

**Astana Water Action (AWA)
Actions by ITALY**

1. Upgrade existing nationwide water monitoring networks in Italy

Reference action: Establish and/or upgrade existing nationwide monitoring networks based on a set of indicators for water quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater bodies to evaluate the effectiveness of water management policy and guide further decision-making on possible setting or revision of water targets (*AWA paragraphs 13 a*)

Description of the action and if possible target date

The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) requires monitoring programmes in order to establish a coherent and comprehensive overview of water body status. For surface waters such programmes shall cover: (i) the volume and level or rate of flow to the extent relevant for ecological and chemical status and ecological potential, and (ii) the ecological and chemical status and ecological potential. For groundwaters such programmes shall cover monitoring of the chemical and quantitative status.

Assessment of ecological status requires an innovative approach based on a set of biological indicators, chemical-physical parameters and hydro-morphological parameters. Italian Regions, in cooperation with the Regional Environment Protect Agencies, are improving the existing water monitoring programmes, in line with the Water Framework Directive requirements, expanding the existing monitoring networks and the list of monitored biological indicators and other relevant parameters. In order to contribute to this complex work, promote the exchange of practical experiences, discuss operational difficulties, compare monitoring results expert groups were set up under the coordination of the Ministry of Environment supported by the Institute for Environmental Protection and Research, ISPRA (Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale) and the National Research Institutes (CNR IRSA, CNR ISE, ISS and ENEA).

Target date : end of 2013.

www.sintai.sinanet.apat.it/view/index.faces

Expected outcome

Upgraded water monitoring network according to the requirements of the WFD and comprehensive, updated assessment of water status in preparation of the review of river basin management plans due in 2015.

Partners:

Ministry of Environment, National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA), National Research Institutes (CNR IRSA, CNR ISE, ISS and ENEA), Regions, Regional Environmental Protection Agencies, River Basin Authorities.

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2. Define and monitor environmental flow in the Po river basin district and Arno river basin

Reference action: Define and monitor environmental flow for rivers, deltas and wetlands, and specify environmental flow for years of different water availability with a view to ensure their sustainability; (AWA: II A2, 13k). *This action also combines actions 11 b) and c), 14 d*

Description of the action and if possible target date:

According to the Italian legislation Water Balance Plans shall be prepared at River Basin level. Provisions concerning water balance, rational water use and minimum ecological flow are set out in the Italian Environmental Law (d.lgs. 152/06). Specific criteria are defined in the “Italian Guideline for the definition of water balance, ecological flow and regulation of abstraction and impoundment (Ministerial Decree 28th July 2004)”. The preparation of the water balance plan is a key measure of the River Basin Management Plan.

The Po river Basin Authority is preparing a “Water resources balance plan”, implementing a specific measure of the Po River Basin Management Plan, published in February 2010, which sets out the following objectives:

- ensure an adequate availability of water resources at river basin scale to fulfill environmental needs and to support water demands the different uses,
- design measures and actions for a sustainable use of water resources.

In the “Water resources balance plan” the minimum ecological flow for rivers in the Po river basin will be reviewed for improving compliance with WFD environmental requirements, and in order to adapt to and manage different conditions concerning water resources availability. Tests to evaluate a better management of site-specific minimum ecological flow are already on-going, and their results will contribute to the preparation of guidelines on the application of minimum ecological flow for all rivers included in Po Basin.

The Arno river Basin Authority has already published for consultation the project of the “Water resources balance plan” for the Arno river basin, which belongs to the Northern Apennines river Basin District. In this plan the minimum ecological flow (according with WFD environmental requirements) has been defined for significant rivers cross-sections. The result of the public consultation under strategic Environmental Assessment according to Directive is currently under assessment.

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<http://www.adbarno.it/cont/testo.php?id=98>

Target date: Po River basin “Water Resources Balance Plan” : 2013

Expected outcome:

A Water Balance Plan at River Basin level (Po, Arno rivers) with specific measures for a sustainable water uses management in the long term.

Guidelines to manage minimum flow for rivers in compliance with WFD requirements.

Partners:

River Basin Authorities, Regional Authorities;

Stakeholders: drainage and irrigation waterboards, associations of hydroelectric power producers, environmental associations, water and sewerage service companies., citizens associations, etc....

Experts

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3. Improve utilization of water resources in the agricultural sector in the Po river basin district

Reference actions: To involve stakeholders (e.g., water users and NGOs) in water development plans, programmes and management in basins, including in river, wetland and lake restoration; (AWA I 11c)

Create and support water user associations to manage water demand locally; (AWA: III A23a)

Adapt agriculture to the local climate and water availability, including by growing less water-consuming crops; (AWA: III A23h)

Improve water accounting in the agricultural sector, such as through metering and water volume payment systems in irrigated agriculture, if needed with some state support/incentive/subsidy for the equipment; (AWA: III A23j)

Description of the action and if possible target date:

Po River Authority is preparing the Water Balance Plan at River Basin level as one of the measures planned in the River Basin Management Plan adopted in 2010. In the Water Balance Plan the Po River Authority is identifying specific actions concerning water use in agriculture aimed at:

- a) adoption of a “Water Resources Conservation Plans” by Water Irrigation Consortia in order to improve management of local water demand,
- b) development of adaptation strategies to climate change in the agricultural sector,
- c) evaluation and improvement of water volume metering and payment systems in the agricultural sector.

Target date: preparation of the “Water Resources Balance Plan”:2013.

<http://www.adbpo.it/on-multi/ADBPO/Home/PianodiBilancioIdrico.html>

Expected outcome:

“Water Resources Conservation Plans” at the level of Irrigation Water Consortia)

Set up of an Observatory at Po river basin district level on water use in agriculture, involving local stakeholders and aiming at saving water resources in agricultural sector.

Partners:

Po river basin Authority, Regions of the District, Ministry of Environment, Ministry for Agriculture,

Stakeholders: Drainage and Irrigation Waterboards, Environmental Associations, citizens associations, etc. Experts

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