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**Call: HORIZON-CL6-2022-GOVERNANCE-01**  
**Project 101086512**



# INN WATER

Promoting social innovation to renew  
multi-level and cross sector water governance

## D1.10: Synergies with the CL6-2022-01-06 clustered projects

Natacha Amorsi (OiEau)

Delivery date: 31/08/2024

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

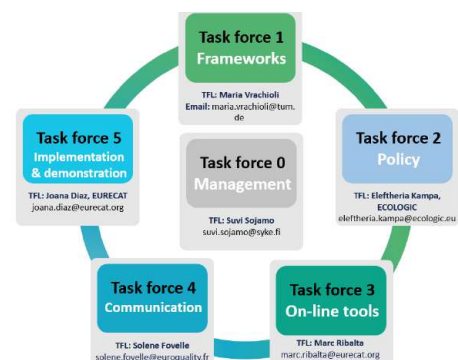
The document, "D1.10 Synergies with the CL6-2022-01-06 Clustered Projects," outlines the collaborative efforts and synergies between three projects—InnWater, GOVAQUA, and RETOUCH NEXUS—funded under the EU HORIZON EUROPE call CL6-2022-GOVERNANCE-01-06. These projects are focused on enhancing water governance, ensuring economic and financial sustainability of water systems, and promoting social innovation across various European contexts. The projects identified significant commonalities in their goals, leading to the formation of the WaterGovernance2027 synergy group (or cluster), designed to maximize the impact of their efforts through collaboration.

### The WaterGovernance2027 synergy group focuses on the following objectives:

- Developing and testing new approaches for sustainable and equitable water governance.
- Supporting policymakers, water managers, and stakeholders in managing cross-sectoral water use conflicts, particularly in the context of climate change.
- Providing online tools to raise awareness and promote state-of-the-art water governance practices.
- Achieving wide uptake of the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) nexus across key sectors and stakeholders.
- Identifying transition pathways and best practices for sustainable water use in Europe.

### Organizational Structure and Activities

The cluster's organizational structure includes five thematic task forces: Frameworks, Policy, Online Tools, Communication, and Implementation and Demonstration. These task forces are designed to streamline collaboration across projects and facilitate knowledge sharing. The cluster's governance is based on rotating leadership, with each project taking the lead in different years.



### Achievements and Future Plans

Since its inception, WaterGovernance2027 has organized several joint events, including the launch event in June 2023 and subsequent workshops aimed at sharing experiences and gathering feedback from water governance stakeholders. The cluster has also published its first joint policy brief, emphasizing innovative approaches to water governance.

Moving forward, the cluster will continue to ramp up its activities, with a particular focus on online tools development and stakeholder engagement. Leadership will transition to the RETOUCH NEXUS project in 2025, continuing the collaborative momentum established by InnWater and GOVAQUA.

This document underscores the importance of creating synergies among EU-funded projects to enhance their collective impact, providing recommendations for establishing and managing such clusters effectively. The next phase of the WaterGovernance2027 cluster will build on these foundations, with an emphasis on practical implementation and broader dissemination of outcomes.

## Document information

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<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	OiEau
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<b>Quality check</b>	Julie Magnier (OiEau)
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<b>Dissemination Level</b>	<b>Public</b>

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2	09/08/2024	Natacha Amorsi	
3	19/08/2024	Julie Magnier (OiEau)	Quality check
FV	31/08/2024	Natacha Amorsi (OiEau)	

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## ACRONYMS

<b>WG2027</b>	WaterGovernance 2027
<b>EC</b>	European Commission
<b>GA</b>	General Assembly
<b>PS</b>	Pilot sites
<b>WP</b>	Work Package

## 1 INTRODUCTION

InnWater is a three years European project that has started in March 2023. It brings together 13 partners with different expertise and stakeholders from 6 countries, to promote social innovation to renew multi-level and cross sector water governance.

The EU HORIZON EUROPE call CL6-2022-GOVERNANCE-01-06 was entitled: « Water governance, economic and financial sustainability of water systems ». Three projects were funded out of this: InnWater, GOVAQUA and RETOUCH NEXUS. Given the theme of the call, it was expected that the three projects have a lot in common in their scope, goals and innovation content.

InnWater partners anticipated the need during the preparation phase to have a dedicated task for the clustering activities (task 1.4 related to WP1 *Project management*). At that time, the idea was to ensure synergies and plan joint activities to maximise the impact of the three projects.

The aim of D1.10 is to explain how InnWater, GOVAQUA and RETOUCH NEXUS have created the WaterGouvernance2027 synergy group and detail the concrete actions that have been taken place since 2023.

Section 2 presents the three projects. Section 3 focuses on the organisation of WaterGovernance2027. Section 4 highlights the key joint activities that have taken place since 2023. Finally, the conclusion proposes recommendations for the creation of such cluster and opens on WaterGovernance2027 forthcoming activities.



