



Water driven rural development in the Baltic Sea Region” Nr. R094 WATERDRIVE

**Strengthening and sustainable water management in the rural landscape.**

**Poland’s strategic pathways.**

**WP 1**

**Version 3.0**

**29/09/2021**



EUROPEAN UNION  
EUROPEAN  
REGIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
FUND



WITH FINANCIAL  
SUPPORT OF THE  
RUSSIAN  
FEDERATION

**Project “Water driven rural development in the Baltic Sea Region” Nr. R094 WATERDRIVE is co-financed by Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme**

Document type	Waterdrive
Title	Poland’s strategic pathways.
Author	Katarzyna Izydorczyk, ERCE Kinga Krauze, ERCE Małgorzata Grodzicka-Kowalczyk, Pheno Horizon Janusz Dąbrowski, CDR Brwinów Maciej Kowalczyk, Pheno Horizon Patryk Waćławiak, Pheno Horizon
Organizations	
Front cover photo	Freepik.com

## Project Partners

Sweden	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
Sweden	South Baltic Water District Authority/Kalmar County Administrative Board
Sweden	Swedish Board of Agriculture
Sweden	Västervik Municipality
Lithuania	Baltic Environmental Forum Lithuania
Finland	Natural Resources Institute Finland
Finland	Finnish Environment Institute
Finland	ProAgria Southern Finland
Finland	Finnish Field Drainage Association
Estonia	Stockholm Environment Institute Tallinn Centre
Latvia	Jelgava Local Municipality
Latvia	Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies
Latvia	Union Farmers’ Parliament
Poland	Agricultural Advisory Service in Brwinow
Poland	European Regional Centre for Ecohydrology
Poland	PhenoHorizon OLP SP. zO.O.
Germany	Agency for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs of the German Federal State Schleswig Holstein
Denmark	L&F SEGES
Russia	Northwest Research Institute of Agricultural Economics and Organisation (NWRIAEO)
Russia	Institute for Engineering and Environmental Problems in Agricultural Production – branch of Federal State Budgetary Scientific Institution “Federal Scientific Agroengineering Center VIM (IEEP)
Russia	Administration of Guryevsk city district



## Polish partner organisations and the pathway task group

Poland | Agricultural Advisory Service in Brwinow

Poland | European Regional Centre for Ecohydrology

Poland | PhenoHorizon OLP SP. zO.O.



## Contents

Contents.....	1
Introduction.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Arguments for strengthening local water management in agricultural landscapes.....	2
Selection and description of pathways most prioritized .....	3
Pathway I - Introduction of new type of services in scope of services provided by the Polish system of public agricultural advisory system .....	3
Pathway II - Improvement of coordination in water resources management at territorial level .....	3
Pathway III - Development instruments of Local Governments as method of implementing water management.....	4
Pathway IV - Local Governments Strategies – key, capacity building, integrated planning .....	6
Setting objectives for the pathways.....	8
Performing SWOT analysis .....	10
Designing the implementation process .....	11
Elaborating on stakeholder roles and responsibilities (stakeholder analysis) .....	11
Visualizing the impact by 2030 .....	11

## Arguments for strengthening local water management in agricultural landscapes

The Waterdrive experiences since the very beginning of the project’s implementation process in Poland and particularly in the case area have clearly proven some dominating key, limiting factors in area of water management related to agriculture and farming practices at both national and local level:

- a) fragmentation of existing network of public and private actors involved in water management in terms of their legal, institutional and managerial tasks,
- b) not sufficient coordination and cooperation systems of their activities,
- c) leading to not fully optimal public funds distributions for water oriented investments aimed at agricultural purposes.

It has created a substantial problem for any activities at local (the case area) level) – no local, bottom-up activities could overcome dominating patterns of national, Polish administrative system.

Our activities, therefore, referred less to specific fields of strictly agricultural policies, but much more toward three aspects relevant for our water related area of intervention:

- a) organizational,
- b) institutional,
- c) facilitating more effective use of already available forms of cooperation between all involved actors.

