



# Governing integration: insights from integrating European water policies

**Kerry Waylen, Sophie Tindale,  
Alba Juárez Bourke & Kirsty Blackstock**



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**Kerry.Waylen@Hutton.ac.uk**  
**@KerryWaylen** 



The James  
**Hutton**  
Institute

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# Integration

- “Integration” often mentioned e.g. IWRM
- Common expectations
  - More **effective** – avoid unintended consequences
  - More **efficient** – multiple benefits for same cost
  - More **democratic** – promotes wider participation
- Rather optimistic & generally imprecise about **how** to integrate and **what** will result



# Integration – water policies



- Policy integration - or coherence - similarly lauded
- EU policy priorities incl. integrated implementation of WFD & FD  
e.g. Art 9 of FD, CIS 2019-21

Share reporting, CAs & management units, coordinate assessment, mapping, planning, measure selection & monitoring.  
→ Efficiency via win-win measures, especially NWRM



# Integration – water policies



- Likely to be challenges
  - Literature on EPI and MLG
  - WFD & FD differ in scope & goals
- Scot Gov interest in learning about others' progress



So, if & how does policy integration play out?



# Our methods

- 2016-7: Content analysis of RBMPs & FRMPs
  - 9 cases - sets of plans from Czech Republic; Flanders; Rhine; Spain; Sweden; UK x4
  - Search for cross-references & linked topics



- 2017: Survey of CIS WG F
  - Simple questions – 19 returns



- 2018: 24 interviews, FD & WFD implementers
  - Central & regional, FD & WFD
  - Progress, Challenges, Examples
  - 4 cases: Flanders; Sweden; UK x 4



## Findings – Progress

- Little evidence in plans - vague, formulaic and/or brief statements
- “On the road”
  - Efforts being made – e.g. 18 of 19 survey replies
  - ‘Work in progress’ – some ahead of others, some taking different approaches



# Findings - Challenges

- Difficulties in **data-sharing**
- **Uncertainties** of NWRM
- Adds further **complexity**
- Lack **resources** connected to visions
- Interpersonal **coordination & collaboration**
- Clash of work **cultures** & disciplines
- Lack of ‘integration **metrics**’
- Public and political **expectations** (esp. floods)



# Findings – How to integrate

- Written sources- Consultations, SEA, cross-checks
- Interviews- Stronger emphasis on interpersonal collaboration, coordination and team-working
- Interconnected themes
  - provide **national-level structure**, guidance;
  - improve **coordination across teams and levels**;
  - share **data and expertise**;
  - enable **local** or catchment-level action and pilots.





# Implications & Reflections

- Early stages but useful insights
- Gives some ideas about how to improve, e.g.
  - Don't settle for easy wins
  - Connect visions with resources
  - Value plans as boundary objects
  - Document and reflect on procedure & 'cultural' challenges



# Implications & Reflections

- Relation with other types of integration?
  - Integration with other policies
  - Sectoral integration, societal integration
  - ICM/IWRM
- Focus on local/catchment level appropriate?
  - Or, abnegates responsibility?



# Implications & Reflections

- Emphasis on interpersonal coordination, communication and partnership working
  - Will this be sufficient? Is that all there is?
- Worries about complexity, costs, etc – do these experiences contradict expected benefits?
  - If so, why?... and why integrate?



**Holistic joined-up thinking and action is the goal –  
policy integration is only a means to that end**

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For more information:

[Kerry.Waylen@hutton.ac.uk](mailto:Kerry.Waylen@hutton.ac.uk)



[@KerryWaylen](https://twitter.com/KerryWaylen)

<http://www.hutton.ac.uk/research/projects/exploring-international-experiences-integration>