## 2 PRESENTATION OF INN WATER, GOVAQUA AND RETOUCH NEXUS

The following descriptions of the projects are based on the presentation made by the coordinators: Suvi Sojamo for GOVAQUA, Maria Vracholi for RETOUCH NEXUS and Natacha Amorsi for InnWater (see section 2.4 for the contacts' details) during the on-line workshop launching WG2027 on the 19 June 2023 (see section 4.2 for details' event).


### 2.1 In a nutshell



- 1 January 2023- 31 December 2026
- 13 Partners
- 3 million €
- 6 pilot case studies
- WEF Nexus

**Main objective:**  
Building on the WEF Nexus, RETOUCH NEXUS aims to promote robust, integrated, sustainable, inclusive and upscalable water governance practices.

Figure 1: RETOUCH NEXUS Key Information



- 1 February 2023- 31 January 2027
- 12 Partners
- 3 million €
- Multi-method case-study analysis
- 6 Living Labs

**Main objective:** GOVAQUA identifies, further develops and validates innovative governance approaches to accelerate the transition toward sustainable and equitable water use in Europe

Figure 2: GOVAQUA Key Information



- 1 March 2023- 28 February 2026
- 13 Partners
- 2,8 million €
- 5 Pilot Sites
- 7 replication assessment sites

**Main objective:** Promoting social INNOVation to renew multi-level and cross sector WATER governance

Figure 3: InnWater Key information



## 2.2 Projects' demonstration

In total, the three projects cumulate 17 demonstration areas, with specific bio-climate characteristics and water governance related focusses.

