



# SUWANU EUROPE

## Deliverable 2.5

### Portuguese Regional Working Group Report

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## Executive summary

In recent years, water scarcity has become a serious problem in Southern Europe and in some other EU Countries. In several EU Regions and territories are suffering from water shortage; even in some of them there is still a regime of drinking water use in the respective mayor cities.

In the light of these circumstances, finding alternatives is crucial for agriculture, agrifood industrial sites, daily life and the economy as a whole. In our SUWANU EUROPE view, the creation of a Regional Working Group is crucial to overcome the problems and to generate a Regional Action Plan to promote the use of reclaimed water in agriculture and in other uses.

The results and the experiences gained by the Regions here involved from the 8 Countries - France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Greece, Bulgaria, Flanders. Belgium – have been proven to be useful to spread in other sites of their countries.

But still there are also local peculiarities in the functioning of the administration, economy and interconnections with stakeholders, in particular farmers, authorities, NGOs and citizens, in different regions/countries.

The specifics of the organization of the relationships, the flow of information in the field of water reuse, as well as the main players, were clarified in WP 2 . Tasks 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and AKIS analysis.

In this regard, the establishment of a RWG for the different regions as in our task 2.5. was consistent with the involvement of a wide range of actors who play a key role in the design and coordination of the regional action plan.

Stakeholders from the administration, local authorities, universities and research institutes, farmers, NGOs and others were involved. Each group of these actors has an important contribution to play in drawing up the regional action plan, in task 2.6.

On the other hand, all of the selected representatives in the RWG are settled and located in the territories, which will ensure a very good coordination, too. The engaging of relevant stakeholders started since the beginning of the project.

This aim resulted in 18 meetings in various regional organizations and relevant institutions with the idea of involving competent organizations to participate in SuWaNu Europe project and goals, explaining the approach and objectives of the EU project and the role of each internal partnership and external organization into.

The 2.5. Report elaborated by Confagricoltura tries to identify the main activities and conclusions that RWGs offered to our partnership and our European stakeholders, with the strategy to contribute for the common interest of water reclamation and sustainable water use.

## 1 Introduction

The Regional Working Groups (RWGs) are the result of an intense contact with actors of the water and agriculture sectors in order to engage them in the SUWANU EUROPE project activities. These contacts started from the very beginning of the project in each region/country.

In the first stage the engagement consisted in sharing the information of the project objectives and foreseen activities. The organization of the participatory workshops in different regions pushed the consortium for a more intense contact. Several activities were organized to engage the stakeholders, such as sending the invitation letters, telephone calls, in some countries drafting a newsletter to disseminate the workshops, to extend the audience and to multiply the dissemination of the information.

The purpose of the work was to ensure a participatory process in the development of action plans and to guarantee an effective transfer of knowledge in the next project steps by the active participation of stakeholders.

Therefore, relevant actors have been involved in the process and engaged as RWG members in each region: farmers using or interested in reused water, regional and national authorities, wastewater treatment operators, rural development groups, researchers, agri-food industries, consumers associations, NGOs and private companies, engineers, advisory groups.

In terms of definition, Regional Working Groups are precisely groups of actors *out of the consortium* that have been engaged to participate and to provide feedbacks to the SUWANU EUROPE project and that have been involved in some relevant project activities such as the development of the Regional Action Plans of the task 2.6. The role of the Regional Working Group (RWG) in different regions is fundamental *to build the participatory actions and the Regional Action Plans*.

In different Regions, the Partners have defined a strategy and an implementation plan to involve the main actors, including the following activities:

- Initial contact with stakeholders
- Regional revision of key documents by key stakeholders
- Invitation of stakeholders through news/letter/phone call
- Regional meetings with RWG members
- Materials dissemination, documents, leaflets, summaries, power points
- Draft versions of the regional action plan to get feedback from RWG members
- Final version of the regional action plan for validation
- Presentation in a regional/national event/fair/conference, workshop etc.

