



A Network for the Environment

The main goal pursued by the **AQUAFIL-NET** Network is to facilitate the association of local participants and the population to water management, a major challenge for coming decades. The Network's actions endeavour to support the implementation of the **Water Framework Directive**. The Aquafil-net network wishes also to help local bodies from member states to work with local bodies from candidate countries, in order to facilitate their integration into the EU (community patrimony concerning water management). Consequently, know-how transfers and "pilot" actions are developed by the network in this field.

Water, a political choice

The choice of the theme of water management is motivated by a strong political will from local bodies belonging to the network.

For member state partners, it was a question of building up on the work achieved for several years through a LEADER rural development programme.

For municipalities of candidate countries, water management is a courageous political choice, as the population does not hold environmental issues as priorities.



Network Members

Four local bodies, two from member states and two from candidate countries, created the network. Located in the Eastern part of Bulgaria, the **Sliven** Municipality (130,000 inhab.) is part of the TUNDJA river basin, which is severely polluted (from the past) due to intensive agriculture. The **Alba Iulia** Municipality (75,000 inhab.) belongs to the MURES river basin. Due to the presence of heavy and mining on the banks of affluents to the Mures river, pollution is an important concern.



Partners from the Luxembourg (Municipalities belonging to the **Attart River Contract**), France (**Pays du Val d'Adour**) have been helping Bulgarian and Romanian local bodies for four years with their know-how regarding water management.

New members have joined the network recently: **Trilho**, a Portuguese association, the Hungarian municipality of **Ivancsa** and the **University of Perpignan** (Fr), which is specialised in water management.

Network Objectives for 1998-2002

- "Know-how" transfer (technical component) concerning river management, and creation of Resources Centres (Water Centres) for local public bodies and socio-economical participants.
- Implementation of a training programme (training component) about water and the environment.
- Cooperation in order to implement « River Contracts ».

Achievements (Ecos-Ouverture Programme)

As a starting point, **Studies conducted** in candidate countries identified river pollution problems. This diagnostic confirmed the urgency concerning treatment of worst affected areas, which are threats to Public Health. Tools to monitor and control the state of rivers were implemented. Studies showed, among other things, that ecological solutions consistent with sustainable development existed.

Training and test projects were performed in order to work on the transformation of rivers, under the direction of technical teams (FR et Lux).



Work on embankments

Pollution Alert systems

Water Centres in Alba Iulia (Ro) and Sliven (Bg) were equipped with mobile laboratories in order to measure pollution and monitor rivers, and implement alert systems.



Transfer of the "River Contract" Model

Local partnerships were created in Romania and Bulgaria with partner municipalities in order to adopt a river diagnostic approach, leading to river transformation programmes. These initiatives are supported by Environment Ministries from both countries. In Sliven, a practical training to diagnostic was carried out under the responsibility of the French partner, targeting technicians of municipalities along the Tundja River.

Transfer of pedagogical tools

Designed by partners from France and Luxembourg, these tools ("malle pédagogique" - an educational package, and "grand jeu de l'eau" - a game about water) were adapted to the specificities of the river basins of other partners. Resources Centres coordinators were trained, as well as teachers.



Resources Centres Water Centres

All these components are grouped into Resources Centres ("**Water Centres**") which have been developed since 2001 for the first four partners. These centres are in charge of developing common actions part of the programme. They also organise numerous local animation actions. These centres are to become places to exchange and gain information concerning water and the environment.



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Interreg 3c West 2004-2006

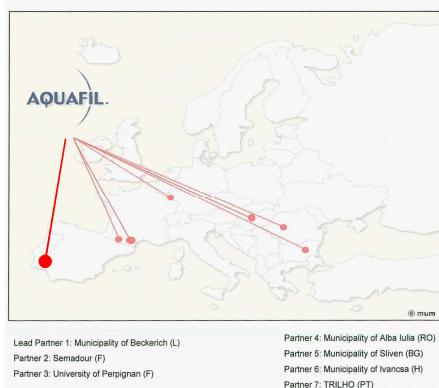


The Aquafil.net Network

A growing Network

2004-2006 Objectives

Initially created by four members, there are today seven participants to the Aquafil Network. The three new members joined the network as the application to the Interreg IIIC Programme was being prepared.



Original members:

- Beckerich and Redange (Luxembourg municipalities belonging to the Attert River Contract)
- Val d'Adour in France
- The city of Alba Iulia in Romania
- Sliven, a Bulgarian city

New members:

- The Portuguese association Trilho (Evora)
- The Hungarian city of Ivanca (located on the banks of the Danube)
- The University of Perpignan (specialised in Water Management)

The Aquafil Network's application to the **Interreg IIIC** programme (Individual Project) was successful. For the 2004-2006 period, partners endeavour to:

- Develop new common tools to manage rivers (databases and geographic information systems)
- Continue to implement river contracts in partnership with newly created river basin agencies in candidate countries
- Create new "Water Centres" (Resources Centres) for new partners
- Establish Water Centres as true participants in development concerning water management (new services to the population)
- Multiply environment education initiatives by targetting a wider public and working on new themes

If you are interested in the work of the Aquafil Network, do not hesitate to contact us!

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