



WATER USERS PARTNERSHIPS

— A METHOD FOR EFFECTIVE WATER MANAGEMENT

WATER USERS PARTNERSHIPS (WUP)

INTRODUCTION

The MOMENT project, Modern Water Management in the South Baltic Sea area, was initiated by the Euro-region Baltic (ERB) cooperation and involves seven regions divided by four countries; Russia (Kaliningrad), Lithuania, Sweden and Poland.

Seven pilot areas has acted as the base for managing water through Water Users Partnerships, i.e. organisation of local and regional stakeholders, and testing concrete pilot measures aiming at reducing the outflow of nutrients and hazardous substances. The main objective has been to find concrete ways of combating the negative impacts that human activity has had on the Baltic Sea, not only through theory but primarily by showing the overall potential of practical solutions. The Water Users Partnerships have served as catalysts speeding up the implementation process and avoiding unnecessary obstacles.



UNIQUE PROBLEMS REQUIRES UNIQUE SOLUTIONS

All of the drainage areas around the Baltic Sea are unique with different environmental problems and possibilities. A common solution solving their problems is therefore not possible, instead each and every area needs to identify and tackle their own concerns in their own way. But at the same time it is crucial that experiences and knowledge learnt by each individual area are shared and spread around the entire Baltic Sea. The MOMENT project has worked with such an approach through the establishment of Water Users Partnerships (WUP).



THE WUP CONCEPT

Water Users Partnership is a new method to implement measures through local and regional stakeholder cooperation. The WUP concept involves stakeholders that either influences or are influenced by water in a given catchment area or by stakeholders that share an interest of the common water for different reasons, e.g. NGO:s, Water Authorities and the academic sector.

The objective for each of the seven WUPs has been to gather local knowledge and expertise. Furthermore, the WUPs implement concrete actions and innovative measures that combat negative impacts from anthropogenic activities. They also assist municipal/regional and/or national/international authorities to do the same.

By collecting and analysing local data/knowledge and merging local expertise the WUP is able to conclude the unique features of its catchment area. The WUP has also provided a deeper acceptance from the local community to implement required measure through their own involvement and understanding for the local area's problems and possibilities, where water is seen as a resource for local development.

STRONG LOCAL INVOLVEMENT FOR A CLEANER BALTIC SEA

The idea is to involve local stakeholders that manage "their" water through a bottom up approach willing to take responsibility to act for its wellbeing. The approach has lead to a more cost effective way, i.e. by identifying local problems so that correct measures are used, of tackling concerns with pollution and ultimately making the Baltic Sea healthier. Representatives from each of the Water Users Partnerships have throughout the project met to discuss their experiences with other Water Users Partnerships, ensuring cross-border cooperation.



"In the latest revised EUSBSR Action Plan Water Users Partnerships are mentioned as a mean for local cooperation and thus lifts the possibility for a future flagship project."

"The way that MOMENT has worked with managing water through local and regional stakeholder participation (WUPs) is referred by HELCOM as the MOMENT approach."

Lotta Ruokanen
Helcom



MAIN RESULTS

- 7 Water Users Partnerships (WUPs) established
- New method introduced in three countries
- 350 active WUP members
- 7 local program of measures developed
- 17 concrete actions implemented



SOME OTHER RESULTS

- Participated in 40 different TV and radio interviews
- Organized 90 different excursions, field trips and study visits
- Published around 200 articles
- Arranged 200 meetings with 4 000 participants
- Have had around 30 000 visitors

LOOKING FORWARD

The Regional Council in Kalmar County has taken an initiative to further develop the WUP concept through a new project called WaterNets. The Euroregion Baltic organisation also granted its support and currently work has started with the aim of submitting a complete application at the end of 2014. The first step will involve an application for seed money in 2013. The target is to involve strategic stakeholders so that WUPs can be recognized by all Water Authorities, at different levels, as an accepted approach of managing water at a local/regional level. For this to happen, the River Basin District Authorities across the Baltic Sea, will play a central part. As the WaterNets application still is in its initial stage more information will be revealed later on.

VISION

Our vision
– WUPs all across the Baltic Sea



FACTS ABOUT MOMENT PILOT AREAS



Map of MOMENTs seven pilot areas (one WUP established in each pilot area).

