

# News

the water management. It includes lessons on the main concepts, keywords and tools related to water scarcity and drought, as well as a survey of the major articles and a list of projects and institutions related to water scarcity and drought in Europe. The WATER CoRe e-learning platform is a stand alone product, available on the website and free from registration. The platform was planned as a data-base-like e-learning tool, divided into seven modules strictly linked to the main WATER CoRe themes, each headed by one of the project partners. We are currently working in the creation of this service, which will be available by mid-summer at WATER CoRe website.

# Project

**WATER CoRe leads to improve water scarcity and drought management policies and instruments in all partner regions.**  
 The duration of the project is three years and it counts with a budget of EUR 2.5 million, financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). WATER CoRe focuses on the exchange of experiences addressed to the identification of problems and the development of best practices for drought management. The 14 partners from 7 EU Member States are committed to exchanging good practices and adapting these to their local or regional conditions.  
 The overall outcome will be a platform of European wide water management strategies available for everybody.



# What's New !

The WATER CoRe project is co-financed by the ERDF and made possible by the INTERREG IVC Programme



Please visit [www.watercore.eu](http://www.watercore.eu) and go to MEDIA section. There you will find more than 60 articles about WATER CoRe project (Available in English, French, Spanish, German, Romanian, Hungarian and Italian)

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Green Week

WATER CoRe in the Green Week

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## WATER CoRe in the Green Week

The biggest annual conference on European environment policy across Europe – the Green Week - took place 22-25 May 2012 in Brussels focusing on water issues.

WATER CoRe project was presented on Thursday 24th May at Charlemagne Building during the side-session “Water Information System for Europe (WISE)” within the official programme of the Green Week.

During the WATER CoRe presentation, technical experts and policy officers of the regional governments of North Brabant, Covasna and Aragon presented the project’s main features as well as some of the collected good practices within the WATER CoRe Good Practice Handbook. More specifically, the speakers explained the following experiences: “Action Plan for Environment” (category: water demand-side management), “A Delta Plan for sustainable fresh water supply” (category: climate change) and the theatre play “The crazy story of water” (category: communication and participation).

Finally, one of the project partners – the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) - organised a stand during the event that acted as focal point for information on the project. Leaflets, newsletter and DVDs on WATER CoRe were available for visitors.

## North-Brabant: Water scarcity in a wet country

The Netherlands is widely known for its ‘fight against floods’. However, in some parts of the Netherlands, water scarcity is also becoming a challenge.

North-Brabant is one of the 12 provinces of the Netherlands. The region is centrally located between the cities of Rotterdam and Antwerp and the German Ruhr area. Like most of the Netherlands, North-Brabant is mostly flat. Brook systems cross the province, running from Belgium in the south to the river Meuse in the North. The landscape is a patchwork quilt of agriculture, nature and urbanised areas. The province has well preserved scenic values in both national parks and other protected areas. With 2.4 million inhabitants, the population density is 497 people per km<sup>2</sup>. This is above the average of the Netherlands. Main cities are ‘s-Hertogenbosch (provincial capital), Eindhoven, Tilburg and Breda.

The main part of North-Brabant lies in the Meuse basin. The river Meuse marks the provincial border in the North and East. Smaller parts of the province belong to the Scheldt basin (West) and the Rhine basin (North-West). The Brabant landscape is intersected by brook systems (Dommel, Aa, Mark) and canals (Zuid-Willemsvaart, Wilhelminakanaal). Most of the brook systems have been heavily modified for agricultural purposes. Under the Water Framework Directive, large parts are restored into a more or less natural state.

Water management in North-Brabant is carried out by the province, the water boards and municipalities. The province is responsible for the regional policy and funding framework. The water boards are in charge of the actual management of the Brabant water systems and waste water treatment. The municipalities take care of urban water and sewer systems. Apart from these governmental bodies, other organisations are also closely involved; the water company (drinking water supply), the farmers’ organisation (irrigation and water conservation), industry (production of soft drinks, beer and other products with water for human intake) and organisation for nature protection and management (wetland conservation).

Groundwater is the main source for drinking water, irrigation and industrial production. Over the year, there is no lack of water in the region. However supply (rainfall) and demand (for agriculture, industry and nature preservation) are unevenly distributed over the seasons. With overall demand rising and supply -due to climate change - declining, this balance is under stress. To ensure availability of water in the future, the water authorities (water boards and province) together with stakeholders such as farmers, land owners and NGO’s started an ambitious ‘Deltaplan for sustainable fresh water supply’.

The ‘Deltaplan’ aims to develop and implement innovative measures. The measures can be technical – such as temporary water storage – or non-technical – such as pricing and other economic instruments. In this process, the province of North-Brabant uses the knowledge and experience of the partners in the WATER CoRe project. Good practices are transferred to a Dutch setting. Examples are: Groundwater management Hessian Reed (Hessen), Novel water reuse technologies (Emilia-Romagna) and Southern Great Plains operational programme (Lower Tisza). The province is keen on continuing the cooperation after the WATER CoRe project and is exploring the possibilities for follow-up activities with European partners.

## Project progress and milestones: Overview on Outcomes of the WATER CoRe project

The main outcomes of the WATER CoRe project are the **Good Practice Handbook**, the **e-learning platform**, the **Guide** and the **Survey**.

In these four information sources users may find the good practices contributed by the project partners as well as European relevant information concerning water management in drought periods.

The **WATER CoRe Good Practice Handbook** is a selection of projects, actions, plans and policies collected in short dossiers. It aims to provide both project partners and stakeholders the good practices achieved by other regions. The final version of the Good Practice Handbook includes 103 good practices concerning water demand management, drought management, climate change, communication and social participation.

Although the experiences and good practices of project partners cover a broad spectrum of water scarcity and drought issues, a huge amount of interesting projects, documents and examples on these matters exist all over Europe. Therefore, the WATER CoRe Project partners carried out a complementary survey on water scarcity and drought activities that collects the experiences of other actors in Europe. The **Survey** allows to get an overview of EU water scarcity and drought policy strategy, networks and projects working on these subjects and, technical and scientific state-of-the-art.

The **Guide** focuses on practical solutions for dealing with water scarcity and drought in Europe. Solutions are grouped in five main themes: Water demand side management (technical); Water demand side management (economic/financial); Drought management; Adaptation to climate change; Communication and participation. The guide presents solutions illustrated by good practices from the WATER CoRe partners, which are presented as general concepts that may be implemented throughout Europe.

All the good practices and the lessons learnt in the project on water scarcity and drought have been revised and collected under an e-learning platform. The **e-learning** programme is addressed to stakeholders working with