





Deliverable 1.3	Quality Assurance Plan
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¹ **R**=Document, report; **DEM**=Demonstrator, pilot, prototype; **DEC**=website, patent fillings, videos, etc.; **OTHER**=other; **ETHICS**=Ethics requirement, **ORDP**=Open Research Data Pilot

² PU=Public; CO=Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services); EU-RES Classified Information: RESTREINT UE (Commission Decision 2005/444/EC); EU-CON Classified Information: CONFIDENTIEL UE (Commission Decision 2005/444/EC); EU-SEC Classified Information: SECRET UE (Commission Decision 2005/444/EC)



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1. Overview of the project

The WATER-MINING project aims to provide for real-world implementations of Water Framework Directive (and other water related legislation), as well as the Circular Economy and EU Green Deal packages by showcasing and validating innovative next generation water resource solutions at precommercial demonstration scale. These solutions combine WATER management services with the recovery of value-added renewable resources extracted/MINED from alternative water resources ("WATER-MINING").

The project will integrate selected innovative technologies that have reached proof of concept levels under previous EU projects. The value-added end-products (water, platform chemicals, energy, nutrients, minerals) are expected to provide regional resource supplies to fuel economic developments within a growing demand for resource security. Different layouts for urban wastewater treatment and seawater desalination are proposed, to demonstrate the wider practical potential to replicate the philosophy of approach in widening circles of water and resource management schemes. Innovative service-based business models (such as chemical leasing) will be introduced to stimulate progressive forms of collaboration between public and private actors and access to private investments, as well as policy measures to make the proposed water solutions relevant and accessible for rolling out commercial projects in the future. The goal is to enable costs for the recovery of the resources to become distributed across the whole value chain in a fair way, promoting business incentives for investments from both suppliers and end-users along the value chain. The demonstration case studies are to be first implemented in five EU countries (NL, ES, CY, PT, IT) where prior successful technical and social steps have already been accomplished. The broader project consortium representation will be an enabler to transferring trans-disciplinary project know-how to the partner countries while motivating and inspiring relevant innovations throughout Europe.

All deliverables and milestones have already been defined in Deliverable 1.1.

The key performance indicators for the WATERMINING project have been defined in the Grant Agreement. They have been included here as Annex 3.



2. Scope of the deliverable

Quality assessment requires information from "internal sources" (project partners, Work Package (WP) leaders, Project Management Team (PMT), Executive Board (EB), etc.) and from "external sources" (e.g. participants of project events, Advisory Board and other stakeholders). Such information will enable a more complete overview of items such as: quality of project management and results achieved; adequacy of materials produced; degree of satisfaction regarding project's events, etc.

Key to the successful delivery of this WATER-MINING is a multi-disciplinary project team that offers a blend of international expertise and local experience, which is necessary to address specific challenges.

Monitoring the project progress and quality assessment activities are managed by the Project Management Team (PMT) and Executive Board (EB) and involves the following main procedures

- Verification of successful accomplishment of project scientific and technical activities
- Organization of internal quality assurance through adequate review mechanisms for reports and deliverables
- Evaluation of events
- Protection and management of IPR of the project results

Therefore, the structure of D1.3 – *Quality Assurance Plan* is here organized in the following sections:

- Quality assessment tools
- Evaluation of events
- Conclusions
- Annex I: Event evaluation form
- Annex II: Reviewer report

This document serves two purposes: (i) establishing a framework for the PMT and the EB to effectively carry out quality assessment of the produced results, and (ii) being a handbook for every member of the project consortium to conduct their project activities at high-quality levels.



3. Quality assessment tools

3.1. Verification of work progress

The Project Management Team (PMT) is responsible for the project quality management. The PMT will ensure that the project activities necessary to design, plan and implement WATERMINING are effective and efficient with respect to the purpose of the objectives and its performance.

The PMT comprises:

- The Coordinator (Chairperson) Prof. Patricia Osseweijer
- The Scientific Manager Prof. Mark Van Loosdrecht
- The Executive Project Coordinator Dr. Dimitris Xevgenos
- The Innovation Manager Dr. Dimitris Xevgenos
- The Administrative Manager Janine Pforr

For Quality Assurance the PMT is supported by Dr. Yuemei Lin who together with prof. Mark van Loosdrecht are the Quality Officers for WATERMINING. The PMT will build project resilience by maintaining the project documentation and overseeing any resource changes should they become necessary.