### 2.2.1 InnWater Pilot sites

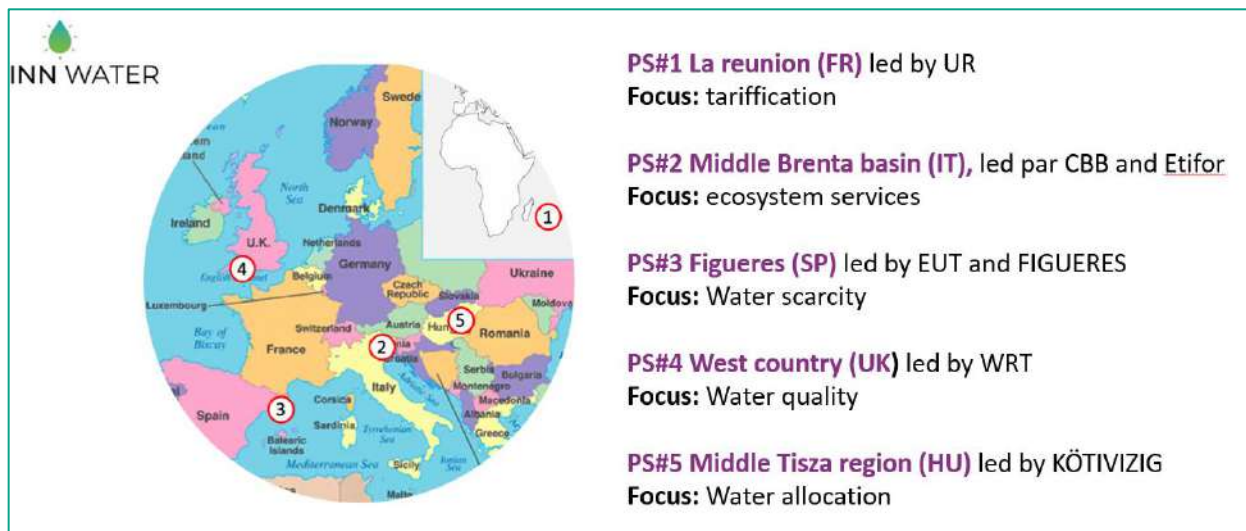


Figure 4: InnWater Pilot Sites

### 2.2.2 GOVAQUA Living Labs



Figure 5: GOVAQUA Living Labs

## 2.2.4 RETOUCH NEXUS Case studies

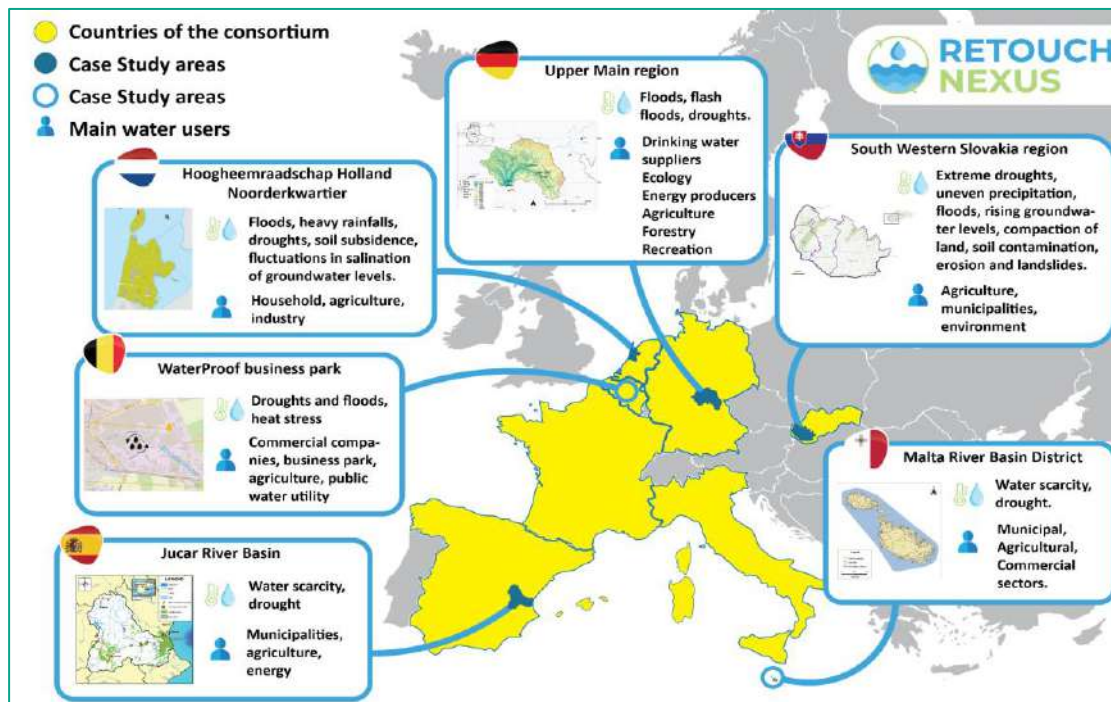


Figure 6: RETOUCH NEXUS Case Studies

## 2.3 Projects' outcomes

### 2.3.1 InnWater outcomes



Figure 7: InnWater Outcomes

### 2.3.2 GOVAQUA outcomes

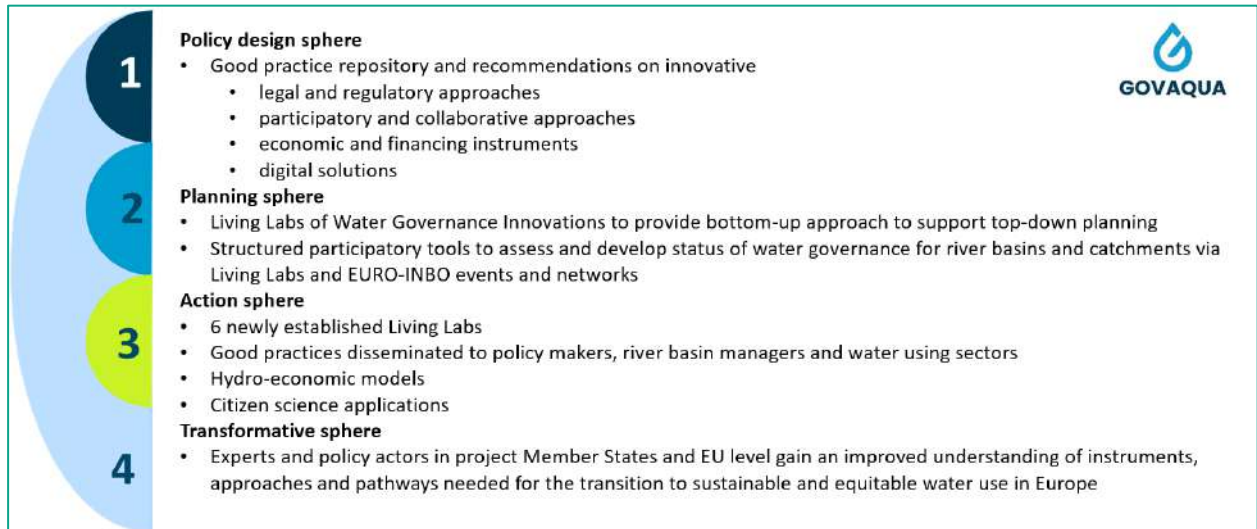


Figure 8: GOVAQUA Outcomes

### 2.3.3 RETOUCH NEXUS outcomes

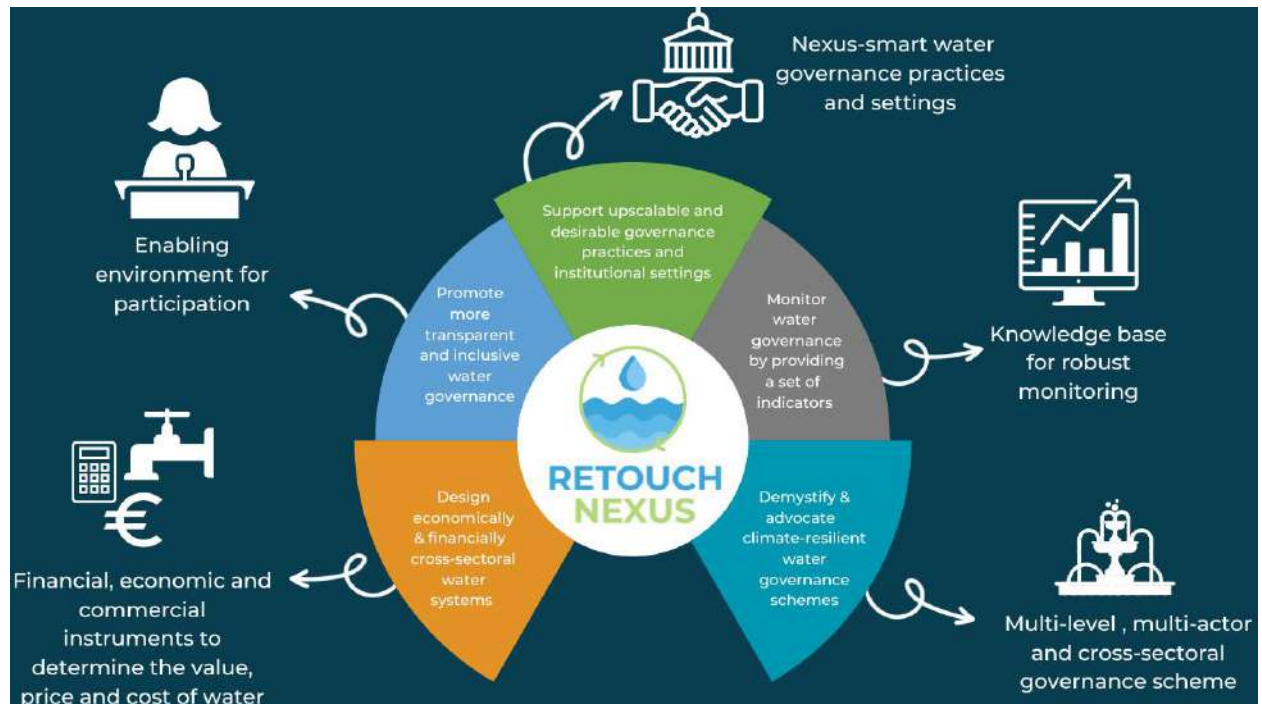


Figure 9: RETOUCH NEXUS Outcomes

## 2.4 Projects' key contacts



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### 3 WATERGOVERNANCE2027 ORGANISATION

The creation of WG2027 has started before the official start of the 3 projects. The three coordinators met to explore each other projects, to highlight the synergies and complementarities in terms of development, research and communication. The common objective was to join efforts and share the experiences on the innovative water governance schemes across a variety of European settings. Those exchanges on the projects led to the structure and organisation of WG2027.

#### 3.1 Key objectives

The following list of key objectives was tailored from the three projects visions, actions and overall aim:

