



European Centre For River Restoration
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Centro Italiano Per La
Riqualificazione Fluviale

TOPIC 3.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

IWRM

River restoration should be a priority issue for water authorities and river managers in Europe, particularly in the context of the WFD (200/60/CE) and other related directives. Because of, ecological river restoration is an integral part of sustainable water management and an integral part integrated river basin approach. For that reason there must be a growing acceptance that river restoration must be a key component of any river basin management process.

Ecosystem approach

River restoration should target at restoring complete ecosystems and ecosystem processes, in which, as in undisturbed nature, dynamism is a key feature, expressed as the self-sustaining capacity of river and stream ecosystems and their capacity to respond to imposed external environmental changes. In this, hydro-morphological processes remain a key factor in steering ecosystem processes and ecosystem quality. This can only be achieved when on a river basin scale.

Transboundary

With increasing scale, river restoration should be based on multidisciplinary, adaptive management approaches and the acceptance of non-stationarity. With increased scale, public involvement in planning, monitoring & appraisal, social processes and interactions between stakeholders are increasingly important. Engaging the range of stakeholders in decision-making processes and most specifically the 'public' in all its diversity is the major challenge. A better analysis of the possible conflicts and synergies between ecological and social functions of river restoration projects allows a better understanding of the needs of nature and the use of people. Whereas most river basins in Europe are transnational, this can only be achieved by intensive trans boundary co-operation, amongst the different type of interest groups.

Conflicts of interest

Water and water bodies are essential for a large number of fundamental human activities and as a consequence conflict may arise at all scales. This is even more apparent with transboundary rivers and aquifers. So the focus of discussion on water cooperation should be changed from simply sharing water to sharing the benefits that can be drawn from water. Basin wide cooperation on river restoration may provide the key to those countries separated or linked by a river.

Implementation

Increasingly, river managers are turning from hard engineering solutions to ecologically based restoration activities in order to improve degraded waterways. River restoration aims to maintain or increase ecosystem goods and services while protecting downstream and coastal ecosystems. Identifying restoration priorities at the catchment scale requires

strong coordination of existing delivery and funding mechanisms and close cooperation between stakeholders.

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