

# A common vision for European Water Innovation



Dear WssTP friends,

The new year has begun with a number of exciting news for our platform! WssTP has finalised and made available [online](#) the much-anticipated WssTP Strategic Innovation and Research Agenda (WssTP SIRA)! The WssTP Water Vision 2030 released in 2016, is developed and has now in the form of this new WssTP SIRA an innovative route on how to be implemented.



One might say WssTP not only knows the terrain we are stepping on, and where we want to go, but has also worked out a map on the highways, winding roads and sidewalks, we shall walk to get there, all together, and as quickly as possible.

We are happy to see that WssTP SIRA has already served as a basis for discussions between WssTP and the different Directorate-Generals (DGs) of the European Commission, bringing water issues at the centre of the EC's attention for the future H2020 Work Programme 2018-2020.

Earlier this month, WssTP, also, organised jointly with the WssTP WG on Water & ICT, a workshop on Digital Water, in the context of the OASC Connected Smart Cities conference, held on the 12 of January. The session brought together a range of speakers, who presented the opportunities and needs for digital solutions in order to address the current and future global water challenges. WssTP has identified Digital Water as an important driver and enabler, for water related innovation.

From the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> of January, the WssTP Board convened in Barcelona for its annual Strategic Board Workshop. Among the main topics of the agenda were the restructuring of the WssTP Working Groups in line with the new WssTP Water Vision and SIRA, as well as the shaping of the new WssTP Innovation and Investment programme. As part of this programme, a spring event on Innovation and Investment with a back to back WG session is scheduled for the last week of March in Brussels. The final dates for our annual stakeholder conference Water Innovation Europe 2017 have, also, been set up! You can now save the dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> of June for WIE2017!

On a different note, Malta took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January. The Maltese Presidency is putting forward an environmental agenda with a focus on three key priorities: promoting maritime environment protection, advancing the Circular Economy Package, and delivering on climate policies. In this edition, WssTP features a special editorial by Dr. Konrad Mizzi, Minister, Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta on the EU Maltese presidency.

I wish you all, and your loved ones, health and lots of success in 2017! This might not be always fully in our hands. WssTP will hold tight to its long-standing values and will continue to pave the way towards a sustainable, resilient and water smart society. That is, and will be, definitely in our hands. With the new WssTP Water Vision compass and the WssTP SIRA map, we do not only envision the future of the European water sector but we suggest targeted actions to turn past and present challenges into opportunities for the future. 2017 can be a great year for our sector and we are only standing at its beginning. The best is yet to come. Stay tuned!

**Tomas Michel, WssTP President**

**Addressing Water  
Scarcity-A common  
challenge by  
Dr Konrad Mizzi  
Minister, Office of the  
Prime Minister of the  
Republic of Malta**



Being located in the centre of the Mediterranean and with a prevailing semi-arid climate, the scarcity of water resources has always been a limiting factor for the socio-economic development of the Maltese islands. Throughout the years Malta has, however, managed to turn the challenge of water unavailability into an opportunity to develop new technologies and management approaches.

In fact, Malta has been one of the first countries in the Mediterranean to introduce sea-water desalination by reverse osmosis for potable water supply on a commercial scale back in the early 1980's and in subsequent years has also been on the forefront of the development of active water leakage management technologies to optimise the management of municipal water demand.

In this context, Malta is collaborating closely with her Presidency trio partners - the Netherlands and Slovakia, to highlight water scarcity as an important issue in the European dimension, which led to the adoption of Council Conclusions on Water Scarcity during the Slovak Presidency. In this regard, Malta notes that the Circular Economy Package recently launched by the Commission provides an important opportunity for the development of water reuse as an effective solution to address water scarcity. Through its New Water Project, Malta can provide a practical example of the application of safe water reuse - where the commissioning of three new wastewater polishing plants will enable the production of high quality water for use in agriculture, landscaping and industry. This alternative source of new water will be able to address around a third of the Maltese agricultural sector's water demand, thus relieving the existing pressures on natural water resources such as groundwater and thereby supporting the achievement of the Water Framework Directive's good quantitative status objectives.