- Develop and test new approaches and instruments for designing, assessing, monitoring and implementing sustainable and equitable water governance systems
- Support policy makers, water managers and key stakeholders in managing cross-sectoral water use conflict while considering the impacts of climate change
- Provide online tools to raise awareness and endorse on state-of-the-art water governance practices across sectors.
- Achieve wide uptake towards WEFE nexus across key sectors, stakeholders and citizens
- Identify transition pathways and good practices towards sustainable and equitable water use in Europe

#### 3.2 Task forces

Based on the WG2027 objectives and Work Packages' structure from each project, five thematic task forces have been set in addition to the management one.

**Task force 1 Frameworks** deals with the water governance assessment method used by the three projects.

**Task force 2 Policy** focuses on sharing the analysis made by each project on the EU directives, and international, European strategies setting the frame for water governance.

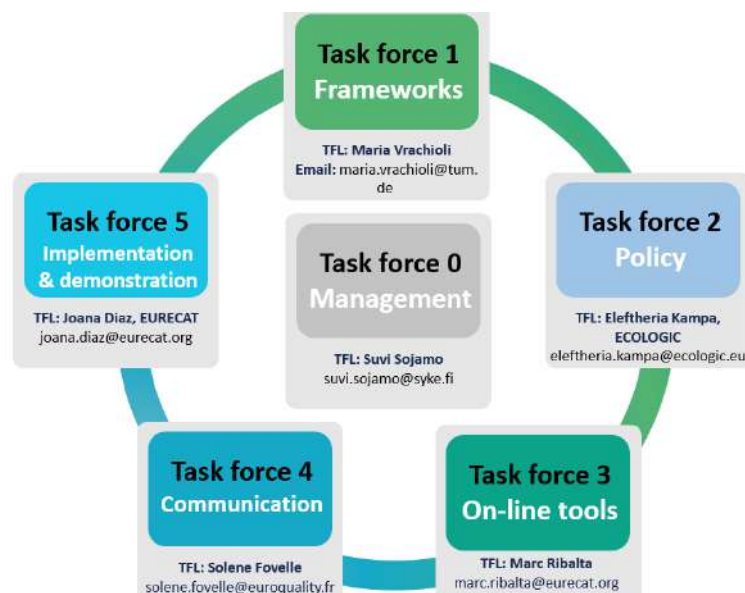


Figure 10: WaterGovernance2027 Task forces

**Task force 3 On-line tools** provides the opportunity to share on the development of the tools developed by each project to bring knowledge and self-water governance assessment components to stakeholders and citizens.

