



Dear Sir/Madam,

we are pleased to invite you to the **the Baltic Sea** Regional network of experts and practitioners developed in the context of the **Natural Water Retention Measures (NWRM) initiative**.

The NWRM initiative was launched in October 2013 by DG Environment, European Commission. Within the context of Green infrastructure policy, the European Union has shown an increasing interest in NWRM measures that aim to restore and enhance the functioning of natural processes and ecosystems by increasing soil and landscape water retention and groundwater recharge. These can represent cost-effective options for achieving the objectives of the Water Framework Directive or the Floods Directive.

The NWRM initiative aims **to develop a European (web-based) knowledge on NWRM**, including technical, environmental, socio-economic, governance and implementation aspects of NWRM. It also aims to build a European NWRM “community of practice” by bringing together all parties interested in the design and implementation of NWRM. In close interaction with existing and future NWRM practitioners, the initiative will ultimately produce a NWRM practical guide that can support the design and implementation of NWRM in Europe.

Four regional networks are being established as part of NWRM initiative: the Danube river basin, the Mediterranean sea region, the Baltic Sea region and Western Europe. These networks were defined for the similarities they can have in bioclimatic, hydromorphological and water management conditions, but they do not have strict geographic boundaries and can overlap. The purpose of the networks will be to facilitate sharing of practical experiences, to enable identifying and discussing specific issues and solutions related to regional contexts, and to help building or consolidating partnership.

Practitioners, managers, representatives from the economic sector, experts, researchers and other professionals are welcomed to get involved in the regional networks. Everyone will be able to access to the NWRM website and database which will provide information on NWRM implementation case studies, costs and benefits, conditions of implementation and other features.

Members of the regional networks will also have access to the web-based NWRM discussion forum to get in touch, exchange information and share views with other members, present the results of their own experiences, get help in the design and implementation of NWRM, get support in making the case for NWRM, comment on the database structure, the content of the guide and other project deliverables. Finally, two workshops per regional network will

be organized, in January and July 2014, to enable members to meet and exchange on all these issues. We will keep you posted on that.

If you are interested in joining the regional networks, it is a simple process -you can:

- visit the **NWRM initiative website**: <http://www.nwrn.eu/>
- join the **Natural Water Retention Measures (NWRM) Forum** on LinkedIn

Please feel free to forward this invitation to other colleagues who might be interested in joining the network.

We hope to see you in the NWRM initiative network soon!

The NRWM Project Team