



SESSION 4

FEEDBACK FROM WORKING

GROUP SESSION

GROUP 1

21 SEPTEMBER 2021, 13:30 – 14:30

WORKING GROUP SESSION – GROUP 1

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Exchange on

- Slovakia
- Czech Republic
- Croatia
- Belgium (Flanders)
- Italy
- Broader European context

DROUGHT IMPACTS (1/2)



- **More detailed information available** with assessments of hydrometeorological institutes
- Water scarcity and drought phenomena **increasingly observed** i.e. over the last decade
- Examples for impacted sectors:
 - Generally: Varying impacts with **regional differences**
 - **Agricultural water use** (e.g. water supply for life stock, increasing demand for irrigation leading also to increasing costs, pressures on drinking water resources)
 - **Reservoir management** – water levels for recreational purposes cannot be ensured due to increasing water demand
 - Reduced availability of water resources leading to **increased competition and potential conflicts** between users

DROUGHT IMPACTS (2/2)



- Examples for impacted sectors:
 - **Water supply**
 - At the short-term, more stable situation for supply schemes tapping groundwater resources
 - Challenge for individual small supply schemes
 - Seasonal variations in demand versus availability (e.g. coastal areas)
 - Limitations of pipe network capacities due to increase of demand → “*wake up call*”
- Need for **more detailed assessments of impacts on water-related sectors** required as basis for risk-based approach versus crisis-management approach → “*making the economic case*”
- Ensuring water for aquatic ecology → **environmental flows**

PAST AND ONGOING RESPONSE ACTIVITIES



- Generally: Response activities rather in the beginning
- Countries step-wise moving to preparation of Strategies, Drought Management Plans and inclusion in RBMPs
- Some examples:
 - Strategic documents, concepts and national fora (e.g. “Blue Deal”, national forum for operational hydrology)
 - Amendment water act – operationalizing drought management
 - Integration of water scarcity and drought in River Basin Management Plans as “Significant Water Management Issue”
 - Projects, e.g. together with other sectors like flood protection and nature conservation (wetland reconnection, re-meandering of rivers)
 - Early warning systems (regional level and national level)
 - Regional funds for coordination of activities
 - Water audits for small farms
 - Youth campaigns to raise awareness
 - Increased media coverage

CHALLENGES AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT



- Generally: Water scarcity and droughts **not yet recognized and addressed at the required level of importance** the topic deserves
- Lack of **financial and human resources**
- Monitoring and **assessment of impacts on water-related sectors seen as a challenge**
- Dealing with **uncertainty** (e.g. climate change predictions, average annual water availability versus seasonality)
- Challenges related to **“three pillar” approach**:
 - Drought monitoring: Generally more advanced
 - Vulnerability and risk assessment: Much less advanced
 - Preparedness, mitigation and response: Gaps
- Activities at EU level
 - Data → information → knowledge → insights → action
 - Diverse situation in Europe → fostering dialogue with countries
- Continuous **need to raise awareness**
- Need for **development of understanding of economic rational**

Thank you!