In particular every Regional Working Group, following the Agreement and the WP 2 task 2.5, *in the first beginning*, had to:

- Involve actively all the partners of the Consortium
- Ensure a stakeholders engagement through a deep analysis of the key actors and the accession to other relevant organizations to be involved
- Disseminate intensively at local and regional level using appropriate channels to reach the identified stakeholders
- Ensure a multi actor and a participatory approach that make regional actors feel part of the Suwanu Europe project, and the Suwanu Europe project activities.

The RWG *second step* had to:

- Contact the regional, national and european relevant associations such as Copa Cogeca, the farmers and agrocooperatives Umbrella confederation in Bruxelles and in each region/country, EURAU and ANECOOP with their wide regional/national networks:
  - ✓ to better align the Suwanu Europe project with their national and european objectives and cooperation actions and
  - ✓ to better identify national / regional memberships and reference organizations;
- Identify at least five members out of the Consortium
- Organize frequent meetings during the running of the Suwanu Europe project, at least five

The RWG *third last step* will:

- Elaborate together with the Consortium Partners the preparation and implementation of the Regional Action Plans, under task 2.6
- Facilitate the Implementation of water reuse solutions
- Seek new opportunities to perform collaborative/cooperative projects
- Seek also new opportunities to build operational groups in the framework of EIP Agri
- Consolidate the Regional Working Groups after the project ends
- Create therefore a permanent cluster in each region to adopt and disseminate water reuse solutions.

## 2 Strategy for the engagement of the RWG

The aim of this strategy at this stage of the project is to present a strategy for the engagement of the Regional Working Groups (RWGs) which will be applied throughout the second period of the project. Experiences and lessons learned emerging from first period RWGs has been taking into consideration keeping this a dynamic process that can be updated during the project.

This collection of information will be used to engage identified stakeholders in the RWGs and will be used to stimulate discussions within the RWGs. It will serve to promote the joint development of strategic thinking, the two-way exchange of ideas between the different stakeholders and will also feed with practical recommendations for the formulation of the Regional Action Plans (task 2.6).

### 2.1 Functioning of the RWGs

The facilitator from each RWG will enroll the stakeholders in the active participation in the meetings, preparing a set of topics to be discussed and the activities to be implemented following a multi-actor approach and a participatory approach. This can be done with the prior discussion with the members, so that there is a consensus on the topics to discuss during the meeting so to actively engage the stakeholders from the beginning.

It is vital that the objectives and the expected outcomes of the RWGs are perfectly clear to all members that take part in the meetings and that the roles of engagement are also clear. The members of the Regional Working Groups, following the Agreement and the WP 2 task 2.5, must among others to:

- Propose practical recommendations for the formulation of the Regional Action Plans (task 2.6)
- Disseminate intensively at local and regional level the SuWaNu Europe project results and outcomes, through their own communication channels;
- Be engaged in the implementation of reclaimed water use solutions;
- Seek new opportunities to perform cooperative projects and to build operational groups in the framework of EIP Agri.
- Create permanent clusters in each target region of the project, to adopt and disseminate reclaimed water use solutions.

### 2.2 Role and responsibilities of the project partner facilitator

The facilitator will be a project partner of each region and their main responsibilities are collected in the following table:

Table 1: Role of the project partner facilitator

Responsibility	Expected Contributions	Outputs
Setting-up of the RWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite and enroll active members (multi-actor approach)</li> <li>Prepare topics for discussion</li> <li>Plan activities (participatory approach)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invitation letter/email to potential members</li> <li>Prepare program of the meeting</li> </ul>
Running the RWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the objectives and expected outcomes of the RWGs and members expected responsibilities</li> <li>Oversee the meeting runs as planned</li> <li>Ensure that all members actively participate in the discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report with practical recommendations for the formulation of the Regional Action Plans (task 2.6)</li> </ul>
Communication and outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize and contribute to communication and dissemination activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send inputs for the SuWaNu Europe website (brief description of the RWGs, members, calendar of events, scientific articles, news, etc.)</li> <li>Publish at least 1 social media post per RWG meeting (before, during or immediately after)</li> <li>Register RWGs members as followers of the SuWaNu Europe social media accounts and relay social media posts published by the central communication team to increase outreach</li> </ul>

### 2.3 Stakeholders engagement support tools

In order to actively engage stakeholders during the meetings, there are several tools that follow a participatory methodology, and that facilitate effective engagement of target stakeholders. The activities aim at promoting the engagement of stakeholders, collaboration and in a participatory approach.

