

Organisation	Region, Objective-status	Expertise in field of proposal
1. Jyväskylä Polytechnic / Institute of Natural Resources	Central Finland, Saarijärvi, Objective 1	Rural and rural industries development, natural resources management, project management.
2. Municipality of Saarijärvi	Central Finland, Objective 1	Spatial planning, community development; delivery of public services e.g. in the field of environmental protection.
3. Forestry Centre of Central Finland	Central Finland, Saarijärvi DO, Objective 1	Forest nature management planning, landscape planning, village development, advising and motivating forest owners, water protection issues related to forestry.
4. Central Finland Regional Environment Centre	Central Finland, Jyväskylä, Objective 2	Environmental management, water quality monitoring, nature conservation, environmental planning, construction and restoration projects, environmental research.
5. University of Jyväskylä / Institute for Environmental Research	Central Finland, Jyväskylä, Objective 2	Research specialisation in environmental biology, especially hydrobiology & limnology, environmental chemistry, development.
6. The Highland Council	Scottish Highlands, Objective 1, Transitional	Local Government Authority with responsibility for planning, as well as strong involvement in sustainable economic and community development, and the interpretation and enjoyment of the natural heritage.
7. Scottish Natural Heritage	Scottish Highlands, Objective 1, Transitional	Government Agency with statutory responsibility within Scotland for the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage (including flora, fauna, geomorphology, geology and natural landscapes) and fostering its understanding and enjoyment.
8. Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey Enterprise	Scottish Highlands, Objective 1, Transitional	One of a network of local agencies responsible to, and funded by, the Scottish Executive for delivery of economic development services to businesses and communities in the Highlands and Islands.
9. Spey Fishery Board	Scottish Highlands, Objective 1, Transitional	Statutory authority for the conservation and management of Atlantic salmon and sea trout fisheries in the River Spey.
10 Development Department in Nordreisa Municipality	Troms County, Norway	Spatial and rural planning including water resource and river management, development tasks incl. community development and project coordination.
11. Regional Board of Northerns Troms Region	Troms County, Norway	Regional spatial and economic planning, development tasks incl. community development and coordination of environmental, spatial and common economic interests in the region.
12. Vindel River Association	Västerbotten County, Sweden, Objective 1	VRA is an inter-municipal partnership, whose main purpose is to support local rural development in the Vindel River Valley. VRA has expertise in rural development, tourism development, international networking and project management.

