



An assessment toolkit to increase the resilience of NWE catchments to periods of drought

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In many North Western Europe (NWE) areas the balance between water demand and availability is under pressure, thus under water scarcity. In addition, NWE areas are adversely affected by changes in the hydrological cycle and precipitation patterns, thus droughts periods. Over the past thirty years, droughts have dramatically increased and NWE are not immune. The summer of 2003 caused 10 billion euro damage to agriculture. In April 2012 the South West of the UK has moved to environmental drought status. Water scarcity and drought problems in the EU are increasing: 11% of the European population and 17% of its territory have been affected to date. Climate change is likely to exacerbate these adverse impacts. 50% of the NWE area are planned to be affected in 2050. Although the problems caused by drought in NWE are currently not overwhelmingly visible early action should be taken to reduce costs and prevent damage. Adapting to drought in NWE is the transnational challenge of the DROP (governance in DROught adaPtation) project.

The Commission's recent "Blue Print on European Waters" states that existing policies are good but the problem lays in implementation. So the future challenge for NWE regions is to improve the implementation, meaning both governance and measures. The problem of drought is relatively new in comparison with flooding for these Regions. This demands another approach with the interaction of different stakeholders. NWE countries have proven strategies for flood prevention; no such strategies exist for drought adaptation. To do this, DROP combines science, practitioners and decisions makers, realizing the science-policy window.

Thus, the aim of the DROP project is to increase the resilience of NWE catchments to periods of drought. To tackle these issues DROP will develop a governance toolkit to be used by NWE regional water authorities and will test a few pilot measures on drought adaptation. The objectives of the project are 1) to promote the use of a European governance assessment toolkit to define regional drought adaptation; 2) to improve the effectiveness of drought adaptation measures for NWE areas, and 3) to enhance the preparedness of regional stakeholders in NWE in drought adaptation.

In this presentation, authors aim at presenting the assessment toolkit based on a combination of five regime dimensions and four regime qualities which have been operationalized into a questionnaire. The questionnaire helps to make a regime assessment of both the static situation and the dynamics.

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