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Turkey - European twinning agreements

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Date de mise en ligne : vendredi 17 février 2012

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* Twinning with the Ministry for Health on bathing water quality

Following a previous twinning on water and health protection, the proposal made by France and Italy for the European twinning on the application of the new European Directive on bathing waters was selected.

This two-year twinning arrangement, financed by the European Union, will deal with all aspects contributing to ensure the quality of bathing waters and bathers' health : legislation, establishment of monitoring programs, vulnerability profiles of beaches, classification of bathing waters during and at the end of seasons, data collection and management, capabilities of laboratories for water analysis of the Turkish provinces.

Indeed, the European legislation has been an important development strengthening quality monitoring and management during the season, especially when pollution phenomena occur generating quality risks, such as rainfall events that convey sewage or runoff waters to the coast near bathing areas. The establishment of vulnerability profiles will help anticipate risks and take preventive measures for protection.

Challenges to public health are important as well as the effects on consumers' confidence, which affects the tourist industry in a country with great attendance, especially from other European countries.

The main partners are the Ministries for Health of the three countries, Turkey, France and Italy, the International Office for Water and the Italian Minoprio Foundation. Various other Turkish organizations concerned with health and coastal environment will also participate as well as several French and Italian institutions whose experts will intervene during the different activities, such as the French Ministry of Ecology, the Loire-Brittany Water Agency, the French Agency for Health Security and the Environment, the Italian Institute of Public Health, the Regional Agencies for Environmental Protection of Veneto and Emilia Romagna, the Bureau of Geological and Mining Research, the laboratories of Paris and Nice.

* Twinning with the Ministry of Water and Forestry on the implementation of the Floods Directive

France, together with Romania, won the bid for the EU institutional twinning with Turkey on the capacity building of the new Water Directorate of the Ministry of Water and Forestry to implement the Floods Directive. While Member States are actively working to meet the European deadline for submitting the "Preliminary Assessments of Flood Risk", it is recognition of the efforts made by French institutions to implement this important directive published in 2007 and the guarantee for the partners to benefit from a transfer of a brand new experience.

This project of M€uro; 1.8 was presented by IOWater, on behalf of the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, in partnership with various stakeholders of the public sector.

Romania, as a former candidate country, will provide its recent experience of accelerated adoption of the "acquis communautaire". It is its first support as Member State on the environmental sector, with experts from key stakeholders in the implementation of the Floods Directive in Romania : Ministry of the Environment and Forestry, the National Institute of Hydrology and Water Management and the Romanian National Water Administration.

The expected results of this 24-month twinning project to be started in 2012 are :

- * Support to the transposition of the Floods Directive in Turkey and adaptation of the institutional organization ;
- * Preparation of a pilot flood risk management plan for the "Bati Karadeniz" Basin running to the Black Sea, in which an event with important consequences occurred in 1998 ;
- * Preparation of the National Plan for implementing the Floods Directive by incorporating an economic analysis using the regulatory impact assessment method.

Photo : The Bati Karadeniz

* Continued twinning on the Water Framework Directive and practical application to six Turkish river basins

Turkey has 25 river basins and over 120 natural lakes. The Turkish Government is now preparing River Basin Management Plans in accordance with the European directives.

Collecting data to help set goals for water bodies is a key condition for improving the water resources of the country. Water quality is affected by population growth, agricultural activities, quick urbanization, and current and future water demands depending on development. The deterioration of water quality can affect ecology and all other water users such as tourism, drinking water suppliers and the agricultural sector.

An institutional twinning is underway on this topic. It is led by the Netherlands with France and Spain. Initiated in September 2011 and lasting 27 months, it aims to collect data on the chemical, physical and hydro-morphological characteristics of the river basins, including the development of monitoring plans for the basins of the Meric-Ergene, Konya, Akarcay, Sakarya and Buyuk Menderes rivers and a monitoring plan at the national level. French experts of the Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing, IFREMER, the Seine-Normandy and Rhone-Mediterranean and Corsica Water Agencies, the International Office for Water and some research institutes (Cemagref, Universities ...) are contributing.