

Editorial

*Increasing progress is being made in the implementation of the Coordination and Support Action **WatEUR**, funded by DG Research and Innovation, to build the European Research Area in the water field.*

*A new JPI Secretariat has now been established in the WatEUR management team to facilitate achievement of the **WatEUR** objectives and to develop Water JPI activities. The Secretariat is composed of two project managers. We therefore send a very big welcome to Armela Dino and Cynthia Monescillo who will be pleased to deal with any enquiries relating to the daily operations on **WatEUR**.*

Further progress includes a new website which provides updated information on the Water JPI, accompanied by beautiful photos taken by some of our especially helpful partners (thank you, Sonia!). There is also an intranet section to help the contributors



*collaborate on each task of the six **WatEUR** project work packages.*

The new website will improve external communications associated with this work and provide a downloadable poster and a flyer. These can be used during conferences, workshops and other events.

We are now working on the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, on the first Joint Call and mapping of Water Research, Development and Innovation in Europe. We are also exploring the opportunities to establish links with infrastructure facilities and mobility schemes in the EU. In addition, Water JPI representatives have been invited to give presentations, on the Water JPI and its opportunities, at events organized by European institutions and national governments.

A new section on Progress in JPI activities will be introduced into the monthly Newsletter, starting from the May 2013 issue, in which the Secretariat will report on advances in the JPI Water and WatEUR coordination.

SYNERGIES BETWEEN JPIS AND RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

During the workshop *“Towards a Roadmap for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research Infrastructures in Europe”* organized last 19-20 March by the European Commission, the coordinators of the Joint Programming Initiatives for Water Challenges Climate, FACCE, Oceans and, Urban Europe were invited to contribute to shaping the new Horizon 2020 programme. The workshop was focused on the following topics: *“Synergy between the biodiversity and ecosystem research components of different Joint Programming initiatives and in view of the supporting role of the European research infrastructures in this area”* and *“A strategy for the research infrastructures supporting biodiversity and ecosystem research in the next ten years in view of the emerging scientific, societal and technical challenges”*. As a specific action originating from the discussions, it was proposed to establish at short term an editing group to elaborate the workshop outcomes as an initial 10-year roadmap for European Research Infrastructures, which should include a view on structuring the research infrastructure community.



Aaar river Bern Switzerland. (courtesy of Sonia Silva)

EIP ACTION GROUPS

By the end of April the European Commission will evaluate over sixty expressions of interest from a large variety of European organisations to establish a European Innovation Partnership Water Action Group . The first approved EIP Water Action Groups will start their activities by mid-May. A short abstract of the accepted proposals will be published on the webpage of the **DG Environment** devoted to this initiative. A second call for expressions of interest is planned for the end of 2013.



GUIDELINES TO LIMIT SOIL SEALING

Soil sealing, the covering of the ground by an impermeable material, increases the risk of flooding and water scarcity and also contributes to global warming. The **DG Environment of the European Commission** has published good practice guidelines to mitigate or compensate soil sealing. These [guidelines](#) consist of examples of policies, legislation, funding schemes, local planning tools and information campaigns implemented throughout the EU Member States. Mitigating measures include making wider use of natural water harvesting systems.

CHANGES IN THE WFD-CIS STRUCTURE

The organisational structure of the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) for the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) will evolve towards a more flexible three-tier arrangement: Water Directors, Strategic Coordination Group and Work Areas. Permanent working groups will be replaced by networks of experts who will be asked to contribute to different *work areas* according to their particular expertise and the nature of the task. The Water Directors and the Strategic Coordination Group will give the networks clear tasks specifying objectives, timelines and deliverables. They will also indicate the expertise they consider necessary and suggest the need for ad-hoc meetings of network members, workshops or the establishment of temporary expert groups.

THE MORPHOLOGICAL QUALITY INDEX FOR RIVER MANAGEMENT

A new index has been developed for the hydro-morphological assessment of Italian rivers. The method was designed to comply with the EU Water Framework Directive requirements, but its use can be extended to other applications in river management.