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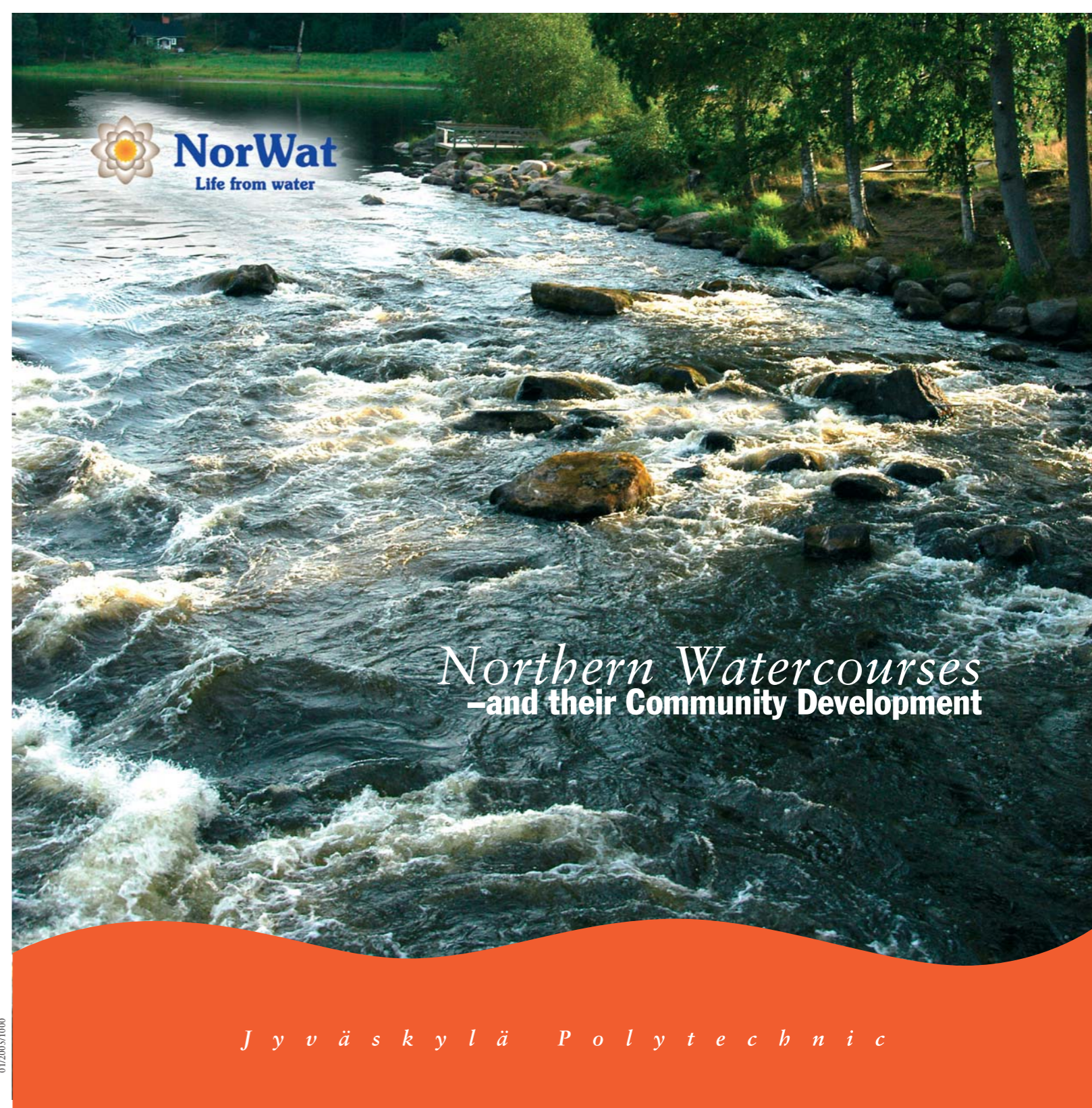
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JYVÄSKYLÄ POLYTECHNIC

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Northern Watercourses
-and their Community Development

J y v ä s k y l ä P o l y t e c h n i c

Northern Watercourses – Life from Water

NorWat (Integrated Approach to Northern Watercourses and their Community Development) aims to discover and disseminate 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 between environmental and socio-economic wellbeing along them. This will be achieved through three themes: (1) sustainable land use management to protect water quality; (2) naturalisation of watercourses to restore and enhance riverine natural habitats; and (3) education, interpretation and training to raise awareness of the value and uses of watercourses.

Background

There are several issues related to northern watercourses and their near communities: water quality, minor utilisation of the potential of the watercourse in the communities, and lack of collaboration between different interest groups of the watercourse and its environs. In addition, most European riverine habitats have been seriously affected by various forms of human activities.

There are a lot of interests and needs for environmental re-naturalisation of the watercourses in the NPP region. However, many important restoration actions have not been undertaken due to lack of knowledge and finance, as well as lack of collaboration between different interest groups. Further, in order to enhance positive sustainable development along the northern watercourses, interpretation and awareness of this natural resource needs to be increased. Education is a key issue.

The idea of a transnational project has originally been developed in the strategic development process of the town of Saarijärvi in Central Finland. After extensive partner search a preparatory project – PreWatCon – was carried out from 1st August 2002 to 31st January 2003.

During the PreWatCon, it became apparent that there is a clear need for a transnational project related to holistic management of northern watercourses and their near environs

with strong emphasis on community involvement and environmental issues. So, after the PreWatCon the partners jointly decided to work towards the application round of March 2004 and finally the NorWat project started in the summer 2004 and will last three years.