Our Pathways have been developed by all members of the Polish Waterdrive consortium mirroring their specific areas of expertise:

- a) Centrum Doradztwa Rolniczego/Agricultural Advisory Centres – National Pathways a) and b),
- b) PhenoHorizon – National Pathways c) and d),

ERCE-UNESCO – support for all Pathways in scope of technical water management issues.

## Selection and description of pathways most prioritized

### Pathway I - Introduction of new type of services in scope of services provided by the Polish system of public agricultural advisory system

The main objectives of this pathway are as follows:

- Introduction of new type of holistic services focused on water management at farm/network of farms levels.
- Close cooperation of agricultural advisory services with all relevant actors at territorial level,
- Key challenge – changing of farmers active behaviour.

The new type of services is based on the current model of advisory services provision within the system of public agricultural advisory services which is based on:

- Supporting of farm holding profitability,
- Assistance for farmers in meeting growing requirements in area of environment protection as defined by national and EU legislation (CAP),
- Management of water resources at farm/network of farms treated as additional factor in a process of provision of agricultural advisory services.

The new approach will require some important changes in the public advisory activities in day-to-day service provision:

- substantial change of overall mode of agricultural advisors operations currently aimed at mainly on farmers; new approach will require active involvement and cooperation with all relevant actors and stakeholders at appropriate territorial level; it would require additional training for field advisors – water advisors – in scope of soft skill (involvement of different type of actor beyond agricultural sector, ability to manage network different actors, high communication skills to manage public events),
- the most important role of new type of services – to facilitate active involvement of farmers in introduction of new measures for water management at farm/network of farms levels. It is very difficult task, taking into account that many of these measures are costly and might have short term negative impact on farms profitability.

This is an organisational change within the system of Polish network of public advisory services.

### Pathway II - Improvement of coordination in water resources management at territorial level

The main objective concerns introduction of coordination mechanism for water resources management at local level (country, commune).

Experiences in solving territorial problems related to water management (droughts, floods) proved not sufficient level of policies delivery at national and local level by public actors operating within frameworks of different ministries.

### Pathway III - Development instruments of Local Governments as method of implementing water management.

Changes which are implemented in the legislation introduce wider range of tools for Local Governments, which contribute to increasing the possibilities of cooperation and conducting a common development policy by stakeholders at various levels (communes, poviats/counties, voivodships) and by neighboring territorial units. This is particularly important in case of water management. Catchments in country territory don't overlap with the borders of local governments. In order to effectively manage and protect them, local cooperation between Local Governments Units GU's (JST – communes, poviats/counties, voivodships) and state authorities is necessary.

The first step to expand the possibilities of cooperation and use of Development Instruments is to update the statutory provisions which are related to development policy, as well as to planning and spatial development. In 2020, the Act on the Principles of Development Policy (created at December 6, 2006) was updated, introducing new tools for cooperation and forward-looking development planning.

The guidelines for conducting the development policy make it possible for local governments to establish joint projects and common development areas. As a part of it, local governments can cooperate in protecting and implementing development policy also for water management. Several cooperative tools are available.

Urban Functional Areas (MOF's - Miejskie Obszary Funkcjonalne) include cities and neighboring areas associated with them. MOF's are established for areas covering spatially continuous settlement systems and a compact urban area, but composed of administratively separate units. The MOF's include cities with a functionally related urban zone and neighborhood centers. The areas concentrated within individual MOF's may together apply for co-financing from the European Commission funds for the implementation of joint projects. Waterdrive indicates the implementation of water projects within MOFs.

Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI / ZIT – Zintegrowane Inwestycje Terytorialne) are a new form of cooperation between local governments which allows co-financing from European Funds. With use of this instrument, partnerships of local government units, cities and areas functionally related to them can achieve common goals and indicate projects combining activities financed from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). Such a formula makes it possible to go beyond the administrative boundaries of local governments, which allows for the implementation of wider, consistent projects. It should be noted that in Poland, ITI's are implemented not only in the formula

dedicated to cities, but also to the Urban Functional Areas. The last ITI's activities have mainly supported the improvement of access and quality of public services, the development of low-emission strategies, sustainable transport, as well as the improvement of the condition of the natural environment and the restoration of the socio-economic functions of degraded urban and suburban areas. As part of the implementation of Waterdrive ITI's activities, it can be used directly to the implementation of water projects. During the last financial perspective, about 30 small ITI's were established.