Malta, therefore, also welcomes the current Commission initiative to establish common quality standards to ensure that water reuse can be applied in a way which is safe for human health and the environment. These quality standards can help develop the enabling environment required to unlock the potential for water reuse to be one of the pillars of Europe's green economy.

Questions about this newsletter? Contact us: [durk.krol@wsstp.eu](mailto:durk.krol@wsstp.eu)

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Malta's Presidency of the EU Council is also looking at water within the Mediterranean dimension and actively supports initiatives at a regional and sub-regional level, through the Union for the Mediterranean and the 5+5 dialogue process, which are placing water management high on the agenda of Mediterranean countries. In particular during its Presidency, Malta will host a Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Water to discuss and endorse a roadmap for enhancing regional cooperation in the water sector with the aim of improving quality of life and security in the Mediterranean region.



**Lena Goldkuhl,**  
Working Group Leader  
of the WG 'Ecosystem  
Services' shares with us  
her insights on the  
developments of the WG!

## Why is it important to have a Working Group focused on this theme?

Ecosystem services are the benefits society obtains from natural and constructed ecosystems. Those benefits, seen from a water perspective, are the focus of this working group. Changes in ecosystem services influence all components of human well-being, including the basic needs for a good life. That is, ecosystem services can be grouped into four broad categories: regulating services, provisioning services, cultural services, and well-being. Regulating services are benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services, e.g., climate regulation, water regulation (floods, drought), and water purification. Provisioning services refers to products achieved from ecosystem services, e.g., fresh water. Cultural services are non-material benefits obtained from ecosystem services, e.g., aesthetics, recreation and ecotourism. Well-being refers to, e.g., the ability to have adequate and clean drinking water. In other words, increasing the knowledge on the value of ecosystem services is necessary, since they have a fundamental impact on our lives.

## What are your expectations from this Working Group?

The working group has been very active in contributing to WssTP's Vision document and Strategic Innovation and Research Agenda (SIRA). My expectation is that the WG can continue to influence EU policy in different ways. I'm also expecting the WG to continue to facilitate joint initiative in the field – at least two H2020-proposals related to Ecosystem Services have been submitted, as a result of the networking arena that WssTP provides.

## What is Working Group currently working on and what is it planning for the upcoming months?

The WG will continue the work on improving the understanding of Ecosystem Services. In particular, the WG will continue to strengthen the network function of the WG by meetings and online discussions, and, if the interest is large enough among the WG members, develop a position paper, and activities in line with the WssTP SIRA. All interested WssTP members are invited to join and contribute to the discussion on the Project Place platform.



## Malta & Water Challenges

Malta is essentially an aquifer - a rock containing usable water - made mostly of limestone (a common aquifer rock holding water in interconnected fractures and cracks), which originally formed on the ocean bed some 25 million years ago. Historically, Malta had enough rainfall to sufficiently replenish the aquifers with fresh water and the country has always been innovative in managing water supply. However, the growing urbanisation, population density and tourist industry pose a challenge to water supply in the small Mediterranean island, which is being solved through innovation, cooperation and governance.

Malta, as a small island considers water as a crucial resource for its citizens and its economy particularly, where industry and tourism are concerned. However, as the country witnessing an increase in population and tourist arrivals, more needs to be done to ensure this resource is safeguarded into the future.