**Task force 4 Communication** supports the organization of joint events and publication. It also adds a global channel to reach out a wider audience for the three projects.

**Task force 5 Implementation and demonstration** focuses on the pilot sites, living labs and cases studies of the three projects. It provides a space to exchanges on stakeholders' experiment and involvement to engage on the water governance assessment.

### 3.3 Governance

The governance principles of WG2027 are:

- **A rotating lead:** the decision was taken that the lead of the task force Management would change every year. During the first year, the responsibility fell on OiEau (coordinator of InnWater). GOVAQUA is leading the WG2027 during the second year (2024). Then RETOUCH NEXUS will lead WG2027 in 2025 and 2026 being the only project lasting four years.
- **A shared on-line platform:** at the start of the first year, OiEau set a dedicated Teams work space accessible by all the partners from the 3 projects involved in the task forces.

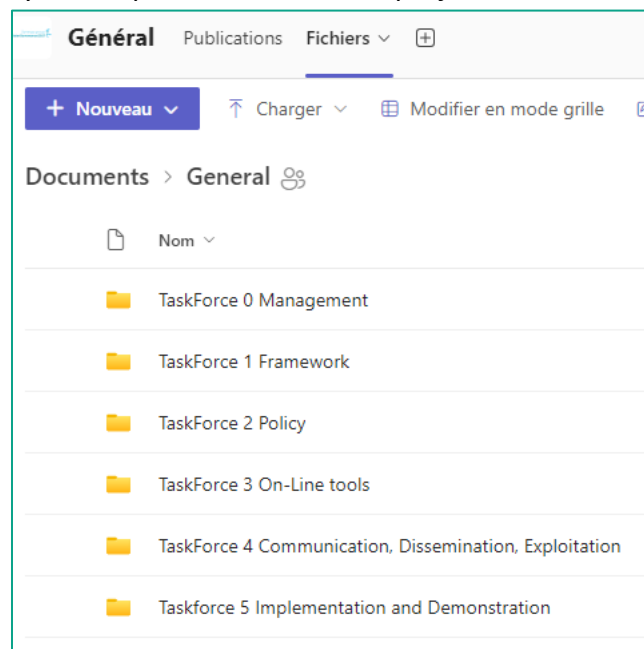


Figure 11: WaterGovernance2027 Shared Working Platform

- **The meetings of the Task force Management** are monthly based. The three coordinators meet to exchange on the progress of their project, to share lessons learnt and supervise the activities of the technical task forces.
- **The meetings of the technical Task forces:** technical forces meet according to their needs. On average, they have meet three time during the first year of WG2027. The meetings are organized by the leader of the task. Sometimes the leader of WG2027 calls for a specific meeting.

## 4 WATERGOVERNANCE2027 IN ACTION

Over the eighteen first months of WG2027, many activities have taken place at within each project, with the organisation of specific WG2027 events and the first joint policy brief.

### 4.1 Interactions among InnWater, GOVAQUA and RETOUCH NEXUS

To bring the cluster closer to all the partners of the three projects, each project's general assembly have a dedicated session including the two other projects;

During the first year, as all the projects were started, the presentations focussed on their specificities (objectives, demonstrations' areas and expected outcomes) as well as the ambition of WG2027 itself.

During the second year; as the results of the three projects started to become more tangible, the WG2027's sessions at the project's general assembly was more thematic. For example, during InnWater Second general assembly in June 2024, the focus was on water governance assessment. The partners in charge of this activity in the three projects exchanged on their method from the desk analysis (link with the OECD water governance framework) to the involvement of stakeholders and tools development.

### 4.2 Joint events

Three events were organised from 2023 to mid-2024:

(i) **The launch of WG2027 took place on the 19 June 2023** (see annexe 1 for the agenda). 50 participants joined the event which aimed at:

- Communicating about the start of WaterGovernance2027 synergy group, a cluster of three projects focusing on identifying, further developing and validating innovative water governance approaches to reach the EU Green Deal, EU WFD and UN SDG1,
- Linking to the broader picture: UN Water Conference commitments, EU WFD evaluation, and Water4All,
- Explaining the foreseen organization of WaterGovernance2027,
- Presenting the expected end results of the projects, linkages to sectors and ways to engage.

The targeted audiences of this event were the European commission officers, key sector representatives and Water Europe network members

(ii) **WG2027 organised a joint event at the Europe- International Organisation of Basin Organisation** general assembly on Innovative Water Governance. The event took place on the 18th October 2023 in Valencia, Spain (see annexe 2 for the agenda). The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Gather feedbacks from river basin managers on their water governance practices,
- Identify needs in terms of water governance monitoring and assessment,
- Share experience on water governance practices
- Benefit from existing EU projects and initiatives on, water governance assessment practices.