The PMT will have monthly meetings to ensure that work is in accordance with the Grant Agreement, and will carry out the following tasks:

- Main interface between the consortium and the EC for all contractual and formal reporting matters;
- Coordination and progress monitoring of all project activities;
- Holding the consortium accountable for progress against schedule and the quality of deliverables.
- Organisation (and chairing) of EB meetings and General Assembly meetings to discuss progress within and across the WPs and the need for any corrective measures.
- Monitoring and managing risks to the project and providing early warning of these where necessary.

Thus, PMT will be in charge of organizing EB meetings, where EB is the executive body where the progress of the project is monitored and managed and decisions are taken. The EB will evaluate in



their meetings the critical risks for the WATERMINING activities as defined in paragraph 1.3.5 "WT5 Critical Implementation risks and mitigation actions" of Part A of the Grant Agreement. The EB will discuss and propose solutions in case of:

- Foreseeable difficulties in a WP to achieve objectives or deliverables
- Need for harmonisation of activities between and across WPs
- Obstacles and barriers causing delays in progress, in particular if this is likely to affect other WPs that need the output of another WP as a starting point
- Need for reallocation of Tasks within or among the WPs, if necessary
- Security or privacy issues raised as part of the DMP design and implementation
- Weak performance or malfunctioning of a partner
- Innovation Management issues in support to the overall business plan

The PMT decides whether an issue can be tackled internally or has to be communicated to and decided by the EC. In the latter cases, the EB will develop a proposal to be communicated to the PMT for decision.

To ensure a regular monitoring of the project's tasks, WP leaders are asked to report on the progress of their WP monthly. For this purpose, WP leaders should collect the views of the task leaders and try to present information regarding:

- On-going activities;
- Short overview of the activities undertaken during that month period;
- Issues/delays with the activities. In case there are issues, the WP leader should also identify other tasks that can be impacted, and specify a plan to minimise the risks.

To ensure that the PMT Officers can monitor overall quality of the project, when an activity, task or deliverable is delayed or when there are deviations from the GA, the PMT Officers should be informed and a valid justification should be provided. The WP leader together with the Coordinator are then responsible to identify other tasks that can be impacted, and specify a plan to minimize the risks. Then, the EB, the Coordinator along with the Risk and Quality Officers will decide on corrective measures to improve the quality of results, and if necessary, to reallocate this responsibility to another partner. The Coordinator, in consultation with the EB, will be ultimately responsible for reporting to the EC and for coordinating mitigating actions, when necessary.



In case of conflict and dispute among the team members, the conflict resolution will follow the procedure described in the DoA and further elaborated in the Consortium Agreement (CA).

To facilitate the project progress monitoring, the WATERMINING toolbox was created and made accessible to the consortium throughout the WATERMINING SharePoint site. This tool provides information and standard templates for internal communication on deliverables and milestones status. WATERMINING SharePoint is an action under Project Management and contractual reporting.

3.2. Peer review of deliverables

3.2.1. Adequacy of deliverables

Deliverables should be conceived according to the objectives and the target audience, considering the purpose of the deliverable and defining the best way to convey the information. All deliverables will undergo a Check, Review, Approve and Verify process. This process ensures that no deliverable goes unchecked and is subject to peer reviewing and approval by the PMT.

The deliverables should be designed from the beginning to be clear about the objective, and then be very concise about which content to include in the documents. Very long deliverables should be avoided as they should be to the point, focused and easy to review for the reviewer and read for the final user. The focus of the deliverable must be clear and concise. Avoid repeating content from other documents (always use references for that) and synthesize, summarize and always get to the point.

The following elements are to be included in a deliverable: Executive Summary, an Introduction section outlining clearly the Purpose and Scope, a Conclusions and a Future Work Section (when applicable).

The right size for a given deliverable depends largely on the topic, the objective, etc. A suggested maximum size of 30 pages for dissemination/exploitation documents and 100 pages for technical deliverables, could be considered as reference. However, there might be exceptions and it will be the



responsibility of the reviewer to indicate whether the report is too large or too short for the purpose (and the work included).

