Sustainable agriculture and water management – Perspectives from GWP

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Introduction

• Why we are here today
• Focus of the presentation: sharing & discussing approaches to advance sustainable agriculture and water management
  • Main case study: natural small water retention measures in Central and Eastern Europe
  • And perspectives from our broader network
Advancing natural small water retention measures in CEE

• Since the early 2010s, working on natural small water retention in rural areas to improve water balance in catchments, increase resilience to floods and droughts, mitigate pollution, and deliver additional environmental benefits

• What are NSWRM? => landscape retention measures (buffer strips, systems of different types of landscapes, wetlands), soil water retention (agricultural techniques, crop rotation..), small ponds and reservoirs...

• Strong potential to upscale

• Can contribute to multiple European objectives, including WFD, Green Deal, Biodiversity strategy, and environmental objectives of the CAP and Farm to Fork strategy

  ➢ Great opportunity to mobilize these strategies and tools deployed for the promotion of NSWRM for multiple benefits!
Advancing natural small water retention measures in CEE

• Mid 2010s: started advancing NSWRM through demonstration projects, knowledge products and building partnerships
Advancing natural small water retention measures in CEE

• Framwat project (2017 – 2020) aimed to strengthen the regional common framework for floods, droughts and pollution mitigation by increasing the buffer capacity of the landscape through NSWRM

• Project supported by INTERREG’s Central Europe Programme and led by the Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Poland

• The project developed new tools (GIS based tool for assessment of needs and possibilities, Excel based tool for comparison of different variants of catchment development and Decision Support System ), methodologies and guidelines, supported preparation of Concept Plans in pilot basins, engaged stakeholders and decision makers
Advancing natural small water retention measures in CEE

• Focus on GWP CEE contributions to:
  • Stakeholder engagement:
    • Stakeholder analysis and analysis of the existing policy documents on regional and national level
    • Coordinated national consultations and National Policy Dialogues
  • Development of synthesis guidelines

Slovak national dialogue, Nov. 2019
Advancing natural small water retention measures in CEE

- A new initiative: OPTAIN (2020 – 2025) – Optimal strategies to retain water and nutrients
- H2020 project coordinated by Helmholtz-Center for Environmental Research, 21 partners
- Identify regional conditions under which NSWRM perform most efficient & Identify optimal combinations of NSWRM on different scales
- 14 case studies
Advancing natural small water retention measures

Some barriers & solutions:

• Leadership for green solutions – yes?
• Supportive policies – going in the right direction?
• Knowledge and capacity!
  • Knowledge of what works & how to design NSWRM that work, standardized methods
  • Proof of impact and assessing all impacts (incl cost – benefits for farmers & society)
  • Know how of public sector actors & private sector providers
• Physical footprint and/or requiring shifts in agricultural practices – importance to embed NSWRM in CAP
Other experiences and pathways of change
Balkans & Mediterranean

Water – Energy – Food – Ecosystems nexus framework as a key governance framework in the Balkans:
- Assessments
- Mobilization of institutional actors and stakeholders
- Support sharing of information across sectors
- Support development of shared plans and institutional mechanisms for coordination

.. Not only managing trade offs, but also looking for synergies!

Advancing non-conventional water resources in the Mediterranean:
- Applications (rainwater harvesting, stormwater retention, greywater reuse systems..)
- Educational activities
- Capacity Building for authorities & Technical Training for local technicians and professionals
- Awareness Raising and Stakeholder Engagement
Other experiences and pathways of change
And beyond

**DRESS – EA: Early warning systems and drought adaptation actions to enhance smallholder farmer and pastoralist resilience to climate change in IGAD region, with Sahara and Sahel Observatory**

**On the ground pilots focused on youth empowerment, agroecology and agroforestry in West Africa**

**Sri Lanka: advancing climate smart agriculture through close collaboration with Ministry of agriculture, its departments and extension services**