

Projects FAIRWAY and WaterProtect: new solutions to protect our drinking water resources against nitrate and pesticide pollution

FAIRWAY and WaterProtect, two projects that recently started under the EU Research and Innovation programme Horizon 2020, aim to protect drinking water resources from pollution by pesticides and nitrates. To reach this ambitious goal, both projects will identify and develop innovative participation and governance strategies and promote the most appropriate mitigation measures in 20 case studies spread across 15 EU member states.

Pollution from agriculture: the main obstacle to ensuring safe drinking water

Safe drinking water is vital for human health. Diffuse pollution of nitrogen and pesticides from agriculture is the main obstacle to meeting drinking water quality targets set by European Directives. More than half the river and lake water bodies in Europe are reported to be in less than good ecological status and about 25% of the groundwater across Europe is in poor chemical status. Despite the necessary regulatory work from both the European Commission and the responsible authorities in the member states, the situation is not improving.

European Commission invests in safe drinking water

The European Commission is investing almost 10 million euros from its research and innovation budget (under the Horizon 2020 programme) in two projects, FAIRWAY and WaterProtect, to deliver new solutions, proven good practices and innovative governance models to protect drinking water resources...

FAIRWAY and WaterProtect are two independent international project consortiums that will use their broad experience to develop and improve strategies to effectively protect drinking water resources (both ground and surface water) from pollution linked to agriculture. The projects will cooperate to strengthen their common efforts but each will also have their own specialist areas of research.

Key topics in both projects are

- **Novel water governance models.** Effective governance approaches for small to large water supplies will be developed and reviewed.
- **Participatory monitoring.** The awareness and involvement of farmers and other actors in the monitoring of water supplies will be increased, using web tools and mobile apps.
- **Effective mitigation.** The understanding of social, technical and economic barriers to the practical implementation of existing measures will be increased and effective mitigation measures will be developed and promoted among farmers, water suppliers and other stakeholders across the area.
- **Communication.** The lessons learned will be communicated and disseminated at all policy levels in the European Union in order to help policy makers to identify key options for protecting drinking water resources from the diffuse pollution of nitrate and pesticides from agriculture.

Project FAIRWAY	Project WaterProtect
4 year project: 2017 - 2021 Budget: 4,999,865 EURO	3 year project: 2017 - 2020 Budget: 4.997.006 EURO
Participants: 23 partners from Netherlands, France, Norway, Slovenia, Italy, Germany, Portugal, England, Ireland, Romania, Greece and Denmark.	Participants: 27 partners from Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Spain, Romania, the United Kingdom and Denmark.
http://www.fairway-project.eu	http://water-protect.eu
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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 727984	This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No. 727450