Strategic Intervention Areas (SIA / OSI – Obszary Strategicznej Interwencji) belong to intervention programs involving an agreement between several local government entities - communes, voivodships. They are created in the areas of occurrence of specific, defined factors. These can be conditions that lead to a crisis situation, but also have development potential. Shared water resources could also be included. However, it should be mentioned that in the past perspective, the problems of water management weren't specifically indicated in this instrument. In the 2014-2020 perspective, one of the Strategic Intervention Areas were rural areas.

Community-Led Local Development (CLLD / RLKS - Rozwój Lokalny Kierowany Przez Społeczność) is a tool used in Poland under the Rural Development Program (RDP / PROW). It was used in the 2014-2020 perspective. It enables the use of the LEADER method within the framework of conducting development policy. It indicates such points as: bottom-up (wide participation of the local community in the creation and implementation of the strategy), territoriality (local development strategy prepared for specific, coherent area), integration (combining various sectors of the economy, cooperation of various stakeholders), partnership (Local Action Group's as a local partnership involving different actors from the public, social and economic sectors), innovation (on a local scale), decentralization of management and financing, networking and collaboration (exchange of experiences and dissemination of good practices). The CLLD tool enables local communities to initiate and implement development activities through participation, in response to the social, economic and environmental challenges of the indicated area. These activities may also include water resources management.

Local Action Groups (LAG's / LGD – Lokalne Grupy Działania) are a type of territorial partnership in the form of a bottom-up initiative. LAG's bring together representatives of local organizations from public and private sectors and non-government organizations, as well as residents working for the local community. It is possible to use LAG's in connection with CLLD to initiate development activities related to the management of water resources in LGU's.

Other Territorial Instruments (OTI's / IIT – Inne Instrumenty Terytorialne) are dedicated to functional areas other than MOF's. They are multi-funded instruments used as part of interventions in the area of cohesion policy related to better integration with local communities. OTI can be used by LGU's independently or in partnerships with other local governments. They should be implemented in selected areas indicated in operational programs through separate activities. In order to implement them, local governments must develop OTI's action plans. On the basis of the approved IITs action plans, municipalities may apply for co-

financing of development activities. Action plans IIT's may be Communal Development Strategies, Supra-local Development Strategies or Communal Revitalization Programs and other strategic documents prepared by local governments.

The future EU financing perspective 2030 is important for the use of all possible development tools. At the stage of planning development under the new budget perspective of the *Cohesion Policy and the Common Agricultural Policy*, funds dedicated to supporting water investments should be included. Their beneficiaries would be local government units or their cooperatives. Development policy using support in this area would be implemented under the previously indicated instruments: ITI's (ZIT), CLLD's (RLKS), OTI's (IIT), ASI's (OSI), MOF's.

As part of the management of the catchment areas, Local Governments should be partners with institutions implementing these tasks - the “Polish Waters” National Water Management, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the Ministry of Environmental Protection. Deeper integration in this area is essential.

### Pathway IV - Local Governments Strategies – key, capacity building, integrated planning

Statutory changes in the field of local governments development and planning activities provide more and more opportunities to carry out activities related to management and protection of water resources. Already introduced and planned improvements in the system lead to greater integration of planning in the area of economic, social, ecological, administrative and spatial development. The possibility of using new tools is particularly noticeable at the lowest, communal governments level. The new way of developing and implementing the assumptions of strategic and planning documents contributes directly to increase of possibilities of managing water resources by local government units.

