Workshop on Agriculture and Water Management in the Danube River Basin
5-6 November 2012
Bucharest, Romania

ICPDR Stakeholders Survey Online Questionnaire on Agriculture and Water Management

The ICPDR Workshop on Agriculture and Water Management, scheduled for 5-6 November 2012, is a component of the EU Grant offered to the ICPDR, dedicated to the organization of a stakeholders' dialogue on inter-linkages between WFD and EU agricultural policies.

An online questionnaire was designed and submitted to a large number of stakeholders in the Danube River Basin. From a total of 71 received inputs, a number of 51 questionnaires were fully completed by 51 respondents, most of them representing public authorities in charge with water management and environment protection.

The survey is addressing stakeholders in the Danube countries who are involved or directly responsible for aspects of integration of agricultural and water policies initiatives and efforts within the context of the implementation of Nitrates Directive (ND) and Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

The main objective of the survey is to learn from stakeholder experience, expertise and best practices and identifying needs and potential barriers for further capacity building and implementation process for agricultural measures, to further support the countries efforts in implementing the EU and national legislation and achieve the WFD objectives.

The results of this questionnaire will pave the way to the discussion of the Bucharest workshop, and they will also provide an opportunity for comparative analysis of different stakeholders' involvement.

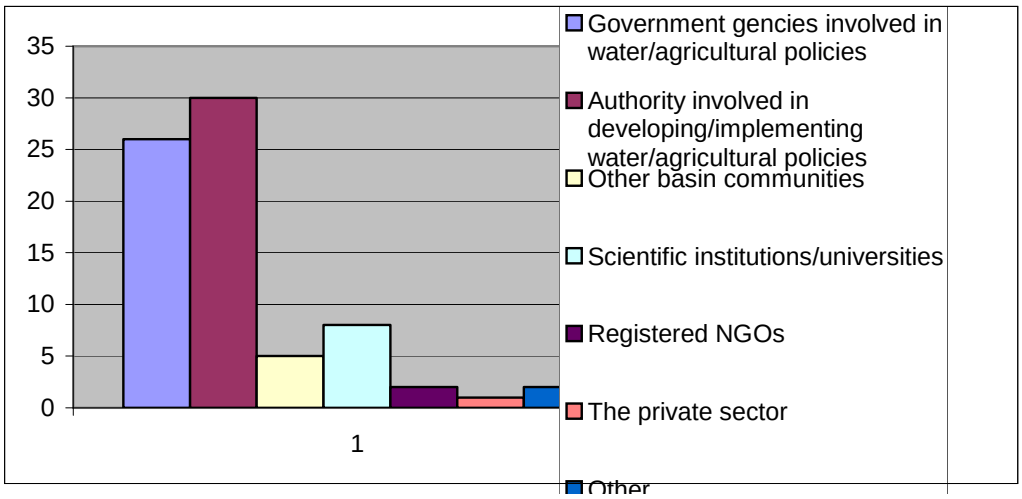

Figure 1 The stakeholder's structure according to their representation

Most of the people who filled in the survey are employed by governmental authorities involved in water and agricultural policies, other stakeholders being less represented.

Within this group of government agencies, the most representative subgroup is water authorities, only two persons (out of 22) representing agriculture (Figure 1).

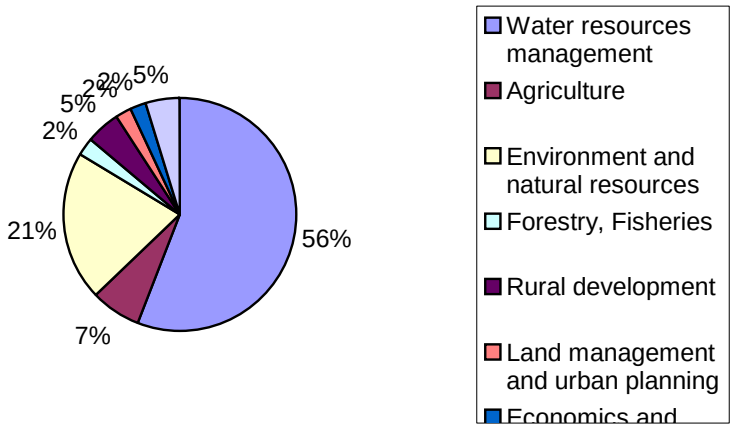

Figure 2 Professional profiles of people who are attending the workshop

The academic sector is represented by 10 specialists only, most equally distributed across water research institutes (8 participants) and environmental research units (the same number of participants). The climate change specialists are not represented, while the farm advisory and irrigation research centers are each represented by one person only.

