3rd regional workshop on water demand management in the Mediterranean
Zaragoza, 19-21 March 2007

Thematic working group
« Factoring WDM into the agriculture sector »

Conclusions & recommendations

Chair: Mr Nicola LAMADDALENA, CIHEAM-IAM.B
Rapporteur: Ms Alessandra SCARDIGNO, CIHEAM-IAM.B

Five contributions were presented during the session:

- An initiative towards water saving and sustainable demand irrigation management in the Mediterranean, by A. HAMDY. A synthesis of a Regional Action Program on Water Resource Management carried out by the CIHEAM of Bari.
- Irrigation water demand management and institutional change. The experience of Tunisia, by M.A. BCHIR & M.S. BACHTA. An analysis of the institutional reform of Water Resources Management in Tunisia. The interactions among different stakeholders were analyzed. The achieved results and their limitations were presented.
- Joint management of the facilities in an irrigation district in North Tunisia, by M. MATHLOUTHI & F. LEBDI. The implementation of the participatory management approach in the Ras Jebel district in Tunisia was analyzed. Economic objectives (income and production), environmental objectives (groundwater status) and social objectives (reduction of conflicts) were considered in the analysis.
- Advanced modelling tools for integrated assessment of water and agricultural policies, by M. BLANCO. The combined effect of the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) and the Water Framework Directive was analyzed in two water basins in Spain, in terms of reduction of water demand and farmers income.
- Ador: a software for water management in irrigation districts, by E. PLAYAN & al. The software ADOR is presented as a tool to support the management of irrigation in the Ebro Valley district and to account for all water used for irrigation in a certified, traceable system.

Key messages of the presentations and discussion can be summarized in three main points:

- **Integration of the objectives of WDM into the agricultural policies.** It is important to integrate environmental issues in the sectoral policies, in general, and in the agricultural policy, in particular. This process requires new tools for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of such integration in order to overcome the existing difficulties: limited availability of the data, the complexity of the policy tools, the problem of the scale.

- **Institutional aspects and capacity building.** A stronger regional partnership is needed to support dissemination initiatives and sharing knowledge on Water Demand Management. It is important to continuously monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Institutional Reforms adopted in many Mediterranean countries.
  The new information technologies can contribute to improve WDM at basin level. Their effectiveness can be higher if participative and endogenous processes are implemented to build innovative tools of water management.

- **Improving water management at Water Users Association level.** WUA have to be further supported and solutions well adapted to the local context have to be implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1) Increase water demand management actions in Mediterranean Agriculture by taking into account: technical aspects (new technologies and innovation) and governance aspects (decentralization, users participation, education, training);

2) Integration of a more sustainable WDM into national policies (by clearly identifying priorities and responsibilities) and regional sectoral policy (agricultural, educational, energy) considering the local conditions (i.e.: food security for non EU countries);

3) Going on the way of "decoupling" agriculture support from production as an effective tool to achieve positive environmental effects;

4) Need for dissemination and sharing of experiences (both among different countries and within the same country) of WDM policies actions in all Mediterranean countries. Ensure an interface between science and policy;

5) Monitoring the achievements of the different policies in terms of WDM by identifying appropriate and shared/recognized indicators.