

BeWater approach: fostering dialogue between science and society

The BeWater approach was developed and applied in four Mediterranean river basins. The basins differ in their socio-economic and environmental conditions and policy frameworks, yet the approach could be successfully applied to all four cases.

Intensive collaboration between scientists and local stakeholders took place over three years. This collaboration led to the identification of various options for water management in each of the river basins and to the development of four River Basin Adaptation Plans.

The project targeted wider society through local awareness campaigns, including mobile exhibitions, talks, surveys, events for school children and teachers, and publicity in local press and broadcast media.



Vipava, Slovenia



Pedieos, Cyprus

What does the collaboration involve?

- Interactive workshops, meetings, interviews.
- A mutual learning process and well-defined science-based approach, with outcomes that are understood and questioned and challenged by stakeholders.
- Stakeholder views, local knowledge and preferences: all included in the scientific process.

Pedieos, Cyprus

BeWater results: a model for bringing together science and society in adaptive planning

The River Basin Adaptation Plans are important management tools for the case study river basins, and some elements of the plans are already being implemented.

More importantly, they serve as a reference for other basins, within the Mediterranean region and beyond, that wish to undertake a scientific participatory development process and increase river basin resilience.

A handbook documents the process and explains how the approach was implemented.

The handbook includes stakeholder selection, participatory development of water management options, and analysis and implementation pathways for the plans themselves, as well as insights from the four case study river basins.

Download the handbook:
www.bewaterproject.eu

How can we do this ourselves?



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Making society an active participant in water adaptation to global change



Global change is expected to reduce available water resources in the Mediterranean region
How can river basins adapt?

www.bewaterproject.eu

BeWater project: an integrated response to a cross-cutting issue



Tordera, Spain

Effective water management involves multiple sectors and fields of expertise, both in terms of policy design and policy implementation.

When management strategies are developed, stakeholders and society at large are often not fully integrated in the process, although their participation is important in order to address the complexity of the issues at hand and improve acceptance of the policies implemented.

In four case study river basins, BeWater project partners worked with professionals, experts, policy actors and society to develop an integrated response: a collaborative process between science and society leading to the elaboration of four River Basin Adaptation Plans.



Rmel, Tunisia

What's in the River Basin Adaptation Plans?

- Focus: river basin management under global change.
- Individual water management options: aim, potential impacts and effectiveness; possible combinations; potential synergies and conflicts between options.
- Additional information: costs; responsibilities; monitoring.

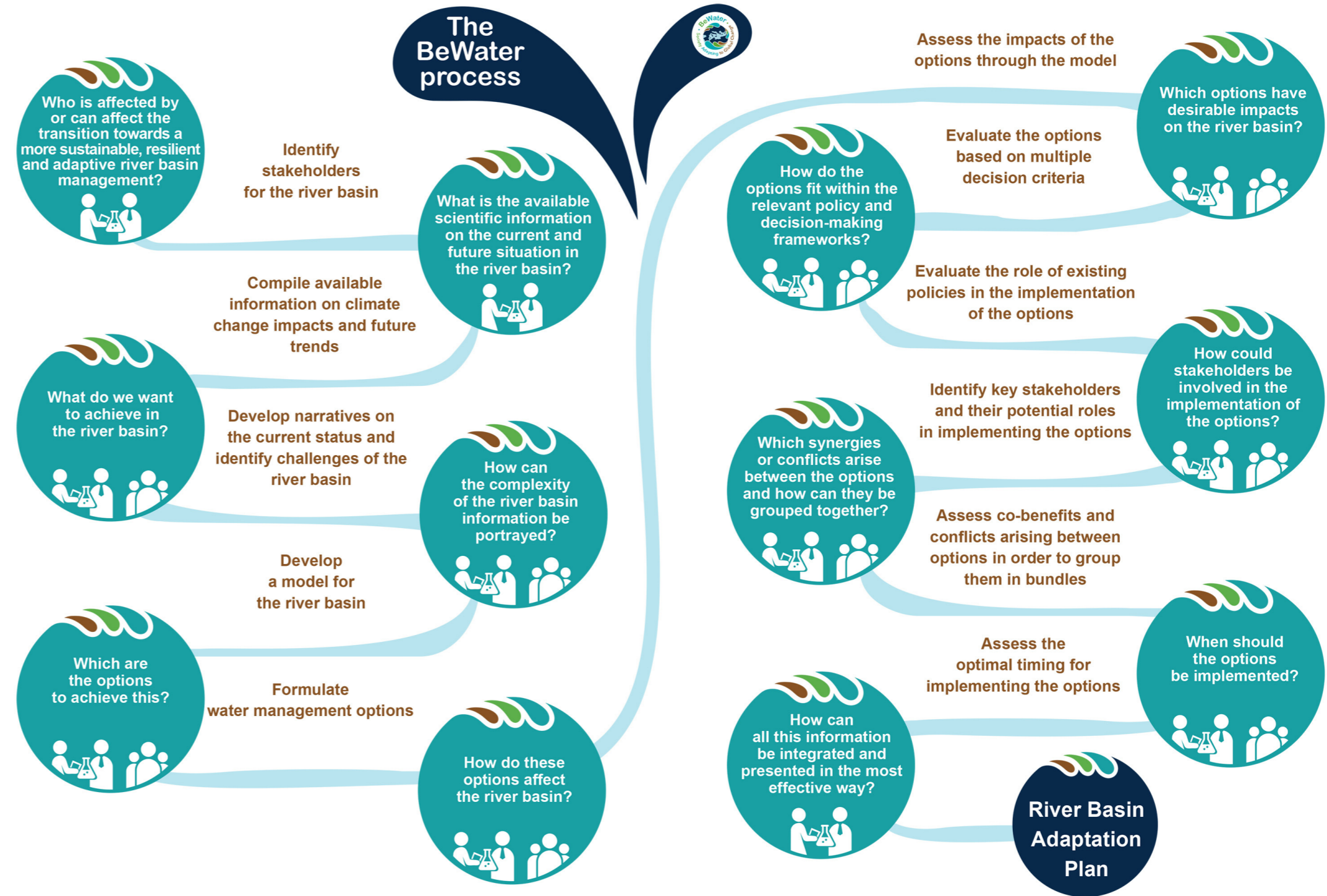


“ Bundles of measures with a proposed implementation timeline have been designed between and [agreed upon] stakeholders. A harmonized plan of actions can already be considered as first concrete adaptation measures.”

Matjaž Tratnik
Professional associate at Hidrotehnik, Slovenia

“ The participatory, semi-quantitative method allowed different kinds of information to be conveyed, providing a more comprehensive result than when built only on technical data.”

Jordi Pagès
Unit for the Control and Improvement of Water Ecosystems from the Catalan Water Agency, Barcelona, Spain



“ The [BeWater] approach has led to the development of a plan that will be acceptable by the civil society and which has not been imposed by the policy makers.”

Najla Khalfoun
Groundwater Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Tunis, Tunisia

“ My participation in the BeWater stakeholder workshops helped me to better understand the multiple and complex functions of river basins and to realize that the active engagement of citizens can improve water resources management.”

Epaminondas Giannouris
Managing Authority of Rural Development Programme Nicosia, Cyprus