



# SIRIUS

Sustainable Irrigation water management and River-basin governance: Implementing User-driven Services



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## Water Vision 2013

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# **1. Introduction**

## **Purpose of the document**

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate that all the preparatory work and the training that was proposed in the SIRIUS contract and carried out in Workpackage1, to engage the local communities in each pilot area, proved effective and that it bore the desired results. The Water Vision drawn up for each pilot area from the ppgis events and regional meetings precisely targeting what is required to be done next to improve the irrigation management of the pilot area is a clear proof of this success.

## **Objective of the document**

The present document gives a brief overview of the present stakeholder institutional landscape in Europe and elsewhere, and sets out to prove that the tool proposed, that is ppgis practice, has now been tested on the ground and proved successful and ready to be proposed as a mainstream water management tool. The ppgis practice (or community drawing) is here proposed to be the appropriate tool to include in the Water Framework Directive, as it could bring in the local community dimension the WFD presently lacks. The same applies to mainstream GMES in land and water applications, which never addressed directly the local community requirements in the core services of GEOLAND 1 & 2, and in BOSS (in spite of repeated insistence by one of the reviewers :).

## **The approach of SIRIUS**

The SIRIUS project is also a GMES project but it was designed from the outset to include the local community dimension. SIRIUS is built on 3 pillars working in parallel:

The first pillar is the application of satellite technologies under the GMES umbrella, and including the preparatory & operational campaigns. The second pillar is the introduction of SPIDER & the building of the GIS layers, the compiling of maps and all its related scientific and field research; and the 3rd pillar is the active involvement of the local community & local stakeholders participating in the regional meetings and the ppgis (local community drawing) practice and the drawing up of a coherent directory of stakeholder-related information in each pilot area.

And in one respect SIRIUS is unique in that it demonstrates that GMES can respond directly to match the real requirements of the local communities through the whole range of the SIRIUS toolset and not through so called stakeholder platforms.

This document also gives a brief overview of the sequence of activities along the 3 years of the project that led to the drawing up of the water vision in each pilot area. This is to outline that detailed planning and persistence were part of the success, and that a lot of preparations (extensive agenda drawn from the stakeholder context deliverable) and follow up (action plans) were carried out before and after each ppgis event.

## **The potential role of SIRIUS**

SIRIUS is happening at an opportune time when the water initiatives at European level, mainly that of the Water Framework Directive and Global water initiatives do not offer concrete tools for receiving tangible feedback from the local communities in water resources decision making. It offers an excellent opportunity for GMES to take on these tools of engagement and be a leader in this field. The ppgis practice is not meant to collect the most accurate information on the ground but is meant to give a picture of the perceptions of the local community. However, in

each pilot area where it was carried out it succeeded to draw out information from participants that was otherwise neither available from the major stakeholders nor from the scientific literature consulted. SIRIUS can showcase the local community maps of the future, where community members were encouraged to plan and commit to positive changes in farming & irrigation practices.

### **SIRIUS vs Global Water Initiatives**

In the present scenario of various 'global water initiatives' that keep emerging it is of interest to study which of them actually target (or not) the participation of the local communities with tangible tools that produce results. There are international societies, organizations and forums bringing together experts and academics from different disciplines to engage in the exchange of information and expertise, with different objectives that range from policy and planning to technology applications in water management. A quick search will reveal that local communities are sometimes included in the list of stakeholders but there never seems to be mentioned how they are targeted.

Along the years there were mega-International conferences, such as the UN International Conference on Water and the Environment in Dublin in 1992, and the UN Conference on the Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro the same year which in retrospect seem to have had only marginal impacts on water management processes and practices. The impacts of the World Commission on Water for the 21st Century, the Bonn Consultation, the Johannesburg Summit and the five World Water Forums all seem to have skipped the issue of utilising concrete tools to involve the local communities

### **Privatisation of water resources**

In the international meetings scenarios there is the consistent increase of the involvement of the private sector in the management and supply of water resources on a global scale. This is being met with anti-privatization campaigns which are giving voice to the advocacy for water to be considered as a human right. Ironically it has been the activists who are working with the local communities to promote alternative water governance models, and not the established water institutions. Bakker (2005) suggests the concept of an alter-globalization which should centre on the 'commons' concepts. In Europe analyses of the effect of price increases in irrigation due to the strict application of the WFD predict that the impact would be most felt by the smaller and family farms (Garrido and Calatrava, 2005).

Water as a Public Good was a concept that emerged strongly through the ppgis sessions in many of the non-European pilot areas as well. In this regard the SIRIUS project is an attempt to draw in the concerns of the local communities through the water visions into potential local community friendly business scenarios in the pilot areas.