



WATER SENSITIVE CITY THEMATIC PARTNERSHIP - ORIENTATION PAPER



WHAT ARE THE KEY THEMATIC AREAS AND SUB-TOPICS?



WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED **DUTPUTS AND IMPACTS?**

- · High water losses and inefficiency in supply
- Low uptake of circular water economy practices
- Urban vulnerability to climate extremes (floods, droughts)
- Social inequalities in access to water-
- related services and risk exposure

 Insufficient integration of water into urban
- planning

 Lack of robust indicators to evaluate water scarcity or water excess at regional and city
- Fragmented governance and lack of
- Limited cross-sectoral awareness on Naturehased Solutions (NhS) Lack of clear and actionable implementation
- auidelines for NbS. Unlocking the benefits of NbS require long-
- term commitment Lack of knowledge and awareness about the
- ecosystem services they provide.
 Regulatory inconsistencies and fragmented
- governance. Insufficient awareness on long-term cost
- savings associated with WSC measures
- Limited integration in planning and implementation of green and blue infrastructure.
- Unbalanced levels of digitalisation among urban entities; lack of data and sensor standardisation.
- Lack of dedicated funding mechanisms for 3 water management digitalisation; high complexity of financing mechanisms Complex data governance
- Need for improvement in collaboration between universities and research and opment institutions
- Lack of knowledge and capacity at local
- Fragmented governance hinders coherent and synergistic water governance across all Lack of meaningful public and stakeholder
 - engagement
 Insufficient financing and economic incentives
 - Limited knowledge and evidence sharing on
 - the 'Water Sensitive City' concept Urban environments continue to be developed in ways that increase water-related risks rather than mitigate them.
 - Regulatory and legal barriers









EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Output 1: Policy briefs with regulatory recommendations

Output 2: Analysis) of Multiannual Financial Framework and/or position paper or policy brief for better funding

Output 3: A model, template or blueprint for local water resilience plans and/or urban water management plans, including a set of indicators/KPIs

Output 4: Distributing knowledge, exchanging best practices.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Output 1: Set of indicators related to water sensitive cities

Output 2: Development of a Blueprint 'Water Sensitive City' plan.

Output 3: Handbook of best practices [Green & Blue infrastructure / Sponge city & Urban water retention/ Biodiversity & Eco-system restoration].

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Output 1: Step-wise, scalable digitalisation strategy, based on three main milestones (digitalised infrastructure; digital twins; and data-driven water governance), including indicators.

Output 2: Mapping of private funding opportunities and public-private collaboration in research projects.

Output 3: Mapping of data-based approaches enaging civil society.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

and practical tools.

Output 1: Comprehensive framework of resources for cities to implement multi-level governance models

ut 2: Joint campaign to highlight best practices and raise awareness

Output 3: Compilation of case studies on public participation in water governance across European cities Output 4: Compilation of good practices on innovative financing models and solutions

Output 5: Stakeholder dialogue to explore innovative funding mechanisms

Output 6: A pilot project with EIB

Output 7: Advocacy for the inclusion of funding for WSC investments in EU Gohesion Policy and the next MFF. Output 8: Development of a widespread WSG Academy Output 9: Tailored support for local authorities to enhance their understanding of WSC principles and implementation Output 10: Series of webinars to disseminate best practices

EXPECTED IMPACTS

- Adoption of policy recommendations
- More direct access to funding (more integrated and cross-sectoral
- · Easier access to funding (especially for smaller municipalities)
- More cities and regions in the EU with resilience / urban water management plans.

EXPECTED IMPACTS

- Support cities in developing a 'Water Sensitive City' plan in co-creation with local stakeholders and community
- Increase number of certified professionals with knowledge of WSC topics (architects, planners, maintenance workers, politicians, others).

EXPECTED IMPACTS

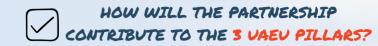
- · Better understanding of Smart Water Operations and Digital Innovation
- More efficient water management based on indicators and data analysis - including digital twins, Al.
- · Increased implementation capacity (level of ambition linked with specific funding).
- Measurable benefits for ecosystem stakeholders

EXPECTED IMPACTS

- Enhance the capacity of cities to effectively implement multi-level governance models, promote and communicate WSC approaches
- Achieve behavioural change towards sustainable water use and citizen participation in water management · Strengthen the financial capabilities of cities to implement WSC projects (including innovative financial mechanisms) and ensure the inclusion
- Develop and spread knowledge on WSC and its practical applications.

of WSC priorities in EU budget policies

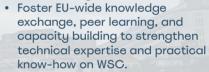
- · Capacity building and tailored support
- · Collaboration with relevant EU and international initiatives.

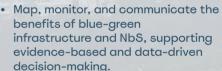


Better Funding

- · Prioritise long-term resilience and cost savings through funding that values the economic and social benefits of water-sensitive investments.
- Blend EU, national, and private funds, mobilising PPPs and revolving instruments to de-risk and scale investments, especially for smaller municipalities.
- Develop scalable digitalisation standards to guide targeted, results-based funding and improve access to finance.

Better Knowledge





 Promote participatory approaches and awareness campaigns that empower communities. policumakers, and practitioners to co-create sustainable water solutions.

Better Regulation

- · Harmonise and strengthen EU, national, and local regulatory frameworks to enable multi-level governance and integrated water management.
- · Mainstream water-sensitive planning by embedding binding requirements (e.g. NbS, water storage, green infrastructure) into land use, housing, and infrastructure policies.
- Use EU-wide indicators and digital tools (KPIs, digital twins) to assess compliance, identify regulatory gaps, and refine policies.



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