3.2.2. Quality Assurance procedure

All deliverables of WATERMINING (PU and CO) will undergo a Quality Assurance (QA) procedure. Two procedures have been designed for the revision of the deliverables depending on the nature and origin of the content:

Deliverables produced within WATERMINING

- WP leaders are responsible for the arrangements and logistics for the QA process and its supervision (contacting reviewers, deadlines, etc.). An excel file, available in the WATERMINING SharePoint, will be used to track the writing and reviewing process of the pending deliverables. Progress of the writing of the deliverable will be included as well so to be able to plan the reviewing process on-time.
- 2. Reviewers will be selected by the deliverable leader as early as possible (see following section on Quality Assurance Schedule) and will be given a check list of deliverables developed for WATERMINING.
- **3.** Reviewers' comments and contributions should be done as described in the following section "Methods to be used by reviewers".
- **4.** Reviewers' comments should be addressed before the deliverable can be considered final. Thus, the author(s) of the deliverable should send the reviewed/revised document to the reviewers for a final acceptation of the document.
- 5. With the approval of the reviewer(s), the WP leader will check that the content of the deliverable is in line with the proposal in DoA. The Quality Assurance Officer will at this stage perform a last round of proof-reading. The Quality Assurance Officer is responsible to oversee the application of QA standards to deliverables against pre-defined quality standards, layout and structure and, if needed, to call in external experts in collaboration with the Coordinator.
- **6.** The final document will be submitted to the Coordinator for the final check and submission to the EC services.
- **7.** Each document will be reviewed in two stages: a. Internal review (within the organisation leading the deliverable) b. External review (by other consortium partners)
- **8.** The internal review (Stage a) is a matter of the general procedures in place by each organisation. In case such procedures do not exist (e.g. for partners that seldom participate in



EU funded projects), the suggested procedure is to appoint internally a person that was not involved in the writing of the deliverable, but senior and experienced enough to make a thorough review.

- **9.** The external review (Stage b) will take place according to the following procedure:
 - i. One main reviewer should review each deliverable (Type R = Reports)
 - **ii.** The reviewer should be from a different organisation than the partner responsible for the deliverable.
 - iii. It should be a person not involved as co-author or contributor to the deliverable, but with enough knowledge and expertise to be able to follow any related technical content, i.e. a <u>senior researcher</u>, participating in any WP (not necessarily the same WP).
 - iv. The person should be fluent in English (if not a native English speaker) to ensure that the quality of English in the Deliverable will be adequate.
 - v. If such a person cannot be found among the consortium members, the WP leader will notify the EB and the PMT, so as to appoint an external reviewer to the project (e.g. among the AB).
 - vi. In case the review at Stage (b) raises serious issues with the Deliverable, the WP leader will appoint a second external Reviewer and the procedure for Stage (b) will be repeated.

Note: The external Reviewer at Stage (b) is the *sole responsible* for the review and should *not* delegate this task to more junior persons in their own organization, e.g. for lack of time. In case they don't have the time, they should notify the WP leader, so that another reviewer from a different organization can be appointed.

Milestone Reports

- Milestone reports produced during the project will be reviewed by the project coordinator and the QA officers. Revision will be conducted according to the methods described for the rest of the WPs products and using the same templates. Revision will take place ensuring that the content produced meets the specifications of the DoA.
- **2.** Track of the writing and revision of the deliverables will be conducted in the same file available in the WATERMINING SharePoint.



- **3.** QA and project coordinator's comments should be addressed before the milestone report can be considered final. Thus, the author(s) of the report should send the reviewed/revised document for a final acceptation of the document.
- **4.** The coordinator will proceed to the delivery of the report to the EC services.

The monitoring indicator will be in place for the Coordinator in the form of a traffic light control process. to monitor progresses of Tasks at each milestone and steer the activity of consortium partners. At each milestone the responsible member will receive feedback in form of traffic light, to indicate that the progress of their activities is on track (green), needs revision (yellow) or is not acceptable and needs radical rework (red).

Note: all deliverables of different types (P = Prototype, D = Demonstrator, O = Other), should be accompanied by a report to be reviewed according to the rules here defined for Deliverable of type R.

The Coordinator is responsible for uploading the final version of the deliverable to the correct location in the project repository and into the European Commission platform. All deliverables must be approved by the Coordinator before being submitted to the EC. The Coordinator is the ultimate responsible for all deliverables towards the European Commission.