Figure 2 presents the professional profiles of people who are attending the workshop. As expected, most representatives came form water management and environment protection area (56% and 21 % respectively), followed by specialists in agriculture.

The scopes of stakeholders' involvement are represented in Figure 3, resulting a great deal of interest for applying techniques suitable for each domain of interest.

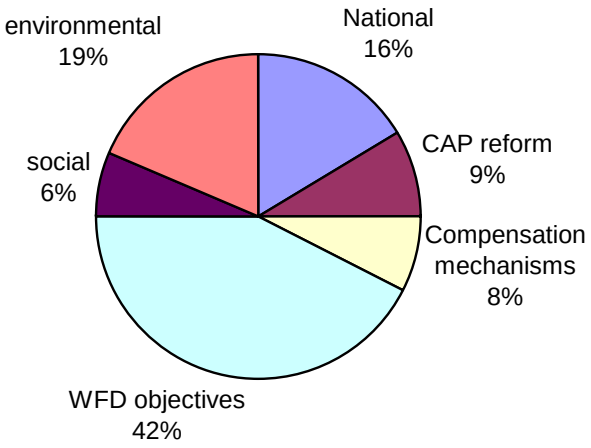

Figure 3 Scope of consultancy provided at national level by stakeholders who are attending the workshop

As for the representation levels, which actually better describes the stakeholders' capacity to cope with the multiple challenges raised by consultancy scope, the situation is described in Figure 4, resulting that institutional and communities/farms interests are better represented.

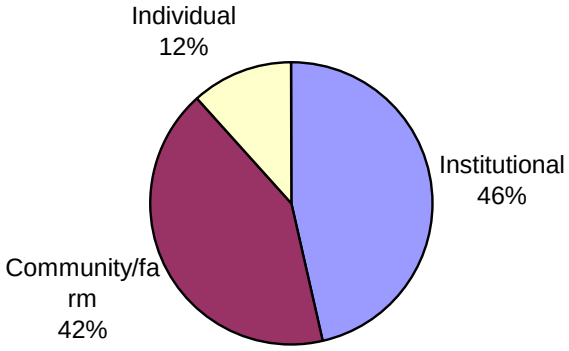

Figure 4 Levels considered in developing stakeholder capacity

The roles played by stakeholders in decision making processes were also surveyed for testing some expected patterns referred to the prevailing and suitable role played by each stakeholder. Most of respondents have identified the governmental agencies and ministries as decision makers, water authorities as implementers and the basin communities as advisers and observers, the two roles being shared with universities and research units. The NGO sector is visible rather as observer or adviser, while the private sector was considered as an important stakeholder just by a few respondents.

Figure 5 show the most important reasons for getting the stakeholders involved in whatever decision making process referring the water management. As expected, the prevailing reasons are related to EU directive implementation and public addressability, which is also connected to a broader basis for negotiating the decisions made at different levels. A great deal of expectations referred to innovative outcomes and better implementation of the decisions made.

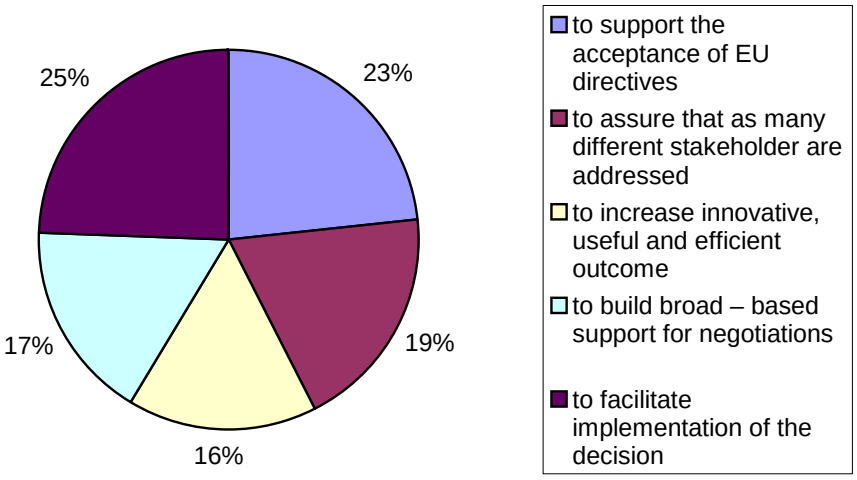

Figure 5 Reasons why getting the stakeholders involved

The benefits expected through stakeholders' involvement are presented in Figure 6 and, by far, the most important results consist in better understanding of the values behind different decisions undertaken by public and local authorities. Definitely harmonized objectives are a precondition for making and implementing the right decisions, as demonstrated in the same figure.

