

NORWAT

Integrated Approach to Northern Watercourses and their Community Development

Most European riverine habitats have been seriously affected by various forms of human activities. This has meant that there is a need for environmental restoration/ re-naturalisation of the watercourses in the NPP region. However, due to a lack of knowledge, finance, and collaboration between different interest groups, many important restoration actions have not been undertaken. Further, in order to enhance positive sustainable development along the northern watercourses, interpretation and awareness of this natural resource needs to be increased with increased education being a key issue. The intentions of the EC Water Framework Directive are a starting point for a testing of the implementation methodology based on the local needs and local involvement. NorWat aims to facilitate this through discovering and disseminating information on new ways to make the best use of watercourses for the benefit of local sustainable community development. Watercourses are important features in many northern periphery regions and this project will seek to improve the inter-relationship



Objectives

NorWat will be divided into 3 main tasks, each addressing a specific issue:

- Establishment of a participatory community development (planning) process in three target regions with special focus on land-use and water quality issues. Networks of pilot communities will be created; in order to share information, know-how and experience with the aim of producing community development plans
- Identify areas of the watercourse where project actions are to be implemented and where restoration can begin
- Develop educational and interpretative material, in order to raise awareness of watercourse resources. An important element of this process is the involvement of primary schools in the four countries. A further part of the project will develop a curriculum on the topic of northern watercourses for an educational training course

Project activities

- Launch of a participatory community development (planning) process and production of a community development plan for the pilot communities
- Establishing networks of pilot communities
- Practical implementation of some pilot actions in the target communities
- Assessing the experiences and results of the community development processes and activities in all participating regions
- Identification and restoration of those sections of the watercourse where project actions are to be implemented
- Development of educational and interpretative material/processes to raise awareness of watercourse resources; includes engagement of local schools
- Developing and running the curriculum and educational structure of a further training course related to northern watercourses
- Dissemination of the results and experiences

Expected results

- Model plans of pilot communities as examples of good practice (case studies)
- A detailed description of good community development planning process with special emphasis on water protection issues and water quality enhancement (Best Practice Manual)
- Increased rural social capital, awareness and knowledge of the importance of northern watercourses
- Improvement of the watercourse environment in the selected sections of the target regions for natural habitats and associated fishing economic benefit with monitored short-term results
- A forum for discussion and exchange of knowledge and experience between participating countries
- A best practice manual of "Re-naturalisation techniques to restore and enhance riverine natural habitats with strong community benefit"
- Establishment of a transnational Activity Working Group to develop and design the environmental education work.

Partners

Municipality of Saarijärvi - Finland
Forestry Centre of Central Finland - Finland
Central Finland Regional Environment Centre - Finland
University of Jyväskylä - Finland
The Highland Council - Scotland
Scottish Natural Heritage - Scotland
Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey Enterprise - Scotland
Spey Fishery Board- Scotland
Development Department of Nordreisa Municipality - Norway
Regional Board of Northern Troms Region - Norway
Vindel River Association, Västerbottens - Sweden

Project website

<http://www.norwat.jypoly.fi>

Measure

3.2

Total Budget

1 241 402

NPP Award

703 041

Project Period

07/03/2004 – 31/05/2007

Countries Involved

Finland, Scotland, Sweden, Norway

Lead Partner

Organisation

Jyväskylä Polytechnic/
Institute of Natural Resources

+358 (0)14 4690 273

Project leader

Ari Rusila

Ari.rusila@jypoly.fi