

Welcome editorial by the REFORM Coordinator

Dear reader,

This is the last newsletter of the REFORM project. Over the last 4 years we have informed you through 8 newsletters approximately every half year. The results from the REFORM project will remain online available at least until the end of 2018. In order to continue receiving regular news on key scientific findings, projects and events related to river restoration, we would like to encourage you to consider a subscription for the following news services: the Freshwater Blog and the newsletter of the European Centre for River Restoration.

In our last newsletter we inform you on our final results and the outcome of the final events.

In our 5th newsletter (September 2014), we informed you on our first scientific publications. Now at the end of the project there are already over 50 scientific publications and in the near future there are more to come. I am very proud with this impressive list already published during the course of the project.

In the last months, REFORM organized a workshop to address the linkage between e-flows and sediment dynamics (Rome, September 2015). The motivation originated from the feedback given by stakeholders during our mid-term stakeholder workshop (Brussels, February 2012). We hope to draw attention to the fact that rivers need more than just water. The outcome of the workshop is captured in a separate policy discussion paper. The opportunity having several experts together was further exploited by organising a back-to-back national stakeholder event for the Italian water sector.

ECOSTAT, one of the working groups for the WFD Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) used the momentum that the final results of REFORM were available to organize a workshop on hydromorphology (Oslo, October 2015). Besides presentations from Member States and other key scientists, REFORM presented key results regarding hydromorphological assessment and the (im)possibilities of biological quality elements to detect the impact of HyMo changes.

A separate item in this last newsletter introduces our proposal for thorough hydromorphological assessment paying attention to both spatial and temporal aspects, because the larger spatial dimension and the history of changes direct and restrict the options for improvement. Most rivers cannot be reversed to what they once were. Restoring in that sense can be a misleading word.

The results of REFORM are rather bulky. The full set of deliverables contains thousands of pages. Therefore we summarised the main findings in our wiki following the logical sequence of river basin management planning: How does my river work? What's wrong? and How to improve? The relevant REFORM Deliverable 6.3 is the guidebook to the contents of the wiki.

Besides, factsheets have been drawn up by regional experts for 11 different types of rivers covering prevailing pressures, on-going and promising restoration measures and monitoring requirements. Even apparently similar river types require a tailor-made restoration strategy acknowledging the governing hydrological and morphological conditions and the interaction with vegetation. The factsheets are thus meant to support decision making, and should not be used as cookbooks.

The final deliverable of our project will be our 3rd and final policy brief. It will be available early January 2016. I do hope you enjoyed reading our newsletters over the years and that our results help and stimulate you to find a better balance between using and conserving streams, rivers, floodplains and other connected wetlands. For me it has been a great privilege to coordinate this interesting and challenging project and to work intensively with so many nice and highly qualified colleagues. I am convinced that the results of REFORM will be of great help to address the complicated topic of heavily modified water bodies and to identify and implement more effective restoration projects.

On behalf of the complete REFORM team,

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