Akmena-Dane River (LT)

- Total size: 579 km²
- Rivers Length: 63 km
- Average flow: 7.6 m³/s
- Major concerns: Inadequate or no waste water treatment and inadequate or no rain water treatment

Minija River (LT)

- Total size: 2 940 km²
- Rivers Length: 202 km
- Average flow: 38.5 m³/s
- Major concerns: Inadequate or no waste water treatment and inadequate or no rain water treatment

Primorskaya River (RU)

- Total size: 100 km²
- Rivers Length: 30 km
- Average flow: 1.4 m³/s
- Major concerns: Inadequate or no waste water treatment and inadequate or no rain water treatment

Bauda River (PL)

- Total size: 561 km²
- Rivers Length: 58 km
- Average flow: Unknown
- Major concerns: Nutrient loads, hydromorphological modifications and flood risk

Brakne River (SE)

- Total size: 462 km²
- Rivers Length: 44 km
- Average flow: 3.7 m³/s
- Major concerns: Nutrient loads and inadequate waste water treatment from domestic households

Bruatorp River (SE)

- Total size: 430 km²
- Rivers Length: 55 km
- Average flow: 3.4 m³/s
- Major concerns: Diffuse leakage of nutrients, inadequate waste water treatment from domestic households and hydromorphology modifications.

Snarje Stream (SE)

- Total size: 287 km²
- Rivers Length: 34 km
- Average flow: Unknown
- Major concerns: Diffuse leakage of nutrients and inadequate waste water treatment from domestic households

WWW

Each individual WUP report can be downloaded at the MOMENT website www.momentproject.eu under archive and then reports



WUP EVALUATION

Ramböll Management Consulting conducted an extensive independent evaluation of MOMENT as a whole and the WUPs in particular. The main purpose of the evaluation was to analyse WUP as a method for modern water management pointing out success factors and challenges of each WUP.



“As an overall conclusion it can be established that the MOMENT project has contributed to strengthening the institutional capacity and has a positive effect on the transnational development in creating cross border networks through working with WUPs in the pilot areas. It can further be established that the MOMENT project indicates that by working collaboratively across sectors and societal levels and by sharing experience over national borders environmental improvements can be reached faster.”

Martin Fröberg
Ramböll Management Consulting



“After having discussed this issue with the president of the ERB and a representative of HELCOM, it is the impression of the evaluator that the concept of WUPs will be embraced and promoted by these two organisations. In a wider context, the evaluator also believes that WUP is an interesting and a fruitful concept for working with water management as it involves not only the decision makers but, maybe most importantly, the end users of the water, i.e. people who directly affect the water quality in rivers and lakes.”

Anna Zingmark
Ramböll Management Consulting



WWW

The complete report “WUP evaluation of Ramböll” can be downloaded at www.momentproject.eu/archive/reports

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM RAMBÖLL MANAGEMENT CONSULTING:

- One of the main results of the MOMENT project has been the establishment of seven different WUPs in four different countries. For partners in Lithuania, Poland and Russia the approach with WUPs has introduced new methods. In Poland and in Lithuania the strengthening of institutional capacity is notable. In the Russian pilot area the bottom-up approach is believed to have contributed to the empowerment of the general public.
- The contextual conditions under which a WUP is established seem to have an impact on how a WUP is established, which objectives and activities are set forth and which results a WUP achieves. However, this evaluation shows that despite contextual differences, the WUP approach has functioned well in all pilot areas after local adjustments.
- Two of the main challenges include future funding of the WUPs and also the identification of one or several driving forces.
- The WUP approach has been successful in all four countries, and the evaluator believes that the WUPs can be implemented in other rivers as well as all across the South Baltic Area. One of the core discoveries of this evaluation is that the prerequisites for a long term solution are different in each of the different countries that have been part of the MOMENT project. Thus, each WUP must be adjusted to local and regional conditions.

SOME MORE CONCLUSIONS:

- The Euroregion Baltic organisation has granted its support for further developing the WUP concept allowing it to be spread in a wider context around the Baltic Sea.
- The interest from media of water related issues has increased in areas of which WUPs have been established.
- Concrete results must be reached within the WUP to maintain the WUP members enthusiasm.
- A new project called WaterNets is currently being developed with the main objective to further develop the WUP concept and spreading it to all regions around the Baltic Sea.





THE MOMENT PROJECT

In cooperation between seven regions in four countries around the South Baltic Sea area the project MOMENT aims at reducing the outflow of nutrients and hazardous substances by modern water management. This includes the establishment of Water User Partnerships allowing a “bottom up” approach starting at a local level and working within river basins letting the water set its own independent borders. The project is co-financed by the *South Baltic Cross-border Cooperation Programme 2007-2013* and runs from September 2009 until June 2013.

Find information and all reports on
www.momentproject.eu

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