Such an example is the World Café method, that can be found in the <http://actioncatalogue.eu/method/7402>, which is a method for engaging groups, both within organizations and in the public sphere. This method is founded on the assumption that people have the capacity to work together, no matter who they are.

A World Café follows seven core design principles: (1) Set the Context; (2) Create Hospitable Space; (3) Explore Questions That Matter; (4) Encourage Everyone’s Contribution; (5) Cross-Pollinate and Connect Diverse Perspectives; (6) Listen Together for Patterns, Insights, and Deeper Questions; and (7) Harvest and Share Collective Discoveries.

World Cafés can create results to generate new ideas, to enable joint decision-making on key strategic issues, to discover new ways for collaboration, to reflect on the implications of a complex issue and in identifying specific step(s) for further exploration and implementation.

The recent events related with COVID-19, called for the need to use of online tools in the organization of initially predicted physical events. There are several online platforms that can be use, and that still allow the planning of dynamics as described before.

Tools such Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Cisco Webex meetings are just some examples.

## 2.4 Engagement of stakeholders during RWGs

Besides the different tools that can be used during the RWGs to promote participatory process and engagement of stakeholders, there are several methodologies that creates more interactive and collaborative formats.

- Initiate the meeting with an icebreaker to get things started in a good way. This is particularly important if the participants don't know each other or come from a different background. This can be achieved by asking participants to bring an object or to pick a word that can in some ways define them and, in this way, they can make a brief presentation of themselves.
- Promote participatory discussions, where tools like pinup.com can be a powerful tool promoting debate and discussion.
- Questionnaires using tools like *Mentimeter* or *Sli.do*, which are live interactive applications to get feedback from the participants, that allow to create polls and Q&As, among others experiences with the participants.
- Networking is a powerful tool for having during breaks for participants to get to know each other and to exchange ideas and experiences.

## 2.5 Communication with stakeholders after RWGs

After each RWGs it is important to make a follow up communication with the participants to keep them involved with the project and to get them to participate in the next RWGs.

This can be accomplished simply by:

- Send an email right after the meeting thanking the participants for attending the event;
- Send an email to participants who did not show or attended and share some of the outcomes of the meeting. This might compel them to participate next time;
- Once the major outcomes of the meeting are prepared, send an email with the major conclusions and results and if possible, an indication for the next RWG agenda.

## 2.6 Main themes raised in RWG activities

During RWGs meetings, the critical discussion points and the axes towards which the RWG activities that the RWG Groups should be focused on were the following:

- a) In terms of regional informations/data policies:
  - Incomplete or updated soil map
  - Irrigation water quality data monitoring systems and swap crops for irrigation water
  - Reference to indicators of consumption & quality. Quantities lost/quantities consumed
  - Measurable water saving elements.
  - Regional problems in water supply, water transport issues - open ducts
  - Basin Management Plans, how they were developed and how reliable they are
  - Reference to different water supply and irrigation networks
- b) In terms of harmonized methodologies/EU critical issues:
  - Reflections on difficulties in water volume management and services
  - Integration with main issues and subjects of the Regional Policy
  - Reference to the AKIS method, (and networking) what it is and how it works
  - EU guidelines/directive approved on reuse of treated water, costs and fines for non-compliance.