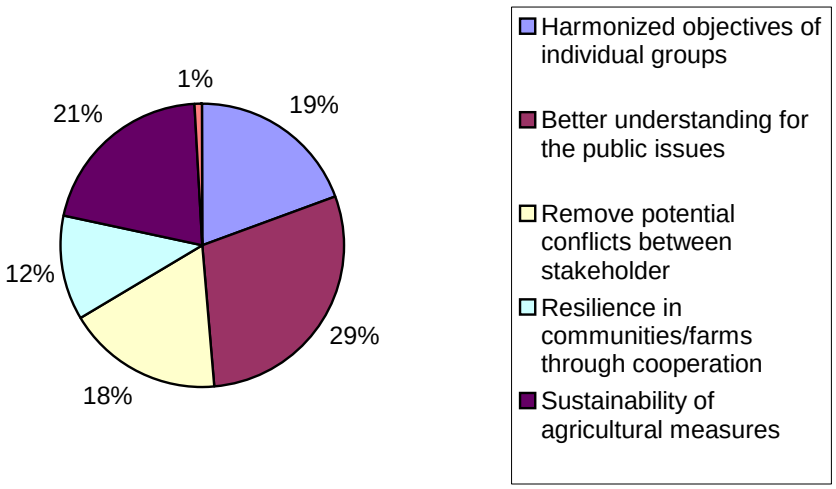

Figure 6 Benefits are reached through the stakeholder involvement

When it came to tailoring the Rural Development Programmes to individual areas (local needs(, most of respondents has agreed with this idea (40 out of 47 total answers) but the opinions about the appropriate methods and analytic tools are different: 29 respondents considered the economic assessment as suitable, while 20 respondents preferred multi-criteria analysis – some people have agreed with both methods. Going further with this aspect, 23 respondents preferred limited number of parameters and only 7 considered a complex analysis more suitable.

As for the actions needed at water basin for a better implementation of agri-environment measures, the opinions are described in Figure 7, resulting that farm-advisory services and better communication are still needed.

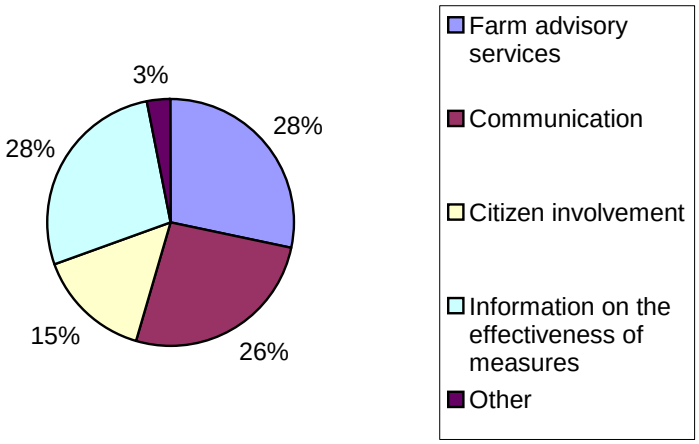

Figure 7 Action required at water basin on the implementation of agri- environmental measures

Synergies between agriculture, water management and environment protection shall be based on a solid ground of various interactions carried out by different stakeholders who are not effectively implied in the three top-level fields of action, but are able to steer other stakeholders' interests in adopting harmonized measures of intervention. The stakeholders' opinions about these synergies are summarized in Figure 8, resulting that a great deal of expectations are addressed to the educational system, fallowed by spatial planning and finances (i.e. insurance institutions).