All deliverables that are reports must be produced using the deliverables template, which is described in the project handbook (D1.1) and made available in the WATERMINING share point.

3.2.3. Quality Assurance Officers

The Quality Assurance Officers will have the overall responsibility for Quality Assurance and Quality Control of the project results in WATER-MINING. Mark van Loosdrecht and Yuemei Lin (EUT) have been jointly appointed to this role.

The Quality Assurance Officers (QAO) will be in charge of the application of QA standards to deliverables against pre-defined quality standards, layout and structure and, if needed, can propose appropriate corrective actions in collaboration with the Coordinator. They also perform a last round of proof-reading, after review and revision is complete for all the deliverables and milestones.



3.2.4. Quality Assurance Schedule

When the deliverable preparation starts, the deliverable leader should contact the WP Leader to propose (and discuss) reviewers. The WP Leader will inform the QAO accordingly. In case the deliverable is a milestone report, then the revision will be conducted by the QA Officer and coordinator only.

Once reviewers have been defined, they will be contacted by the deliverable leaders (keeping the WP leader informed in cc) about the future revision of deliverable, and agree on a binding procedure for the review process. The deliverable leader will propose the schedule for the review process in advance, agree on it with the reviewers and share it with the corresponding WP leader, who will then share it with the QAO. The process of revision will be tracked through an Excel file located in the WATERMINING SharePoint, where the status of the revision and envisaged deadline will be indicated.

The schedules for the review process are provided in **Error! Reference source not found.** (for deliverables) and Table 2 (for milestones). However, the timing of specific review stages can be adapted if previously agreed between the coordinator, the WP leader, the deliverable leader and the corresponding reviewers.

Review Process Stage	Starts When	Duration	Roles involved
Contact QA Officer. Select reviewers and agree on schedule	Start of deliverable preparation	1 week	Deliverable Leader WP leader QA Officer Reviewer (Stage b)
Submit final draft to reviewer (Stage b) for content review and to WP leader for check with DoA	15 days before the submission date	5 days	Deliverable Leader Reviewer (Stage b) <u>Please note</u> : At the end of this Stage the Reviewer must notify the WP leader in case serious issues arise, which will need a

 Table 1. Schedule for the review process of deliverables in WP1-WP5



Review Process Stage	Starts When	Duration	Roles involved
			second external reviewer to be appointed
Address reviewer comments and approval by reviewer	10 days before the submission date	6 days for update and 2 days for approval by the Reviewer	Deliverable Leader Reviewer (Stage b)
Quality Check and content check with DoA	2 days before submission date	2 days	Quality Assurance Officers Coordinator
Submission to European Commission	Deadline		Coordinator

Table 2. Schedule for the review process of milestone reports

Review Process Stage	Starts When	Duration	Roles involved
Contact QA Officer and coordinator and agree on schedule	Start of deliverable preparation	1 week	Deliverable Leader QA Officer Coordinator
Submit final draft to reviewers for content review and quality check and to WP leader for check with DoA	15 days before the submission date	7 days	Deliverable Leader QA Officer Coordinator
Address reviewer comments and approval by reviewer	8 days before the submission date	6 days for update and 2 days for	Deliverable Leader QA Officer



Review Process Stage	Starts When	Duration	Roles involved
		approval by the QA officer and the Coordinator	Coordinator
Submission to European Commission	Deadline		Coordinator

It is the responsibility of the deliverable leader to make sure that the document is ready for starting the review process by the corresponding date and, therefore, to plan the previous writing phase accordingly. The deliverable leader should also take into consideration any internal rule regarding QA adopted by the contributing parties, so as to avoid delays.

With reference to the dissemination rules, these are covered in Section 8.3 of the CA and Article 29 of the EU GA. More concrete, the partner wishing to publish, present or disclose information about the project, the partner should send an email at least 45 calendar days before publication / disclosure of information to the identified representative of each consortium partner. In case there is a shorter period than 45 calendar days before the presentation becomes public, the approval of all partners need to be established first. Provide the foreseen title, list of contributing authors, abstract of the content and the purpose of the publication. More information is also provided within D1.1 entitled "Data Management Plan" (Section 10).