The evaluation of stream morphological quality is preceded by a phase of river segmentation, consisting of an initial division of the network into river reaches with homogenous morphological characteristics. The evaluation procedure consists of a set of 28 indicators, which were defined to assess longitudinal and lateral continuity, channel pattern, cross section configuration, bed structure and substrate, and vegetation in the riparian corridor. These characteristics are analysed in terms of geomorphological functionality, artificiality and channel adjustments. Definitions of indicators, classes and the scoring system were based on expert judgement. The scoring system leads to the definition of the Morphological Quality Index (MQI). More information is available [here](#)

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



Tiber river at Milvio bridge

RESULTS OF THE IWRM-NET PROJECTS

The second common call of the ERANET devoted to integrated water management [IWRM-NET](#) funded six transnational projects: ESAWADI, CLIMAWARE, IMPACT, Water2ADAPT, ICARUS, WATER CAP & TRADE. From March to September 2013 webinars are being organised to disseminate and share the work undertaken by the researchers involved in these projects.



US RIVERS ASSESSMENT

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the United States has published the results of its first global survey on national rivers and streams carried on in 2008-2009, discovering that 55% of them are in bad quality conditions. See [here](#) for details



THE OPEN CALL OF ACQUEAU

The EUREKA Cluster for water composed of an industry- and business-led water network have launched an open call for 2013 focusing on the priorities highlighted in the ACQUEAU Blue Book and in particular on “*Water and wastewater infrastructures*”, “*Water and wastewater treatment processes*”; “*Energy savings and recovery innovations with a focus on the water and energy nexus*”.

The [ACQUEAU](#) open call is a two-step process: a project outline can be submitted at any time (at least two months before the closure date of the deadline fixed for presenting full project proposals).

FOUR CALLS FOR MARIE CURIE ACTIONS

The FP 7 programme “People” aims to strengthen, quantitatively and qualitatively, the human potential in research and technology in Europe, by stimulating people to take up the profession of a researcher, encouraging European researchers to stay in Europe, and attracting to Europe the best researchers from the entire world. It is implemented through a coherent set of Marie Curie Actions which address researchers in terms of their skills and competence development at all stages of their careers, from initial research training specifically intended for young people, to career development and life-long training in the public and private sector. Mobility, both trans-national and intersectoral, is fundamental to this programme. More information on the open call is available [here](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS

CONFERENCE ON LAND USE AND WATER QUALITY

The objectives of this event [luwq2013](#) organised in The Hague on 10-13 June 2013 are to provide a forum for exchange of scientific knowledge, to discuss the entire policy cycle for water quality improvement and to intensify contacts between soil/water-related scientists, economists, water managers and policy makers.

EVENT ON URBAN WATER MANAGEMENT

The 8th [NOVATECH](#) international conference will take place in Lyon on 23-27 June and focus on strategies and innovative solutions for integrated and sustainable water management in the city.

16th BIENNIAL SEMINAR ON WATER RESOURCES

This workshop will be held in Tarragon, Spain, from 25-28 June 2013. The proposed sessions will discuss sustainable river basin management, water reclamation, water resources and environmental education, computer tools for water resources and environmental analysis and nanotechnology. For further information, please contact: mariajose.figueras@urv.cat

EUROPEAN RIVER RESTORATION CONFERENCE

This [event](#) will take place in Vienna on 11-13 September 2013 and provide examples of practical efforts to restore the natural state and functioning of rivers and how this has improved flood risk management, river ecology, and supported green infrastructure and community development.

THE ECOHYDROLOGY AND BIOTECHNOLOGY SYMPOSIUM

This international [conference](#) will provide a transdisciplinary floor to integrate efforts between ecohydrologists, engineers and social-economic scientists which contribute to ecologically sound solutions and define the areas of possible augmentation of natural capital. This event will take place in Lodz, Poland on next 16-22 September.

INTERNATIONAL SNOW SCIENCE WORKSHOP

The event [issw2013](#) aims at promoting interaction and exchanges between practitioners and researchers in the field of snow and avalanche science. The conference is organised in Grenoble from 7-11 October 2013 and the field trip will take place in Chamonix Mont Blanc.

HYDROFRACTALS CONFERENCE

The International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG), the International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS) and the European Geosciences Union (EGU) are jointly organising a conference on the hydrological cycle. This event will take place in the Los Island, Greece, from 17-19 October 2013. For more information see: [kos2013](#)



THE PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE [waterjpi](#) WEBPAGE