In the case of implementing the Municipal Development Strategy and supplementary strategic documents (e.g. the Environmental Protection Program), the changes introduced in 2020 in the Act on the Principles of Development Policy (from 6 December 2006) are particularly important. This document points, the way of developing and implementing the Commune Development Strategy. It indicates aspects such as implementation of wide functional and spatial structure analysis into the strategic documentation of municipalities, along with guidelines in the form of functional and spatial structure model, and the possibility of pointing areas of operation involving cooperation of several local governments (e.g. in the form of Strategic Intervention Areas – SIA's / OSI, Urban Functional Areas – MOF's). Statutory provisions also specify the necessity of consulting planning documents which are going to be published with bodies such as other local governments (communes, poviats, voivodships, or “Polish Water” National Water Management, State Forests, etc.).

The possible joint projects and development areas indicated in the implementation of development policies may allow the management of water resources by municipalities in cooperation with other local governments in areas covering particular catchments. Tools that can be indicated by the Commune Development Strategy include: Urban Functional Areas (MOF's), Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI's/

ZIT), Strategic Intervention Areas (SIA's / OSI), Community-Led Local Development (CLLD / RLKS), Local Action Groups (LAG's / LGD), Other Territorial Instruments (OTI's / IIT).

The new provisions indicating the implementation of the Functional and Spatial Structure of the Commune into the Commune Development Strategy lead to a wider integration of strategic and planning documents. In new Strategies, especially conditions of spatial development will be described, which earlier were included in the Study of Conditions and Directions of Spatial Development. The spatial indications from the Strategies should be especially included in future planning documents. Structure models indicate guidelines based on the commune's condition diagnosis in a wide range of spatial development, development of buildings and infrastructure, and the protection and development of natural areas - including water resources. Based on these assumptions, the inventory of important landscape elements (including water areas) becomes an obligatory element of the Strategy - Landscape assessment.

It is important that the provisions of strategic documents determine the possibility of gaining public funds by local government units. Indicating recommendations for water management among the development directions will directly contribute to the possibility of implementing projects related to this area. This applies to both - communal and poviats local governments.

Based on the new statutory provisions, municipalities are required to develop new strategic documents within 4 years. NIK (Supreme Chamber of Control) may impose appropriate penalties on local governments for the lack of a Strategy which should justify the implementation of municipal investments. This means that by 2025 there should be recommendations for water management in the communes.

In addition to the development policy, changes to the spatial planning and management system are also planned. The Act on Spatial Planning and Development (from March 27, 2003) was partially updated in 2021. However, the Ministry of Development, Labor and Technology (MRPiT) plans to develop the act further by changing its paragraphs, which is currently being consulted. The new provisions should tighten the integration of planning documents with strategic ones and give the possibility of greater control of spatial development. In principle, this will allow for a coherent and standardized development policy. This changes will also contribute to better water resources protection and management.

It should allow the inclusion of important guidelines for conduction of spatial development policy in the Development Strategies of LGU's (including the protection and use of water resources in catchments).

According to the new assumptions, the two-stage planning system will be based on General Land Use Plans (replacing the present Study - SUJKZP) and Detailed Development Plans. The first one are going to be acts of local law (which means that their provisions will be binding for the implementation of new development) and will be based on the guidelines indicated in the Model of the Functional and Spatial Structure of the Commune included in the Strategy. It will replace the current Studies on the Conditions and Directions of Spatial Development. Areas excluded from development and other investments should be indicated - natural areas, floodplains, etc.

Detailed Plans will be based on the indications of General Plans and will cover larger spatial units in the commune, which excludes the creation of plans for individual plots. Decisions about development conditions and the location of a public purpose investment are assumed to be compatible with the General Plan.

Additionally, the new prototype of the act provides complementary tools for the implementation of development policy in communes. These include: national standards and municipal standards for development of buildings and infrastructure, public-private partnerships as a part of Integrated Investment Projects.

National standards and communal standards. Individual local government units will be able to prepare their own local standards for infrastructure and building development. It should influence the location of development and determine arise of buildings or other infrastructure elements in accordance to the guidelines.

Public-private partnerships as a part of the Integrated Investment Project (IIP / ZPI). It will concern the creation of investment spaces. As part of the partnerships, agreements will be concluded between the commune and investors, in which the expectations of both parties, rights and obligations will be formalized, as well as the division of activities which are part of investment implementation. With use of IIP, which will be consistent with the General Plans, local governments may indicate appropriate practices of maintaining the optimal condition of water resources to investors.