3.2.5. Method to be used by reviewers

When working with Word documents, reviewers' comments and contributions should be done using "track change" mode combined with specific text comments aligned with the specific section. Reviews based on a pdf document, are not acceptable, because they do not allow for easy modification of the text. It is also possible, when the comments are of a general nature to submit an accompanying text document (as a separate word or pdf file).



The reviewers are invited to give detailed and constructive comments (with references, whenever possible) that will help the authors to improve the deliverable. A structured reviewer report is provided in **Annex B**.

3.2.6. Delays on the revision

In the case where, by unexpected reasons, the reviewer is not able to meet the deadline, the deliverable leader should be informed as soon as possible. If the reviewer cannot be replaced in time, or cannot meet the deadline, then the deliverable leader should inform the STC via the leader of the WP within which the deliverable is produced.

3.2.7. Other issues

The reviewers should take into consideration, when applicable, the issue of protection and management of IPR of the project results, making any suitable comments on this respect.

3.3. Evaluation of events

Meetings of the Project Steering Board (PSB) and other relevant external events of the project (e.g. Stakeholder and Dissemination events, International Conferences) should be evaluated by the participants to ensure high quality and continuous improvement. A model of questionnaire is provided (**Annex A**) to be used and adapted for this purpose. This model can also be used for other events that partners might organize.



This document summarizes procedures to ensure a successful collaborative work within the project, describes relevant roles and tasks, as well as tools and instruments available to conduct and report the work undertaken within the project at the highest possible quality level.

The document aims at being a project execution handbook and a reference for all project consortium members for the entire project duration.



Annex A: Event Evaluation Form

[Name of event] Evaluation Form (Place, date)

Dear [name],

It was a pleasure to have you in this event. We would like to know your opinion, so that we can improve future events and meet your expectations. Your identification is optional.

Thank you for your collaboration!

Name (optional): _____

Organization (optional):

I. Please rate each of the following items between 0 and 4 (0=not applicable (N/A); 1=excellent; 2=good; 3=average; 4=poor)

1. Meeting preparation and logistics (0=N/A; 1=excellent; 2=good; 3=sufficient; 4=poor)	
Meeting information provided in advance (e.g. dates, venue, programme)	
Logistic arrangements to participate in the meeting: travel, accommodation, etc.	••
Quality of hotel, meals, etc.	
Meeting venue (adequacy of the room where the meeting took place)	
Materials distributed during the meeting to support the sessions	
Comments:	

2. Overall assessment of the meeting (0=N/A; 1=excellent; 2=good; 3= sufficient; 4=poor)	
Attainment of the objectives of the meeting (the objectives of meeting were met)	
Positive and collaborative atmosphere among participants	
Duration of the meeting (1=adequate; 4=totally inadequate)	
	1
Opportunity for individual participation and input in the meeting	
	1
Comments:	



3. Evaluation of sessions (0=N/A; 1=excellent; 2=good; 3= sufficient; 4=poor)			
Day 1	Clarity of presentations/speakers	Discussions (moderation, conclusions reached)	
[name of session]			
[name of session]			
Comments to Day 1:			
Day 2	Clarity of presentations/speakers	Discussions (moderation, conclusions reached)	
[name of session]			
[name of session]			
Comments to Day 2:			

II. In your opinion, what were the most positive and less positive aspects of the meeting?

III. What suggestions do you have for future meetings?



Annex B: Reviewer Report

Overview Information

Deliverable Title	
Author(s):	
Dissemination level:	
Due submission date:	
Peer Reviewer (Person, Organization)	
Date of admission to Peer Review:	
Date of Peer Review completion:	

Length and Structure of the Deliverable

	Reviewer Comment	Author's remediation
Overall length. Is the overall length of the deliverable justified?		
Length of separate parts. Please indicate parts that are overlong, irrelevant, and redundant. Please indicate the parts which are too short or not enough elaborated.		
Overall style . Does the document comply with the project editing standards? (see Template for Deliverable, and Annex C: Check list for deliverables)		



Content

	Reviewer Comment	Author's remediation
Compliance with GA . Does the deliverable contain what was defined in the deliverable description in the Grant Agreement? If not, please indicate the parts where improvement is necessary.		
Logical consistence & clarity. Is the content presented in a logical and to-the-point manner? Is the work performed and results presented clearly? If not please indicate the parts where the improvements are necessary.		
Language quality. Are there any grammatical / typographical errors and/or incomprehensive sentences? If yes, please provide the authors with appropriate annotations.		
Overall content . Does the deliverable require substantial revision or rewriting? If yes, please make precise suggestions how the deliverable can be improved.		
Other observation. Mention any other striking aspects that require revision.		