*"When Valletta was being built in the 16th century, one of the conditions for all properties was that each had to have its own wells and water cisterns. Valletta Local Council would like to revive the underground wells of the city especially with the possible introduction of urban gardens."*

**Dr Alexiei Dingli, Mayor of Valletta**

Paragon Europe is a Maltese organisation focused on realising excellence through innovation, capacity building and technology transfer. With over twelve years of operational experience, Paragon's multilingual, multicultural and multidisciplinary team has developed the right expertise to carry out tender and project activities to the highest standards. The three main water-related projects that Paragon has implemented in Malta are Free and Open Source Software for Water Resource Management, Water Efficiency in European Urban Areas and Demonstrating Managed Aquifer Recharge as a Solution to Water Scarcity and Drought. In 2015, during the Malta Water Week, Paragon launched the Water Cluster of Malta, which it coordinates since then. As from 2017, Paragon Europe is also the national coordinator of Climate-KIC for Malta. Read more about the Malta at the dedicated regions' section of our website.



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## Welcome New Members



InOpSys, Belgium

InOpSys NV is a KU Leuven spin-off company which is commercializing a new concept to treat hazardous and toxic chemical and pharmaceutical wastewater streams. InOpSys designs and delivers flexible, modular and mobile units, or in short, a chemical Plant-On-A-Truck. These mobile facilities are brought to chemical and pharmaceutical companies to treat wastewater on site. This will reduce the number of waste transports to traditional treatment facilities. The technology can also be adapted to waste streams with diverse flow rates and compositions. The company has a broad knowledge in scientific and innovative research and many years of experience in industrial chemical engineering and production. **For more information, please click [here](#).**



Università Politecnica delle  
Marche, Italy

Università Politecnica delle Marche (Ancona) has 5 faculties (Engineering, Medicine and Surgery, Economics, Sciences, Agriculture) and 12 Departments. Three of its departments will be involved in WssTP activities: DIISM, DICEA and SIMAU. Among its water related activities are: Water production through waste heat recovery from energy systems; Small scale desalination systems; Renewable desalination; Coastal Engineering and Integrated Coastal Zone Management; Coastal dynamics and protection, Renewable energy from marine flows; Offshore Engineering, Environmental impact assessment at sea and rivers and design and management of urban water systems. **For more information, please click [here](#).**



AIMEN, Spain

AIMEN is a highly professionalized R&D organisation with more than 200 employees specialised in the field of Materials Engineering, Manufacturing Processes, Laser Technologies and Environmental Technologies. AIMEN is participating in 21 European projects of which 14 are being coordinated by AIMEN. Additionally, AIMEN is participating in 56 national projects. **For more information, please click [here](#).**

## Join WssTP!



Would you like to become one of the key players in the European water sector, make an impact on the EU Water RTD&I strategy or collaborate with a pan-European network of leading water organisations? With 170 members currently on board and a constant growth since its creation in 2007, WssTP is the platform to join! As a WssTP member, you can benefit from our key services areas:

- **Fostering collaboration** through Working Groups activities and meetings, Brokerage events, Water Innovation Europe Conference & online tools;
- **Intelligence for members:** Policy Watch, Member's newsletter, WssTP Observatory, Help Desk Function;
- **Communication and Dissemination** with monthly newsletters, website, social media, press releases, SME awards;
- **Advocacy for public funding and water:** advises EC on drafting funding calls, strategic policy work for water, WssTP Water Vision and SRA, Management body for MEP Water Group.

For more information, please contact [Durk Krol](#).

## AGENDA

**06 February 2017**

EWA Seminar: A Guide to the EU Water Policy

**7 February 2017**

2<sup>nd</sup> WaterInnEu Marketplace  
E-pitch event

**20 February 2017**

World Water-Tech - Innovation Summit

**7 March 2017**

MEP Water Group event  
Maltese EU Presidency

**22-24 March 2017**

AfriAlliance Conference

**28-29 March 2017**

WssTP Innovation & Investment Workshop

**20 April 2017**

WssTP- SusChem Workshop  
From Water Use to Water Management: The case  
of smart & small water treatment units

**14-16 June 2017**

Water Innovation Europe 2017

[www.wsstp.eu](http://www.wsstp.eu)

On Twitter: [@wsstpeu](#)

On LinkedIn: [The WssTP Group](#)

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