

MID-TERM EVALUATION CONSENSUS REPORT

To Ally Technology, Nature and Society for integrated urban water management (ATENAS)

Name of Coordinator: Dr. Kinga Krauze
 Project code: WaterWorks2017-ATENAS
 Duration of project: 36 M
 Start date: 01/04/2019

End date: 31/03/2022

FOLLOW-UP GROUP

Please include the data of the FG members reviewing the report

| Name | Organisation |
|-----------------|---|
| Gaëtane SUZENET | International Impact Partners |
| Mario SCHIRMER | EAWAG Swiss Federal Institute of Aquatic Science and Technology |

1. Scientific and technological progress

Significant progress has been made towards achieving the objectives and milestones of work packages (WP) 1 and 2. WPs 3 and 5 have been launched.

WP1: milestones 1.1 and 1.2 have been achieved. The research team pulled together also information on critical factors found at particular case level. Existing presentations of different NBS included description of their structure and functions, but usually lacked examinations of challenges, barriers and success factors. These were produced in ATENAS for the collection of case descriptions and inventories. D. 1.1 and 1.2 were merged to form 'information cards', which compare NBS, compile results of the two original deliverables and present demo-site specific aspects. The results of the WPI review were discussed in interviews and workshops with demo sites representatives over the period running from Nov. 2019 to June 2020.

WP2: Milestone 2.1 has been completed. D 2.1 has completed for Poland and France, and not for Finland. The initial targeted area was too large and lacked accurate land use data. Another area was identified. The analysis started however beyond this reporting period. Promising results arose for Poland; initial identification of the best NBS location was made possible. The report describes well the co-design process to identify the hotspot cities' NBS according to the local contexts, in each country (milestone 2.2 achieved).

The project has promoted a multi-disciplinary approach through its co-design and living lab approach.

Websites dedicated to each demo site have been set up. Publications are forthcoming, as well as participations in conferences.

2. Collaboration, coordination and mobility within the Consortium

The mid-term report demonstrates the efficiency of the coordination and organisation of the project fairly

well. Because of the COVID 19 situation, the consortium organised periodic on-line progress meetings. 7 meetings (including the kick-off meeting) were organised over the reporting period. The mobility aspects were limited because of the constraints linked to the COVID 19 situation. By the project's specificity, each consortium partner had to play two roles, first a lead of a transnational task and second a lead of the own demo site activities. This requires, especially in the COVID-19 situation a strong focus on local actions and actors. In this case the consortium took well care for an exchange of experiences between cases, with subsequent virtual trips. The consortium also addressed this issue through issuing a common template that would serve as a basis for conducting the discussions on reviewing the critical factors in the workshops organised in each location. The transnational aspect is a key feature of the project as the latter is carried out in 3 different countries and river basin areas. The project consortium intends to extend this transnational nature by promoting modelling as an enabling tool to be replicated, i.e. the stakeholders' involvement guidelines in NBS-related activities can be applied in other countries.

3. Coordination with other international project funded by WaterWorks2017, or other instruments

ATENAS capitalizes on the knowledge and data gathered by a large range of other projects such as H2020 NAIAD, Nature4Cities, RadomKlima, EHREK and ThinkNature, Rainman and ILKKA. Locally, each partner links up with NBS implementors (private investors, NGOs) to better recognize pros and cons of NBS types locally, and create pathways for cost-efficient implementation of NBS. With respect to synergies between national and EU funding in the relevant research fields through transnational collaboration, this project builds upon established long-term collaboration among stakeholders and embeds its actions in local needs and investments aimed at meeting EU regulations (WFD, Nitrogen, Habitat), international commitments – COP21, SDG, and EU strategies – cohesion policy. The products of the project e.g. mapped by the IRIP modeled sources and accumulation places of run off, initiated overview of models allowing for individual NBS modeling and design, or the “cook book” for NBS implementation including building up human capacity contribute to national strategies of sustainable development and climate adaptation. The links established with international networks – UNESCO IHP Eco-hydrology program and Long-Term Ecosystem Research – allows for better exchange of knowledge and application for complementary funding, bringing competences of other partners.

4. Coverage of the themes and sub-themes of the call

ATENAS contributes to a large range of themes and sub-themes of the call. This research covers Sub-theme 1.2. Integrative management by implementing Natural Water Retention Measures (NWRM) such as Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR). Furthermore, the project strengthens socio-economic approaches to water management (Theme 2) and especially to Sub-theme 2.1. Integrating economic and social analyses into decision-making processes, Sub-theme 2.3. Connecting science to society and Sub-theme 2.4. Promoting new governance and knowledge management approaches. In the latter case, the project aims at developing innovative water management tools and approaches suitable for decision-making based on an analysis of the limitations of current practices. In addition, ATENAS contributes to Theme 3. Supporting tools for sustainable integrative management of water resources and complements the actions developed under the European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and other European initiatives.

5. Stakeholder/industry engagement

Stakeholders' involvement is at the core of the project, through the co-creation and living lab approach.

The project aims to demonstrate how stakeholders' participation in the NBS design process can enhance the acceptance of these and augment their efficiency towards improving urban water management. The project promotes approaches (e.g. interviews, workshops, tailor-made workshops) to engage with stakeholders and develop NBS with them. A methodology to undertake an exhaustive stakeholders' mapping was designed in WP5. The methodology considered e.g. how powerful the stakeholder is to facilitate or embed the project (e.g. level of influence), and how relevant the project is for the stakeholder (e.g. level of interest). Based on the weighted results of influence and relevance, the level of participation (inform, consult, involve, collaborate, empower) can be chosen. The industry's participation is however less clear, except in the Finnish case, where no link with the industry has been established yet. The mid-term report refers to links with the business in the French case. It does nevertheless not explicitly state what they are. Only in Poland, a link to industry has been established with a letter of intent signed by Mikronatura Srodowisko Sp o.o., which has a longer history of collaboration with ERCE on developing the barriers against nitrogen non-point source pollution. Additionally ERCE has established contacts with additional business partners. The report is however not clear enough about how these industrial partners will concretely participate in the project, beyond providing expertise and knowledge.

6. Recommendations for improvements/amendments of the report

| Page | Modification | Rationale for change |
|--------|--|--|
| 17- 18 | Impact – Request for being more explicit about strengthening the competitiveness and growth of companies | As the consortium intends to work with and involve businesses, explaining what the added value is for them can facilitate the outputs uptake beyond the project end. |
| 24 | Involvement of investors in the Polish case | To better understand who they are and what their role is/will be. |

7. General Assessment Comments

The main problem identified is related to the COVID 19 situation, which has hampered to fully implement the stakeholders' involvement process, and limited the collaboration with the relevant stakeholders on the demo sites. The COVID 19 situation delayed internal project actions, e.g. hiring of staff. There was also a delay in starting off the project because of deferred funding decisions by the Polish Funder. The team has made great effort to catch up on the work plan. The milestones have been achieved and the reports and deliverables have been prepared.