Peer Review Summary

poor
below average
average
good
excellent
is ready to be submitted to the EC
requires minor revisions
requires substantial revisions
requires a second reviewer at stage (b)



Annex C: KPI's for WATERMINING

No	KPIs	Quantifiable target	Relevant	
NO			Objective	Deliverable
1	Number of CE solutions demonstrated	6	Ob. 1 - 5	n.a.
2	Share of renewable or waste heat recovered to drive the processes in <i>CS1 & CS2</i>	> 50%		
3	Reduction in energy consumption of current seawater desalination process	10%	Ob. 1	D3.2 &
4	Increase of water recovery factor compared to current seawater desalination process	80%		D3.3, D3.5 – D3.7
5	Purity of recovered salts (magnesium hydroxide and sodium chloride)	> 90%		
6	Number of optimized Kaumera processes (CS3)	2	Ob. 2	D4.1
7	Production of market valued bio-based alginate- like polymers (Kaumera polymers) from the waste sludge from a Nereda installation (<i>CS3</i>)	25%		D4.2
8	Concentration of phosphorus in the treated UWWT effluent stream (<i>CS4 & CS5</i>)	< 0.05 mg/L		D5.3, D5.4, D5.5
9	Cost for removal of phosphorus from UWWT effluent stream (CS4 & CS5)	< 100 €/kg P removed	Ob. 3	D5.3, D5.4, D5.5
10	Content of micro-pollutants in recovered phosphate product (<i>CS4 & CS5</i>)	0		D5.3, D5.4, D5.5
11	Share of energy needs covered by energy recovered (<i>CS5</i>)	> 60%	Ob. 4	D5.6
12	Reuse (percentage) of water recovered from the treatment of UWWT plants (<i>CS5</i>)	100%	00.4	D5.5
13	Reduction in the use of freshwater sources (CS6)	70%		
14	Energy requirements covered by waste heat (CS6)	> 40%	Ob. 5	D6.4
15	Recycling of chlorine/sodium streams (CS6)	> 90%		



No	KPIs	Quantifiable target	Relevant	
NO			Objective	Deliverable
16	Number of cases where chemical leasing concept is demonstrated	1	Ob. 6	D9.2
17	Customised Circular Economy Evaluation model of WATER-MINING solutions transferrable into software applications	5	Ob. 6	D8.1
18	Assessment model on the sustainability performance of the WATER-MINING solutions	5	Ob. 6	D8.4
19	Quick scan procedure for verification completed	3	Ob. 6	D8.5
20	Number of framework agreements signed	3	Ob. 7	D9.3
21	Number of Augmented Reality applications developed (WP7)	3		D2.3
22	Number of CoP and best practice models developed	6	Ob. 8	D2.4
23	Model for social impacts assessment	-		D8.2
24	Number of policy packages developed	3	Ob. 9	D10.3
25	Number of roadmaps	6	00.9	D10.4
26	Website as central dissemination tool	25,000 visits over the 4- year project duration	Ob. 6 - 9	D11.2
27	Number of explanatory videos	3	Ob. 6 - 9	D11.5
28	Young Water Professional exchange sessions attached to consortia meetings	2	Ob. 6 - 9	D11.6
29	Engagement of local/regional technical/non- technical stakeholders linked to Living Labs by sector specific role out events	3, one per sector	Ob. 6 - 9	D11.8
30	Number of stakeholders finally included in each CoP	>75% of identified stakeholders	Ob. 6 & Ob. 8	D2.2
31	Stakeholders' moral values and concerns that are translated to performance indicators	>50%	Ob. 8	D2.2



No	KPIs	Quantifiable target	Relevant		
			Objective	Deliverable	
	32	Number of workshops in each CoP	18	Ob. 8	D2.2
	33	Model of best practices for social embedding in the development of water mining technologies	1	Ob. 6 & Ob. 8	D2.3