

Water Projects Europe Circular Water Solutions for a Water-Smart Society

Exploring Water-Oriented Living Labs Innovations
Athens, Technopolis Gazi, 8 June 2023

Introduction.

Water Projects Europe (WPE) is an upcoming event that serves as a side event of the Water Innovation and Circularity Conference (www.wicc.gr), scheduled to take place in Athens in 7-9 June 2023 within the framework of the HYDROUSA project (www.hydrousa.org). The workshop itself is scheduled to take place on 8 June 2023 within the Conference venue. This event aims to explore the transformative concepts of a Water-Smart Society and Water-Oriented Living Labs. By discussing and sharing knowledge, the event aims to foster innovative water management practices aligned with the overarching goals of sustainability and circularity. This event is part of the ambitious **HYDROUSA project**, which is nearing its completion, and is a Horizon2020 EU funded project that provides innovative, regenerative, and circular solutions for three vital aspects: nature-based water management, resource valorisation, and local economies. It aims to create a win-win-win situation for the economy, environment, and community within the interconnected realms of water, energy, food, ecosystems and employment.

The core principle of HYDROUSA is to establish water loops that incorporate various non-conventional water sources. The project showcases demonstrations of water treatment and management systems that recover freshwater, nutrients, and energy from wastewater, rainwater, stormwater, seawater and vapour water. Additionally, HYDROUSA promoted water conservation solutions such as aquifer storage and sustainable agricultural practices like fertigation and precision irrigation.

Water Project Europe (WPE) is a series of events of Water Europe made to learn from and build on the experience of innovating projects working on converging topics. WPE aims at clustering water-related projects by thematic areas to allow them to interact, mutually build on the respective experience, support policy development, and stimulate the market uptake of innovations.

Rationale

A Water-Smart Society envisions a future where water resources are managed intelligently, efficiently, and sustainably. To achieve this vision, Water-Oriented Living Labs play a crucial role as experimental spaces for testing and implementing cutting-edge water solutions. These labs integrate research, technology, and stakeholder engagement to facilitate the development and deployment of innovative approaches to water management. By emphasizing the importance of Water-Oriented Living Labs, WPE aims to promote collaboration, creativity, and knowledge exchange among stakeholders, ultimately driving sustainable water management practices. WPE will host a comprehensive discussion that includes the following projects: HYDROUSA, NEXTGEN, ULTIMATE, ACCELWATER, CARDIMED and AQUASPICE. Additionally, the event will provide an opportunity for the water utilities and



other relevant stakeholders to actively engage in the discussion and contribute their valuable insights and perspectives. This inclusive approach aims to foster a collaborative environment where diverse stakeholders can share their experiences, challenges, and innovative solutions, ultimately driving the advancement of sustainable water management practices. The event will showcase innovative projects that demonstrate practical solutions for achieving a Water-Smart Society.

Objectives of WPE

1. Driving Water Circular Solutions

Taking example from the hosted projects, WPE will emphasize the significance of circular water solutions from the projects, focusing on the transformation of water waste streams into valuable resources. Through the Water-Oriented Living Labs approach, participants will explore holistic and regenerative water management practices that promote sustainability, resource efficiency, and environmental preservation. Integration of grey with green infrastructures using nature-based solution to support circularity will be discussed.

2. Showcasing Living Labs Innovations

WPE will feature pioneering Circular Water and Water-Oriented Living Labs projects that serve as models for sustainable water management. By harnessing the potential of Water-Oriented Living Labs, participants will engage in collaborative efforts, exchange knowledge, and share best practices. These interactions will inspire creativity and foster the development of practical solutions.

3. Collaboration and Partnership

Collaboration is key to driving transformative changes in water management. WPE aims to foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including researchers, engineers, water practitioners, academia, industry, and public authorities. By bringing together these stakeholders, the event will facilitate dialogue, encourage the exchange of ideas, and promote the formation of partnerships. Through these collaborations, participants can accelerate the adoption of water-smart solutions and address complex water management challenges.

4. Policy Support and Funding

To implement and scale up water circularity initiatives, supportive policy frameworks and funding opportunities are essential. WPE will address the need for such frameworks and opportunities. By engaging with key stakeholders, including the European Commission, the event aims to create an enabling environment for innovation and sustainable water management practices. Through collaborative discussions, participants will contribute to shaping policies and identifying funding mechanisms that support the transition to a Water-Smart Society.

5. Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Development

WPE will provide an arena for participants to share experiences, insights, and lessons learned through panel discussions, workshops, and interactive sessions. This knowledge exchange will enhance the capacity of individuals and organizations to implement water-smart practices in



their respective contexts. By fostering a learning community, WPE aims to inspire continuous improvement, innovation, and the dissemination of best practices in sustainable water management.

WPE offers a unique opportunity to compare projects achievements in sustainable water management practices. Through collaboration, showcasing the outcomes and the models of innovative projects, addressing policy and funding aspects, and promoting knowledge exchange, the event aims to drive transformative changes in water management. By embracing the vision of a Water-Smart Society and harnessing the potential of Water-Oriented Living Labs, we can collectively shape a sustainable world for generations to come.

DRAFT AGENDA

10:00 - 10:10	Introduction to WPE (WE and HYDROUSA)
10:10 - 10:15	Opening poll
10:15-10:30	Key note: Water in the Circular Economy Evdokia Achilleos EC REA
SESSION 1	THE PROJECTS' EXPERIENCE: KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT
10:30 - 10:40	HYDROUSA Simos Malamis
10:40 - 10:50	NEXTGEN Klio Monokrousou
10:50 - 11:00	ULTIMATE Christos Makropoulos
11:00 - 11:30	Networking coffee
11:30 - 11:40	ACCELWATER Charalampos Manousiadis
11:40 - 11:50	CARDIMED George Tsimiklis
11:50 - 12:00	AQUASPICE George Arampatzis
SESSION 2	THE SERVICE PROVIDER VIEW: CHALLENGES AND PRACTICE ON CIRCULAR WATER
12:00 - 12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federation of the Greek Water Utilities (TBC) • Water Utility of Athens (TBC) • Water Utility of Thessaloniki (TBC)
SESSION 3	SECURING WATER FOR ALL: THE EU PARTNERSHIP AT WORK Water Oriented Living Labs for a Water-Smart Society
12:30 - 12:40	Water4All Pillar D Demonstration of innovation, Andrea Rubini
SESSION 4	DEBATE AND EXCHANGE: HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE A WATER-SMART SOCIETY
12:40 - 13:20	Panel discussion (moderated by HYDROUSA)
13:20 - 13:30	Final poll and takeaways (HYDROUSA and WE)
13:30 - 14:30	Networking lunch

