

2. Collaboration, coordination and mobility within the Consortium (Maximum 250 words)

The mid-term report demonstrates the efficiency of the coordination and organisation of the project. The coordination has been affected by the Covid-19 situation, but not entirely, since most activities could be replicated online. For example, protocols for specific tasks of the project (e.g. literature review) have been designed. Collaboration between the partners has also been active and effective, through both the organisation of 3 levels of coordination (consortium, post-docs in each country and ad hoc whenever an issue arises) and one to one collaboration on specific project tasks, e.g. the Dutch and Swedish partners collaborated on the survey design. Because of the COVID 19 situation, the consortium organised periodic progress meetings to try to compensate for the loss of richness of in-person meetings. 13 meetings (including the kick-off meeting) were organised over the period running from December 2018 to September 2020.

The transnational aspect is a key feature of the project and some tasks are carried out bilaterally and in close collaboration between at least 2 countries, allowing for comparison and benchmark of different governance environments. The country coordinators have a large degree of autonomy, which means that they are less dependent on each other's work and progress. This also means that there is a risk of the comparative value of the four-site being reduced, which is already exacerbated by the different start dates of the partners, and the progress report could have been clearer on how this will be mitigated. Mobility has been limited due to COVID 19, but has been compensated by both close and/or bilateral collaboration between partners and resources allocated to two countries, such as interns and dissertation students.

3. Coordination with other international project funded by WaterWorks2017, or other instruments (Maximum 250 words)

The report mentions collaboration with another Water JPI project, NATWIP, as the latter covers the same case study areas (Norway, Sweden and South Africa). Collaboration has also been initiated at the national level, in Sweden with the project RE-LAND funded by FORMAS, and in South Africa with the project CoReCT. A similar approach has been developed in Norway. The mid-report does however not mention how these collaborations will enhance the approach and outcomes of the EnTruGo project.

These interconnections could also be fostered by joint events promoted by Water JPI.

4. Coverage of the themes and sub-themes of the call (Maximum 250 words)

The EnTruGo project relates to the Theme 2 ‘Strengthening socio-economic approaches to water management’ and in particular to Sub-theme 2.4. ‘Promoting new governance management approaches’. To date, the project has built knowledge on the general public’s trust in water governance and in government institutions entrusted with water management. This will form the basis for assessing the impact of democratic innovative approaches and identifying governance strategies to enhance trust in government’s capacities to implement water policies.

As noted above, good progress has been made with the literature review, and some significant findings have emerged that will guide the field data collection and also shape the project’s eventual contributions(s) to the literature and to practice.

5. Stakeholder/industry engagement (Maximum 250 words)

Due to the nature of the project, stakeholders’ participation has been initiated during this reporting period, mainly to design the survey and conduct interviews. Engagement has generally been high in the four country contexts, with water governance stakeholders being engaged in all instances. The project partners considered it as a pre-requisite to enhance the methodological approach to study the interpersonal trust. It will be furthered and stepped up in WP2 with the case studies and WP3 with the workshops. Contacts have already been instigated. Stakeholders’ participation is inherent to the process implemented in the project and is a key requirement to improve water governance.

Industrial stakeholders have not yet been involved. It may be during the next reporting period, when fully carrying out WP2. In the next phase of the project, the team could perhaps seek to engage with higher-level water governance institutions.

No commercial exploitation of the results is planned as the results are linked to improve governance in water resources management. Results will be publicly made available.

6. Recommendations for improvements/amendments of the report (Please complete Table below)

| Page | Modification | Rationale for change |
|-------------|---|--|
| 25 | Provide a clearer idea of how the project will accommodate a different type of and/or schedule for comparative work, and what this will mean for the contributions to knowledge | The delays regarding partner start dates and Covid-19 were unavoidable, but a greater sense could be given about how they could be further mitigated in the final stages of the project. |

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| 25 | Sámi youth workshops - give more detail on how these will be organised and implmented, especially if the Covid-19 situation does not improve imminently | These workshops are a key part of the research, and potentially less viable via online techniques than other activities, so it is important to have a Plan B in place. |
| 27 | It would be useful to know how often the consortium and postdoc meetings are held, and, if they are not regular, to consider making them regular in order to maintain contact and momentum during these times. | Increased difficulty of maintaining contact with online-only mechanisms. |
| 29 | Collaboration with other projects | To better understand how the projects mentioned will influence/contribute to the project's outcomes. |
| 33 | Present a more detailed and systematic list of the outputs - this section seems to mention a paper by a master's student but not the literature review paper and the NL survey paper that were mentioned earlier, nor the policy brief that was also referred to. | More detail needed on outputs, content, contribution, and planned outlet. |

7. General Assessment Comments (Maximum 250 words)

Completion of WPI Deliverables has been delayed because of administrative issues and a delay in the starting date of the project and of some partners. Also, the literature review and survey design have proved to entail more work than expected, although this is not fully explained in the report. Field work, which is not so easily covered to online techniques in all of the locations, has been disrupted across the project, and has progressed at different paces in the four locations.

These delays have been compounded by the Covid-19 situation, which has reduced mobility and fieldwork across the team, and has potentially also made contact and momentum more difficult. The situation has also hampered the full implementation of the process of stakeholders' involvement, and limited the collaboration with the relevant stakeholders.

As a result and to mitigate the impacts of the delays, the consortium has decided to have a more combined approach between WPs2 and 3. It would have been useful to see a clearer plan to mitigate the obstacles that have arisen, especially as the coming months continue to be uncertain in regard to the pandemic.