

Turkey



The Gediz basin

In the past decade, the Gediz basin located in Western Turkey changed considerably: this started with the severe drought which affected the Basin from 1989 to 1994, in part due to an above average increase in urban and industrial demand.

When these **drought stroked**, irrigation were reduced sharply during the peak summer season, the **return flows diminished** and **water quality** deteriorated considerably in the lower third of the basin, bringing rural residents to complain. At the same time, there was widespread desiccation of the important **wetland areas** in the Gediz Delta, leading to large reductions in bird populations and loss of species diversity.

Five categories of water users in the Gediz Basin can be identified and their respective water uses outlined. In addition there are other **State actors** such as DSI (Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources) involved in Gediz Basin water management who, while not water users, are playing important role. The current problem is that, although DSI had been the sole actor to perform the **water allocation** for long years, there are now **several new actors** who claim that this task is not assigned explicitly but only implied in Law. The responsibilities of these new actors – claiming their role to undertake the water allocation - overlap with those of DSI, and significant conflict are arising: this is both an institutional and legal problem.

With respect to **water pollution**, the situation is similar. The problem is again the existence of **too many regulations** which treat pollution issues from a number of different perspectives and rely on different ministries and institutions.



For instance, control on water pollution is the responsibility of **4 different ministries**: DSI monitors water quality while the Ministry of Environment and Forestry detects violators and reports them to the local governor. Then, the local governor (Ministry of the Interior) issues fines on violators and the fines are collected by the Ministry of Finance which do not return them to the environmental sector.

DSS tools and approaches in Turkey

Major water resources agencies in Turkey have been and are still pretty slow in adapting DSS tools for water management, as cooperation with research institutions is rather weak.

In the last 2-3 years, these agencies have nevertheless started to favour DSS tools: yet, they fail to use DSS effectively and sufficiently in decision-making since there is a strong need for capacity building and personnel training.

Keywords: Wetland, Conflicts, Laws overlapping

Further readings: See the NOSTRUM-DSS *Turkish National Report*, available at <http://www.nostrum-dss.eu>
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