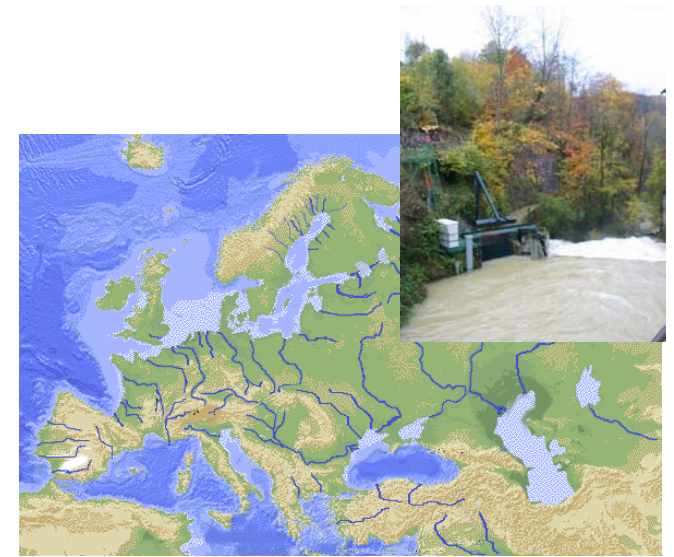


# Spatial Plans and Local Agreements for Small Hydro



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Two main challenges are facing the world in the coming century: climate change mitigation measures and diversification of energy sources. Renewable energy sources (RES) serve both these purposes. The European Commission has therefore set green electricity production objectives to 22,1% of the electricity share within Europe by 2010 (2001 EC Directive).

Although small hydro plants (SHP)<sup>(1)</sup> could contribute significantly to the EU's objectives, few such plants have been developed in the last decade. Past hydropower projects have disrupted fish runs, flooded fishing grounds, and had an adverse visual impact on the landscape. In response licensing authorities implemented restrictive conditions on SHP development, which are reflected in the high upfront costs of environmental impact assessments. However, if the economic situation for producers improves, and the environmental constraints better reflect the concerns of all stakeholders, the total contribution from SHP in the EU 15 member countries could probably reach 60 TWh in 2020 – 2030 as stipulated in the EU White Paper.

Both renewable energy development and conservation of the river resources are crucial for a sustainable development. It appears now that with some precautions, small hydro schemes can respect the environment and in many cases can improve it. Searching for a rational and beneficial balance is the focus of the partly funded European project SPLASH<sup>(2)</sup>. Actions of the project include:

- ✦ The preparation of pilot spatial and policy plans for small hydro in each country, identifying on an integrated basis the acceptable locations and the environmental considerations that must be met if a proposal is to be acceptable. The plans will be designed

<sup>1</sup> Unit power from 10 kW to 10 MW, although within SPLASH projects will not be considered above 5 MW.

<sup>2</sup> The project SPLASH, 'Spatial Plans and Local Agreements for Small Hydro', started in April 2003 and lasting 30 months, involves 6 countries : France, Ireland, Portugal, Switzerland, Poland and Greece.

to act as an aid to the environmental assessment process to ensure that the process is directed to those contentious issues that need real attention.

- ✦ The evaluation of how various technology might affect the economic resource and be fully integrated into the main electricity supply.
- ✦ Supporting municipalities (or groups of municipalities) and other local actors as independent electricity utilities / producers (IPP), and acting as a catalyst to bridge the gap between the new policy framework and local actors, in order to reduce the unit cost of the feasibility study of an SHP through the distribution of the costs to all the projects that could be developed in one local area.
- ✦ Facilitating new forms of private / public partnerships
- ✦ Editing good practice guides and case studies, organising workshops and conferences
- ✦ Identifying a couple of sites on the studied areas and undertaking feasibility studies



If you wish to participate to the SPLASH project or simply be updated on the project progresses, please send back the following form :

Incentive measures set in each country, are still not enough to foster SHP implementation, and this is where SPLASH should bring some solutions.

Project news and progress are posted on the ESHA's website and on the partners' websites.

**Société - Organisme:** ..... **Domaine d'activité :** .....

**NOM :** ..... **Prénom :** .....

**Fonction ou Service :** .....

**Adresse :** .....

.....

.....

**Tél. :** ..... **Fax :** ..... **E-mail :** .....

**Has your organisation/company been already involved in a SH project ?**    Yes / No

**Would you be interested in investing in a SHP ?**    Yes / No

**Would it be useful for your organisation to know the technical, economical SH potential on a territory, taking into account environmental constraints ?**    Yes / No

**You wish to :**    participate if the opportunity allows for it        be updated        on the project