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Poland : Support to the implementation of the Water Framework Directive the Upper Vistula pilot basin 2004 - 2006

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A PHARE Twinning on the implementation of the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) started in September 2004 for a two-year duration, involving the French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development and its Polish counterpart.

The objective of this twinning was to provide support on the following aspects in particular :

- **preparation of river basin district management plans and programmes of measures ;**
- **implementation of the cost recovery principle ;**
- **public participation**, through the whole preparation process of the management plans ;
- **international co-operation in International River Basin Districts.**

In Poland, the project was led by the Department of Water Resources, Ministry of the Environment, and also involved the Polish Regional Water Management Agencies (RZGWs), the Institute of Meteorology and Water Management (IMGW), the Water Management Board (BGW).

IOWater was the French operator of this project, with the contribution of numerous experts from the water administration, water agencies and the Office of Geological and Mineral Research (BRGM).

In addition to the permanent IOWater experts, the assignments were carried out by the people in charge of the various components of this twinning arrangement : Pierre Strosser and Thierry Davy for economic analysis, Eric Muller and Marie-Claire Domont for management plans, Jean-Pierre Rideau and Arnaud Courtecuisse for cost recovery, René Lalement for water data management, Stéphanie Croguennec and Julien Martinez for public consultation, Jacques Sironneau for legislative aspects, Denis Besozzi and André Wulf for international basins, José Smitz for the use of the Pegase model.

Seminars, led by Martial Grandmougin and Dominique Frechin, were organised in four regions in order to present the French experience in WFD implementation and the evolution of SDAGEs and SAGEs.

The Upper Vistula pilot Basin

The objective of the Pilot Basin experiment was to test the methods and tools available at the various steps of the WFD implementation in Poland.

Component 1 : characterisation, heavily modified water bodies, economic analyses : detailed analysis of pressures, test of the Pegase model, economic analysis of water uses, development of baseline scenarios (2015 deadline), assessment of the risk of not achieving good water status, identification of the main water management issues in the basin.

Component 2 : preparation of the programme of measures, cost-effectiveness analysis : identification of the main measures used in Poland and corresponding cost estimates.

Component 3 : public information and consultation : testing process for public information and consultation, creation of an Informal Committee for water management in the pilot basin.

Component 4 : evaluation of water resource and environmental costs, disproportionate costs, derogation.
The first outputs were presented during a seminar organized in Gliwice early July 2005 and in 4 training courses organized in September and October in Gdansk, Warsaw, Szczecin and Wroclaw.

The pilot basin

The pilot river basin that was selected covers the upper basin of the Vistula, from its spring to the confluence with the Raba. It has a surface area of 10,000 km² and is inhabited by 4.3 million people.

The pilot river basin is located on the territory of two **Regional Water Management Boards (RZGWs), Gliwice and Krakow.**

It is characterised by an uneven distribution of water resources.

Its high urbanisation, important concentration of industries, high salinity of the Vistula water as well as the low groundwater level contribute to increasing the costs of drinking water supply to the population.

Guidance documents based on the results of the tests and adapted to the polish context were drawn up.

Workshops and training courses were organised to transfer guidance and methodologies to other river basins.