

## ANNEX 3: INTERVIEWS - Seppo Rekolainen



### **Seppo Rekolainen**

*Director Freshwater Centre of the Finish Environment Institute (SYKE).*

*Vice President of SAG of the Water JPI.*

**1 – SYKE aims at providing information, skills and services for governing, public and private sectors, EU bodies and International Organisations. The range of action of the Institute is impressive. Focusing your answer on the Water domain, could you briefly describe examples of SYKE’s actions that contributed to improve Water quality in Europe?**

List of most relevant actions:

- SYKE’s personnel are representing Finland in many of the WFD CIS Working Groups
- SYKE is a partner in many EU funded project, in which methods are developed for assessing European water, and also mitigation method are investigated to improve the status of waters
- SYKE is actively taking part in the implementation of the Transboundary Water Convention under the UNECE

**2 – Societal Challenges, Industrial Leadership and Excellence in Science. Until recently, these issues were tackled almost independently. How important are Joint Programming Initiatives in setting these priorities and articulating industry-society-academia?**

Very important. The water problems cannot be solved without a holistic approach.

**3 – As Vice-President of the Stakeholders Advisory Group of the Water JPI, could you elaborate on SAG’s contribution to the implementation of the SRIA?**

The role of SAG has not been very active, not at least as a group. On the other hand many of the group members have been actively taking part in the discussions.

**4 – Collaborative work is mandatory to meet the demanding goals of EU Directives. Given the asymmetric European landscape in Water RDI and Water Policies, what is key to get all member-states engaged and “making it happen” (quoting from the International Annual UN-Water Conference)?**

Water security is linked to food and energy security in all countries, and also crossing the country borders. Not only because of transboundary waters, but also because of the international nature of food and energy trade. To ‘make it happen’ all countries and all sectors should be involved.

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**5 – In your opinion, are Europe’s objectives of achieving “Sustainable Water Systems for a Sustainable Economy in Europe and Abroad” being accompanied by the scientific community? How do you evaluate the cooperation between companies and research infrastructures to meet these goals?**

1st question: yes and no. On the other hand scientists are producing much new information about the status of waters and how to improve it. But many scientists also see, that the objective is too challenging. 2nd question: We can see a good start between industry and research, but there is a lot more to do.

**6 – There is a pressure for applied scientific knowledge to solve present industrial challenges or to have an immediate impact on the lives of European citizens. As a leader of prominent research projects, please comment on the compatibility of the delivery of fast results with the continuous need to focus on fundamental research.**

We still have a big challenge with the science-policy interface although we have seen some nice examples where decision makers have been inside the research projects already when they were designed. But unfortunately we still have many applied research projects where end-users are just end-users, not partners.

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