The targeted audience of this event was mainly river basin's organizations



(iii) In June 2024, WG2027 organised an on-line event labelled Green Week Partners event<sup>1</sup> on cutting-edge water governance for water resilience (13 June 2024). The agenda of the event is presented in the annexe 3. The purpose was to present the first WaterGovernance2027 policy brief and key messages (see next session).

### 4.3 Joint Policy brief

The joint policy brief development was led by GOVAQUA (coordinated by SYKE). Figure 11 highlight the key messages of the policy brief. The full version is available on internet<sup>2</sup>.

**Water resilience is built with better water governance**

Europe is increasingly experiencing severe droughts and floods due to climate change, and despite decades of efforts to curb pollution, the health of water ecosystems continues to decline. Addressing water resilience should be a priority for the new European Parliament, the new Commission, and the Member States. Water resilience consist of the capacity of our socio-ecological systems, especially aquatic ecosystems and the communities that rely on high-quality and sufficient water supplies, to manage change—either by resisting, adapting, or transforming in response to it.

Strengthening of Europe’s water resilience requires improved water governance. The institutional frameworks of today and the interaction between different sectors and actors have to be enhanced as the use, development and protection of waters demand our careful consideration. Recent research has identified governance practices and innovative instruments, approaches and arrangements that can support water resilience, with EU-wide scaling up potential.

**Key messages**

- Water resilience is critical for the core aims of the EU. Water should be a strategic priority in the work of the new European Parliament, the Commission, and the Member States.
- Water resilience requires a cross-sectoral regulatory approach. More attention should be paid to water use and impacts in the agriculture, industry and energy production sectors and their water-intensive value chains to reach the Water Framework Directive’s water status objectives and to advance systemic adaptation to climate change. Regulation should be able to impose requirements not only on new but also on existing activities impacting waters.
- Water resilience is founded on collaboration between the public sector, private sector, civil society and research and education. Participatory and collaborative approaches support vertical integration across multiple levels of governance and horizontal coherence and coordination across policy sectors. Power and capacity of actors, diversity of knowledge systems and coordination across jurisdictional and geographical boundaries are critical factors in their effectiveness. Social innovation and digital solutions facilitate data exchange, streamline decision-making, and promote inclusive participation from all stakeholders.
- Water resilience is best financed with a diversity of funding sources, consolidating water charges and tariffs that incentivise efficient water use, and leveraging private finance through public-private partnerships or blended finance solutions.
- Increasing Europe’s water resilience requires reflective approaches, such as greater use of monitoring and evaluation of policies and their implementation. Incorporating the trade-offs and synergies among water, food, energy and ecosystems in monitoring and evaluation enable better understanding of the impacts of management decisions. Commonly agreed indicators, supporting data, and the use of open and accessible digital platforms can improve the flow of information to a wide range of decision-making actors including the wider public. It can also help holding decision makers accountable, and raise awareness, acceptance, and uptake of more sustainable water use and management practices.

Co-funded by the European Union | UK Research and Innovation | Synergy group WaterGovernance2027

Figure 12: WaterGovernance2027 First Policy Brief

<sup>1</sup> All the details of the webinar are available at : [https://www.syke.fi/en-US/Research\\_development/Research\\_and\\_development\\_projects/Projects/Governance\\_innovations\\_for\\_a\\_transition\\_to\\_sustainable\\_and\\_equitable\\_water\\_use\\_in\\_Europe\\_GOVAQUA/News\\_and\\_Events/Water\\_resilience\\_is\\_built\\_with\\_better\\_wa\(66839\)](https://www.syke.fi/en-US/Research_development/Research_and_development_projects/Projects/Governance_innovations_for_a_transition_to_sustainable_and_equitable_water_use_in_Europe_GOVAQUA/News_and_Events/Water_resilience_is_built_with_better_wa(66839))

<sup>2</sup> WaterGovernance2027 policy brief:  
file:///C:/Users/n.amorsi/Downloads/WaterGovernance2027SynergyGroup\_PolicyBrief\_2024-2.pdf

## 5 CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Recommendations to create and facilitate an EU projects' cluster

Creating a cluster or synergy group is increasingly common for projects funded by European programs. OiEau's experience has highlighted key steps to create a cluster and demonstrate its value:

