**Annex 5**

**Mid-Term Evaluation Report**

**(Individual)**

**Water Joint Programming Initiative**

**2018 Joint Call**

*Closing the water cycle gap - Sustainable management of water resources*

These Project Management Guidelines will be effective from the date of the National funding decisions and shall remain in force until the last final project report is approved in 2022.

**The Mid-Term Consensus Report will be made available to the Consortium as well as CSC and JPI Water GB.**

**MID-TERM INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**PROJECT TITLE AND ACRONYM**

Name of Coordinator: Kinga KRAUZE

Project code: WaterWorks2017-ATENAS

Duration of project: 36 months

Start date:  **1April 2019** End date: **30 April 2022**

**DETAILS OF THE EVALUATOR**

Name: Gaëtane SUZENET

Organisation: International Impact Partners

Date of review: 26 March 2021

### **Scientific and technological progress**

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| *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 project partners extensively reviewed the existing research literature, inventories, and case studies. The review was meant to identify both the solutions and the critical and context-specific issues to be considered for nature-based solutions (NBS) when selecting the 3 demo sites. 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.*  *WP2: The project partners decided to use the IRIP model. 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, involving different stakeholders.*  *The results of the WP1 review were discussed in interviews and workshops with demo sites representatives over the period running from Nov. 2019 to June 2020. Websites dedicated to each demo site have been set up. Publications are forthcoming, as well as participations in conferences.* |

### **Collaboration, coordination and mobility within the Consortium**

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| *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 period running from April 2019 to June 2020. The collaborative and mobility aspects were limited because of the constraints linked to the COVID 19 situation. Collaboration was also limited because each project participants had to deal with different NBS contexts, different set of critical factors and different stakeholders. The consortium intends to address this issue, and has already done it 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.* |

### **Coordination with other international project funded by WaterWorks2017, or other instruments**

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| *The project consortium has not found relevant Water JPI projects of common interest. A national meeting of Water JPI projects in Finland was organised by the Academy of Finland in November 2019. ATENAS project was presented in the meeting, and information was exchanged between the projects.*  *It has however identified the ATENAS project as being a continuum of several H2020 projects such as NAIAD and BIODIVERSA. It follows on to these two projects to build the knowledge on the insurance role of ecosystems in Lodz and understanding the limits to accessibility of green areas and their services to the broader society. SYKE’s collaborator HSY is involved in EU CBC project Rainman (*[*http://projects.gtk.fi/rainman*](http://projects.gtk.fi/rainman)*). Synergies have been sought between the projects. The outcomes of an earlier EU European Regional Development Fund project Climate-Proof City (ILKKA) – Tools for Planning (*[*https://ilmastotyokalut.fi/en/about-the-project/*](https://ilmastotyokalut.fi/en/about-the-project/)*) have been used as a starting point when collecting local NBS implementations to analyse their critical factors. The EU Horizon 2020 project Urban Nature Labs (*[*https://unalab.eu/en/*](https://unalab.eu/en/)*) has also been considered as it offers opportunities for interesting comparisons to ATENAS having the Finnish city Tampere as a frontrunner example of NBS implementation. ATENAS will spin up with H2020 project EuPOLIS operating in the City of Lodz, which also involves eight other cities around Europe and beyond. This project is building knowledge on the links between NBS, blue-green infrastructure and health.* |

### **Coverage of the themes and sub-themes of the call**

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| *The ATENAS project relates to Theme 2 ‘Strengthening socio-economic approaches to water management’ and in particular to Sub-theme 2.4. ‘Promoting new governance and knowledge management approaches’.*  *The results to date have started contributing to develop a new co-design and mutual learning process that will take into account the local context and require the participation of a broad range of stakeholders as well as a multidisciplinary approach to implement NBS in cities.* |

1. **Stakeholder/industry engagement**

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| *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. It also encourages networking between the different Representatives. Stakeholders to be involved are site-specific and can range from urban planners to river basin authorities, local authorities and communities, researchers… 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, in which no link with the industry has been established yet. The mid-report refers to links with the business in the French case. It does nevertheless not explicitly state what they are. Only in Poland, participation seems to be more advanced, with one consultancy firm being a project participant, and contacts with other industry representatives having been established. The report is however not clear enough about how these industrial partners will concretely participate in the project, beyond providing expertise and knowledge.* |

### **Recommendations for improvements/amendments of the report** (Please complete Table below)

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| **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. |
| 18 | IP – request for being more explicit about the CA agreement | IP ownership and how it is shared between the partners is important, in order to ensure that results can be quickly disseminated and outputs exploited 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. |

1. **Recommendations/ problems and risks**

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| *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.*  *A recommendation may be to consider how the use of digital tools (e.g. online communication, virtual reality visualization, digital twins) could be expanded in addition to the participatory and modeling instruments.*  *Another recommendation is to anticipate how the approach developed in the ATENAS project can be ensured beyond the project lifetime (objective 3 related to securing the continuation of the ATENAS approach), bearing in mind the current COVID 19 situation, and how it could be alleviated to still guarantee the co-design and mutual learning process.* |