- The new Agricultural Policy has strict restrictions and measurable terms, with constant and strict scrutiny of residues.
- c) In terms of the farming systems/stakeholders/users:
- Information, behavior and irrigation systems
  - Farming systems/ habits of farmers.
  - Policing and controlling in agriculture.
  - Use of treated water in non-edible crops-concerns- difficulties
  - Industrial food processors water use/reuse
  - Environment-friendly policy.
  - Some proposals to facilitate farming/industrial reuse waters
- d) In terms of local/regional rules:
- Licenses and re-use licenses
  - Secondary treatment, effluent quality, and reuse of treated waste.
- e) In terms of the economy:
- Design and problems in water transportation and unit costs
  - Reliability of the processes of reuse.
  - Water recycling from drainage canals-advantages and disadvantages.
  - Water treatments costs/efficiency/piloting plants
- f) In terms of management/new skills/gaps:
- Competencies, development planning
  - key management issues, best practices to share
  - Reference to remote management and its importance
  - Cross-compliance of operators and consumers with irrigation processes.
  - Consumer/citizenship analysis/acceptance/willingness to buy

### 3 Discussion and participants in the RWG meetings/events

#### 3.1 Portuguese Working Group meetings

FENAREG and CONSULAI prepare the regional working group meeting with the main regional and national entities on the reuse of water. This meeting was crucial for the development of SUWANU EUROPE for several reasons. SUWANU EUROPE appeared at a critical juncture for water management in Portugal, due to the confluence of a number of national and European strategies, all of which focus on the relevance and need to take advantage of urban reclaimed water.

Composition of the RWG and people Invited to attend the RWG meeting: CONSULAI, FENAREG, AdP - Waters of Portugal APA, Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente AP, Alentejo - Alentejo Public Waters, DGADR – Directorate- General for Agriculture and Rural Development, GPP – Gabinete de Planeamento, Políticas eAdministração Geral , UN Water Convention Committee COTR - Irrigation Technology and Operational Center ,EDIA - Alqueva Development and Infrastructure Company, ISA - Higher Institute of Agronomy, LNEC - National Civil Engineering Laboratory, to better Identify barriers that prevent further implementation of reuse, which is also one of SUWANU EUROPE's objectives, and to establish exchange of information on the situation of Portugal.

Also exchange of knowledge; share information on wastewater use measures; exchange of documents to establish action plans, implementation and entry into force of the European regulation; awareness of limitations (or not) that products may have when irrigated with recovered water for export, both within the EU and abroad (quality labels).

The Regional Working Group (RWG) for the Alentejo region (Portugal) is the result of intense contact with actors in the water, agriculture and business sectors to involve them in the SUWANU EUROPE activities.

These contacts were initiated from the beginning of the project and, in a first stage, consisted of informing the objectives of the project and planned activities.

The participatory workshop allowed direct and intense contact with the main entities in the sector. Since then, several activities have been organized such as sending invitation letters, phone calls, e-mails and leaflets that allow information sharing. However, although great efforts were made to organize the meeting during 2019, it wasn't possible due to the busy schedules of our guests. So it was only possible to hold it on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2020.

At this working meeting, the Portuguese cluster (FENAREG and CONSULAI) aimed to ensure the active participation of stakeholders in the development of action plans and to ensure the effective transfer of knowledge in the next stages of the project. In this phase of the project, the Portuguese cluster invited regional and national authorities, wastewater treatment operators, rural development groups, researchers and private companies (for example, engineers and advisory groups).

The Portuguese cluster has defined a strategy with different stages for the participation of these actors, including the following activities: Contact with stakeholders; Presentation of the project and the objective of the RWG; Presentation and characterization of the target region; Presentation of the legal framework in Portugal; Presentation of a Portuguese project about the use of water for reuse in agriculture; Distribution of dissemination material (for example, PPTX, working documents); Aggregation of a group dynamic to identify barriers to the use of treated

wastewater and suggest action lines. A large and varied composition of stakeholders were present at the RWG meeting (Table 2):