- **The engagement with the other project's coordinators** should happen right at the beginning of the project (even just before). Beyond the technicalities of a cluster, sharing coordination experiences can offer valuable support for each project.
- **The initial actions among coordinators should:**
  - (i) *Identify similarities and complementarities* between projects to set specific cluster objectives, in addition to general ones like creating synergies and expanding the audience,
  - (ii) *Formulate a shared vision and objectives into task forces*,
  - (iii) *Encourage identified partners to participate* and lead in these task forces. For instance, WaterGovernance2027 chose to outline the main context and let partners organize their activities.
- **Establish an effective governance structure**
  - (i) *Decide on the management approach for the cluster*, such as rotating leadership annually, and determine meeting frequency for both management and technical task forces
  - (ii) *Support partner interaction* by providing an online platform (like Teams) for document access and collaborative writing.
- **Foster a sense of community within the cluster:**  
A cluster should not be perceived as an additional workload but as an opportunity to develop synergies that will support all partners' tasks. Communication material can help partners to relate to the cluster. It is recommended to:
  - (i) Involved partners in naming the cluster,
  - (ii) Create a brand identity, a concept notes (explaining the cluster) and power point template for presentation,
  - (iii) Keep partners regularly informed about the cluster's activities and progress during project meetings.


### 5.2 Next steps

InnWater, GOVAQUA and RETOUCH NEXUS are ramping up their interactions as the results of their projects become more tangible. A specific focus will be put on the task force 4 on-line tools as the test with stakeholders are about to start.

Following InnWater lead in 2023 and SYKE in 2024, RETOUCH NEXUS will take the helm of WG2027 in 2025.

## ANNEXES

### Annexe 1: Agenda of WaterGovernance2027 launch event



**Synergy group**  
**WaterGovernance2027**

On-line Launch  
19 June 2023 – 9.00 to 11.00 CET  
Agenda v4

**Connection link:**  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89896325727?pwd=SDIsTHINTkRkTUtWMkNTbnExNUINDz09>

**Aim**

- Communicating about the start of WaterGovernance2027 synergy group, a cluster of three projects focusing on identifying, further developing and validating innovative water governance approaches to reach the EU Green Deal, EU WFD and UN SDG<sup>1</sup>
- Linking to the broader picture: UN Water Conference commitments, EU WFD evaluation and Water4All
- Explaining the foreseen organization of WaterGovernance2027
- Presenting the expected end results of the projects, linkages to sectors and ways to engage


**Target audience**

- European Commission officers
- Key sector representatives
- Water Europe network members

**Proposed agenda**

09.00	<b>Opening remarks</b>	Natacha AMORSI, OIEau
09.05	<b>Introduction to the call and the cluster</b> Questions/Answers	Astrid GUIFFART, EU
09.20	<b>Setting the scene for EU water governance in the coming years/decades</b> - Global level: UN Water Conference commitments and SDGs - EU level: Green Deal, EU WFD evaluation, other topical processes, Water4All Questions/Answers	Bertrand VALLET, EU
09.35	<b>OECD water governance indicators: an overview</b> Questions/Answers	Juliette LASSMAN, OECD
09.55	<b>Projects' presentation: RETOUCH NEXUS; GOVAQUA, InnWater</b> - Synergies to embrace water governance challenges - WaterGovernance2027: foreseen organisation	Maria VRACHIOLI, TUM Suvi SOJAMO, SYKE Natacha AMORSI, OIEau
10.15	<b>Discussion</b> - Expectations on the end results of the project - Sharing good practice examples of water governance	Suvi SOJAMO, SYKE Maria VRACHIOLI, TUM
10.55	<b>Closing remarks</b>	Natacha AMORSI, OIEau
11.00	<b>End of the meeting</b>	

<sup>1</sup> The three projects are funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Programmes HORIZON (topic HORIZON-CL6-2022-GOVERNANCE-01-06 - Water governance, economic and financial sustainability of water systems)



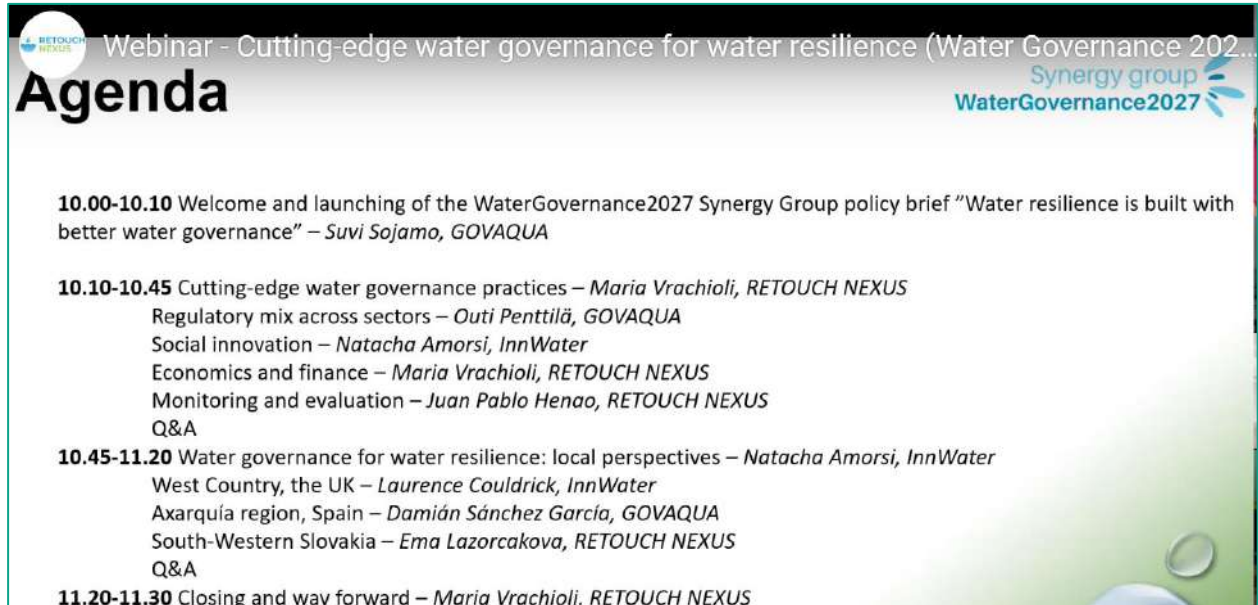
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the European Union