### Setting objectives for the pathways

Thus to follow up our activities within the Waterdrive project up to 2021, the following overarching objective of all the National Pathways has been defined:

To facilitate development of more coherent, holistic approach to water management at regional/local levels in close coordination with national initiatives taken by key policy decision makers through:

- a) initiating new organizational and institutional changes at national and regional levels, ‘
- b) promote more common application of already existing policy instruments amongst key water management actors at regional/local levels.

As a result the four National Pathways have been developed:

- a) Introduction of new type of services in scope of services provided by the Polish system of public agricultural advisory system,
- b) Improvement of coordination in water resources management at territorial level,

- c) Development instruments of Local Governments as method of implementing water management,
- d) Local Governments Strategies – key, capacity building, integrated planning.

It shall be emphasized that all relevant actors involved in water management in agriculture will be included into four National Pathways implementation, starting from farmers and their organizations and network of agricultural advisors through local governments representing all level of self-governance up to actors operating at national level.

## Performing SWOT analysis

As all pathways are to be delivered under one, overarching strategic objective described in section 3 one SWOT analyses covers all four pathways.

strengths	weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network of national and local public actors operating in area of water management.</li> <li>• Fully operational network of public agricultural advisory services covering the whole area of Poland</li> <li>• Network of water partnerships managed by farmers as a representatives of farming communities at local level (network not covers the whole area of Poland)</li> <li>• Already existing tools for local governments that gives the possibility to develop in the field of water management</li> <li>• wider integration of planning and strategic documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor coordination at strategic and operational levels between public actors involved in water management</li> <li>• Lack of specific focus within scope of operations of public actors involved in water management on agricultural needs as a separate topic</li> <li>• Lack of properly trained agricultural advisors to provide holistic water advise at farm level</li> <li>• Low level of farmers involvement in local water partnerships</li> <li>• Lack of sufficient policies and financial mechanisms for more active involvement in water management based on common intersectoral activities</li> </ul>
Chances	threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for more effective cooperation at national and regional level on managing water related issues connected with agricultural sector</li> <li>• Development of new type of services – water agricultural advisors</li> <li>• Activation of water partnership and farmers’ involvement in their actions through appropriate policies and financial incentives</li> <li>• New incentives for local governments for more pro active approach for water management, involving other local actors and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slow process of development of cooperation instruments between all public actors involved in water management focused on agricultural needs</li> <li>• Risk of to low level prioritization of water agricultural advisors within institutional system of public agricultural advisory services in Poland</li> <li>• Unclear legal position of water partnership under new legislation, still in the process of discussion</li> <li>• Limited interest of local authorities in agricultural related water management</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increasing attention of local authorities to the issue of access to water during droughts</li></ul>	due to strong competition with others problems (e.g. air pollution)
---	---

## Designing the implementation process

All pathways to create realistic way for improvement of coordination at regional/local levels requires:

- extremely flexible approach to apply all available legal, organisational and financial resource positively influencing voluntary cooperation between all relevant actors and stakeholder at an appropriate territorial level,
- currently the most relevant vehicle for supporting cooperation in an initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development leading to establishment of nearly 100 Local Water Partnership by the end 2021 (to be extended for the whole area of Poland in next years),
- the public agricultural advisory services has been allocated the main role in the process of local partnerships establishment at poviats/counties levels, It closely correlates with Pathway 2.1 as new type service will actively support partnership creation in their areas of providing advisory services,

However, in future under this pathway all activities leading to better cooperation at regional/local level shall be actively supported, particularly by the public agricultural advisors (including water advisors).

## Elaborating on stakeholder roles and responsibilities (stakeholder analysis)

*To be done later this year when, hopefully, current work of new legal framework defining legal position of some relevant actors active in water management will be, at least temporary, defined.*

## Visualizing the impact by 2030

*To be done later this year when, hopefully, current work of new legal framework defining legal position of some relevant actors active in water management will be, at least temporary, defined.*