*Table 2: Participants at the RWG meeting*

Name	Organization that represents	Position to the organization	Description of the Organisation
Rita Rijo	CONSULAI	Technique	SUWANU EU participant/ Consultant
Rui Almeida		Partner & Executive Director	
Ricardo Zanatti		Technique	
João Pedro Caldeira		Technique	
Carina Almeida	FENAREG	General Secretary	SUWANU EU participant/ Water Management Disposals and Cathches Federation
Diana Cordeiro		Technique	
Sara Antunes	AdP - Waters of Portugal	Coordinator - Engineering Directorate	The core Grupo AdP - Águas de Portugal activity involves the integrated management of the urban water cycle and spanning all of its respective phases, ranging from the catchment, treatment and distribution of water for public consumption to the collection, transport, treatment and disposal of urban and industrial wastewaters and including their recycling and reuse.
Marta Carvalho		Engineering Direction	
Anabela Rebelo	APA – Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente	Water Resources Department	The Portuguese Environment Agency (APA) is a new public institute, within the scope of the Portuguese Ministry of the Environment. APA's mission is to propose, develop and monitor, on an integrated and participated manner, the public policies for the environment and sustainable development, in close cooperation with other sectoral policies and public and private entities. APA is responsible for the Report on the State of the Environment of Portugal.
André Matoso	AP Alentejo - Alentejo Public Waters	Regional Director of the Alentejo Hydrographic Region Administration	AgdA - Águas Públicas do Alentejo, SA carries out the exploration and management of water services related to the Public Integrated Water Partnership of Alentejo, under a public partnership, aiming at the provision of a quality service, with respect for essential social and environmental aspects, as well as the provision of their capacities to serve the national interest.
Rui Sequeira		Technique	
Cláudia Brandão	DGADR – Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development	Head of Hydraulic Infrastructure Division	DGADR represents the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development in matters related to the use of water in agriculture, participating in the elaboration of the national water policy and elaborating, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the National Irrigation Plan.
Luís Boteta	COTR - Irrigation Technology	Technique	To promote agricultural development, in particular through the coordination and promotion of scientific research, experimentation, demonstration and dissemination of

Name	Organization that represents	Position to the organization	Description of the Organisation
Marta Varela	and Operational Center	Technique	results and training and professional qualification; promote and carry out projects necessary for the creation and diffusion of knowledge and for the Technical-Scientific exchange
José Costa Gomes	<b>EDIA</b> - Alqueva Development and Infrastructure Company	Director   Planning and Water Savings Department	Its mission is to design, execute, build and operate the Alqueva Multi-purpose Undertaking (EFMA), thereby contributing to the economic and social development of its area of intervention. EDIA's tasks include infrastructure management, environmental assessment, farmer support, irrigation promotion and monitoring.
Manuela Ruivo		Environmental Engineer	
Elizabeth Duarte	<b>ISA</b> - Higher Institute of Agronomy	Researcher at the Center for Research in Agronomy, Food, Environment and Landscape	The Instituto Superior de Agronomia (ISA), School of Agriculture, is the largest and most qualified school of graduate and post-graduate degrees in the Agricultural Sciences, in Portugal, and its know-how is recognized nationally and internationally.
Maria João Rosa	<b>LNEC</b> - National Civil Engineering Laboratory	Researcher, Head of the Sanitary Center, Department of Hydraulics and Environment	As an independent and impartial R&D institute, LNEC's priority is to make science, as to contribute to the creation, development and dissemination of applied research in areas related to civil engineering,
Alexandra Brito	<b>CAP</b> - Portuguese Farmers Confederation	Technical Department	Championing the interests of Portuguese agriculture at home and abroad and always safeguarding the economic aspect of the activity are the objectives of the Confederation of Farmers of Portugal, in the defense of a dignified quality living for all farmers who wish to continue their way of life
Bernardo Albino	<b>ANPOC</b> – National Association of Protein, Oilseed and Cereal Producers	President and Farmer	It promotes research and dissemination of all technical and economic actions aimed at improving the conditions of production, processing and marketing of cereals, oilseeds and protein crops.
Lopo Carvalho	<b>AQUAGRI</b>	Technical & Sales Consultant	Are specialized in Services and Equipment for Irrigation Water Management, activity in which they integrate internet-based remote monitoring technologies and data analysis software for irrigation management. Aquagri consulting services are supported by a complete set of specific irrigation management equipment, such as soil moisture and salinity probes and automatic weather stations that provide, simultaneously, information on weather conditions and on the risk of crop diseases occurrence.
Marta Delgado	<b>HIDROSOPH</b>	Technical Consultant- Production Department	They have backgrounds in engineering, agriculture, hydraulics, statistics, information technology and solid international experience. They all share the same environmental concerns and believe that together we can contribute to making a difference in the world.  They are using intelligent irrigation principles and technologies available to the greatest number of irrigators.