## Annexe 2: Agenda of the Europe-INBO event on Innovative Water Governance

18th October 2023 – 9.00 – 12.30	
9.00	<b>WELCOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS</b>
9h15	<b>WELCOMING WORDS</b> <i>Mrs. Stéphanie Laronde, Director of International Cooperation, OiEau</i>
9.20	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
	<b>European view on the synergy group WaterGovernance 2027 composed of GOVAQUA, InnWater, RETOUCH NEXUS European projects</b> <i>Mrs. Astrid Guiffart, Project Officer, European Commission - TBC</i>
	<b>European context on water governance, EU Directives/guidelines and current stakes</b> <i>Mr. Bertrand Vallet, Policy Officer, European Commission- TBC</i>
	<b>How GOVAQUA, InnWater, RETOUCH NEXUS European projects do respond to Europe's water governance?</b> <i>Mrs. Suvi Sojamo, GOVAQUA coordinator, SYKE</i> <i>Mrs. Natacha Amorsi, InnWater coordinator</i> <i>Mrs. Maria Vrachioli, Retouch Nexus coordinator</i>
10.10	<b>CASE STUDIES OVERVIEW</b>
	<b>Share of experience: presentation of the set of case studies from each project</b> <i>Mr. Damian Sanchez Garcia, CETAQUA, for GOVAQUA</i> <i>Mr. Laurence Couldrick (West country), Mrs. Natacha Amorsi and Mrs. Julie Magnier (OiEau) for InnWater</i> <i>Mr. Manuel Pulido, Adrià Rubio and Eulalia Gomez (UPV) for RETOUCH NEXUS</i>
	<b>WORKING SESSION – ROUND TABLES</b>
	1. Which water governance challenges are you facing?
10.40	2. What have you put into place as solutions and approaches to face these challenges?
-	3. Identification of the remaining gaps and needs based on your own experiences <i>Facilitated by Mrs. Suvi Sojamo, SYKE, Mrs. Julie Magnier, Mr. Yannick Pochon and Mr. François-Xavier Imbert, OiEau</i>
12.10	<b>CLOSURE</b>
	<b>Key messages from the Workshop</b> <i>Rapporteurs from the working session</i>
12.30	<b>Next steps of the WG2027 cluster activities</b> <i>Mrs. Suvi Sojamo, GOVAQUA coordinator, SYKE</i>



## Annexe 3: Agenda of the WaterGovernance2027 webinar on cutting-edge water governance for water resilience



The slide features a header with the RETOUCH NEXUS logo on the left and the Synergy group WaterGovernance2027 logo on the right. The main title 'Agenda' is prominently displayed in the top left. The agenda items are listed in a structured format with time slots and speaker names.

Webinar - Cutting-edge water governance for water resilience (Water Governance 2027)

### Agenda

**10.00-10.10** Welcome and launching of the WaterGovernance2027 Synergy Group policy brief "Water resilience is built with better water governance" – *Suvi Sojamo, GOVAQUA*

**10.10-10.45** Cutting-edge water governance practices – *Maria Vrachioli, RETOUCH NEXUS*

- Regulatory mix across sectors – *Outi Penttilä, GOVAQUA*
- Social innovation – *Natacha Amorsi, InnWater*
- Economics and finance – *Maria Vrachioli, RETOUCH NEXUS*
- Monitoring and evaluation – *Juan Pablo Henao, RETOUCH NEXUS*
- Q&A

**10.45-11.20** Water governance for water resilience: local perspectives – *Natacha Amorsi, InnWater*

- West Country, the UK – *Laurence Couldrick, InnWater*
- Axarquía region, Spain – *Damián Sánchez García, GOVAQUA*
- South-Western Slovakia – *Ema Lazorcakova, RETOUCH NEXUS*
- Q&A

**11.20-11.30** Closing and way forward – *Maria Vrachioli, RETOUCH NEXUS*





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