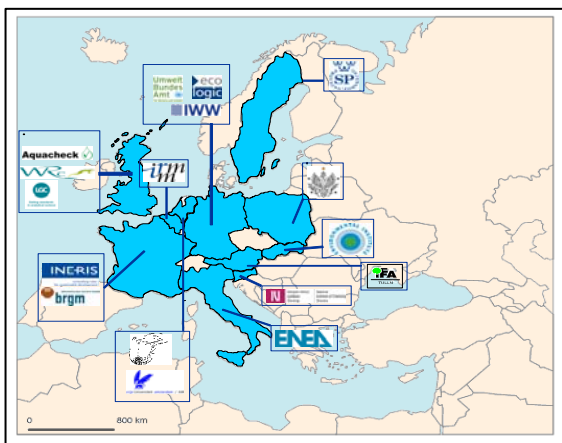
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