A core group of 14 organizations has been selected within the participants of the RWG meetings/events and/or from the participatory workshops.

*Table 3: Core group of SUWANU EUROPE Regional Working Group for Alentejo (Portugal)*

Name of main contact person	Organization that represents	Position to the organization	Role of RWG member during SUWANU EUROPE
Cláudia Brandão	<b>DGADR</b>	Head of Hydraulic Infrastructure Division	Bring expertise in governance and regulatory measures.
Anabela Rebelo	<b>APA</b>	Water Resources Department	Bring expertise in governance and regulatory measures.
André Matoso	<b>APA/ARH Alentejo</b> - Alentejo Public Waters	Regional Director of the Alentejo Hydrographic Region Administration	Bring expertise in governance and regulatory measures/Regional context
Elizabeth Duarte	<b>ISA</b>	Researcher at the Center for Research in Agronomy, Food, Environment and Landscape	Bring expertise in appropriate water reuse technologies and monitoring
Maria João Rosa	<b>LNEC</b>	Researcher, Head of the Sanitary Center, Department of Hydraulics and Environment	Bring expertise in appropriate water reuse technologies and monitoring
Marta Carvalho	<b>AdP</b>	Engineering Direction	Bring expertise in governance and administrative measures.
Alexandra Brito	<b>CAP</b>	Technical Department	Bring expertise in irrigation and farmers concerns.
Bernardo Albino	<b>ANPOC</b>	President and Farmer	Bring expertise in irrigation and farmers concerns.
Luís Boteta	<b>COTR</b>	Technique	Bring expertise in irrigation technologies.
José Costa Gomes	<b>EDIA</b>	Director   Planning and Water Savings Department	Bring expertise in governance and administrative procedures.
Marta Delgado	<b>HIDROSOPH</b>	Technical Consultant-Production Department	Bring expertise in irrigation technologies.
Lopo Carvalho	<b>AQUAGRI</b>	Technical & Sales Consultant	Bring expertise in irrigation technologies.
Rita Rijo	<b>CONSULAI</b>	Technique	Bring expertise in irrigation and farmers concerns.
Rui Almeida	<b>CONSULAI</b>	Partner & Executive Director	Bring expertise in irrigation and farmers concerns.
Ricardo Zanatti	<b>CONSULAI</b>	Technique	Bring expertise in irrigation and farmers concerns.
João Pedro Oliveira	<b>CONSULAI</b>	Technique	Bring expertise in irrigation and farmers concerns.
Carina Arranja	<b>FENAREG</b>	General Secretary	Coordinator - Bring expertise in irrigation and farmers concerns.
Diana Cordeiro	<b>FENAREG</b>	Technique	Coordinator - Bring expertise in irrigation and farmers concerns.

## 4 Conclusions for Alentejo (Portugal)

**The Portuguese** experiences told us that the expected an intense engagement of key actors has been pursued during this first stage of Suwanu Europe project:

- The first contacts have been made through the organization of workshops, meetings, surveys, etc. creating a core group that will be actively involved in the project activities.
- The creation of this group will be very relevant for the future of water reuse in Alentejo and in Portugal and it provides a framework for a necessary dialogue considering the coming changes of the current situation.
- The main change foreseen is the new EU regulation on minimum requirements for water reuse in agriculture which has been recently approved at the EU Parliament. This regulation is in force after the approval of the EU Council and the Commission. However, it is absolutely crucial to advance which will be the changes that will arrive in the near future. In this sense, this is an opportunity for SUWANU EUROPE to have a real impact.
- The consortium can act as intermediary between different experts contacted and the stakeholders and become an effective instrument of knowledge exchange which considers the most recent events and solutions.
- Active engagement of actors is therefore crucial.