Objectives

The overall aim of NorWat is to enhance economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable development of communities along the watercourses in the Northern Periphery. In more details, the objectives are

- 1) to raise further the profile of the watercourse and its economic and environmental significance. This may lead to increased rural social capital, awareness of the importance of northern watercourses and may eg. activate local inhabitants to develop their living conditions in target areas.
- 2) to improve the watercourse environment in the selected sections of the target regions. This will benefit natural habitats and associated fishing economy.
- 3) to network different interest groups and share information about the protection of watercourses and their environs both within and between different NPP countries.
- 4) to help each participating country to learn from one another about some particular aspect of the overall project, i.e. to share our strengths to date.



Main components

NorWat is divided into 3 main themes, each addressing a specific issue which the partners considered to be the most appropriate for transnational work:

Theme 1: “Sustainable Land Use Management to Protect Water Quality and to Promote Community Development along Northern Watercourses”

Theme 2: “Watercourse Naturalisation to Restore and Enhance Natural Habitats”

Theme 3: “Develop Educational and Interpretative Material/ Processes to Raise Awareness of Watercourse Resources”

These themes were agreed, based on the criteria of:

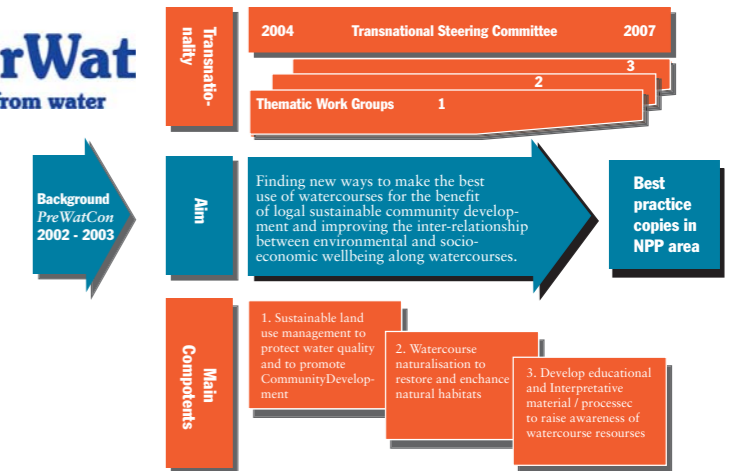
- **INNOVATIVE** (at least for one of the partners, learning from the others)
- **TRANS-NATIONAL** (in terms of sharing from one another’s best practice and providing a best practice manual for others – both within and beyond this project – at the end)
- **ACHIEVABLE** (i.e. within 3 years and likely match funding)

Each theme will be lead by one partner country, with the results being shared to the other partner countries in terms of best practice. However, all partners will contribute to the development of every theme, so that they all will gain maximum benefit from best practice sharing.

Implication and results

The implication and results of the project include

- Model plans/ village and community development plans for pilot communities, including eg. landscape management plans, re-naturalisation plans for a section of watercourse and its close environs, and socio-economic analyses as examples of good practice.
- Practical tests and demonstrations of some actions recommended in model plans/village development plans



- Run a “School Goes To Fish” component so that primary school children can visit a Hatchery or participate in management fishing or respective actions relevant in the region in question.
- Develop and plan a curriculum and educational structure of a further training course for those utilizing and/or managing the watercourse in their work
- Run and test the somewhat tailored training courses in each of the three participating countries.
- Produce a Best Practice Manual in each theme to facilitate replications of the project actions elsewhere in the NPP region with detailed description of eg.
 - good community development planning process with special emphasis on water protection issues and water quality enhancement,
 - re-naturalisation techniques to restore and enhance riverine natural habitats with strong community benefit,
 - linking primary school children in the NPP area with their local watercourse and watercourses and communities in other countries,
 - the structure, contents and organisation of the training course for wider application in the NPP region by utilising and summing up experience gained during the test courses.
- A forum for discussion and exchange of knowledge and experience between participating countries.
- Increased transnational co-operation in the NPP region for the pilot communities.