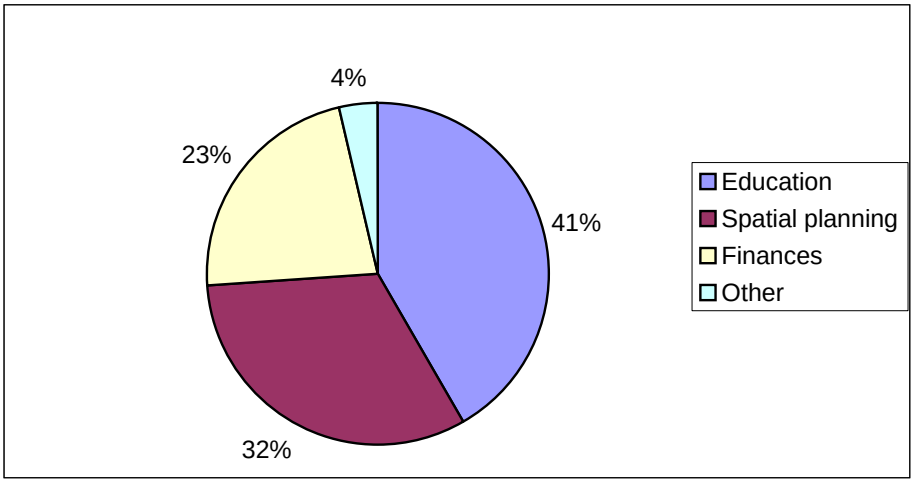

Figure 8 Directions from people are expecting to raise synergetic effects between agriculture, environment protection and water management

As for the extent to which the ND and CAP effectively addressed the impact of agricultural practices on water quality, the situation is presented in Figure 9, resulting that most of respondents confirmed the heavy impact of agricultural practices on water.

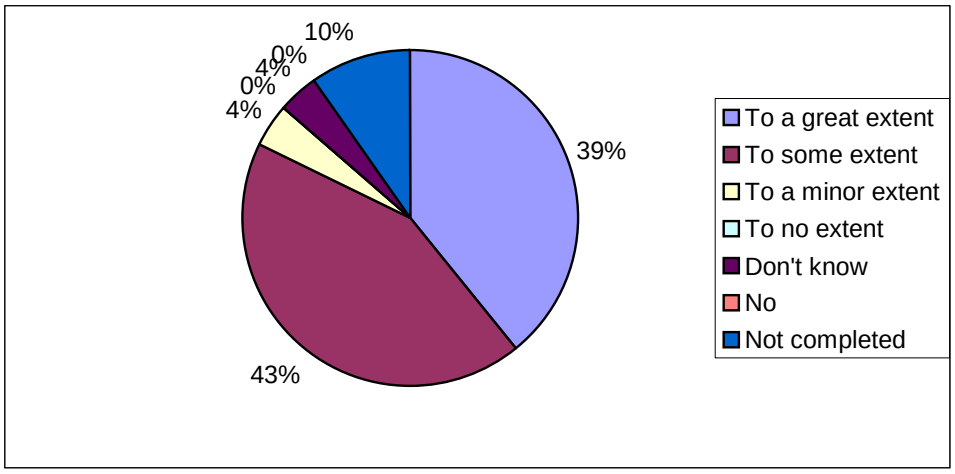

Figure 9 Answers to the question referring to the extent to which the ND and CAP applied in each country/region addresses agricultural impacts on water

The next questions inquired the people's opinions about the objectives of WFD and their relationship with agricultural measures undertaken in each country. The answers are summarized in Figure 10, resulting that most of the participants are aware and concerned about the impact of agricultural practices on WFD objectives and implementation.

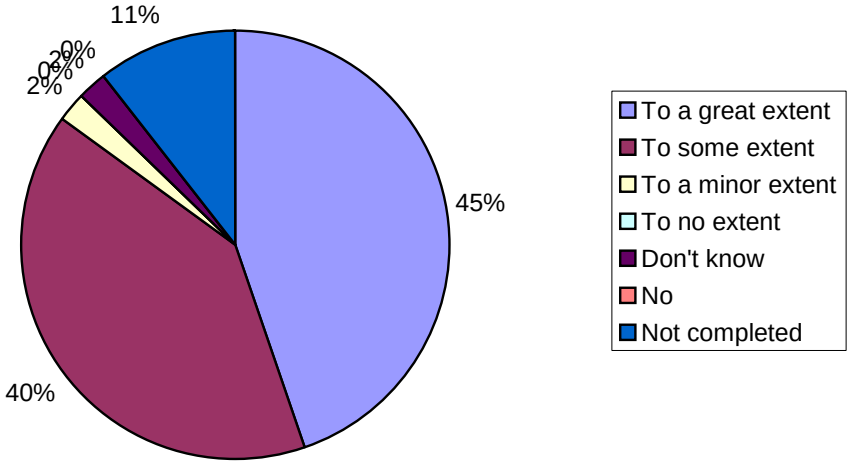

Figure 10 Answers to the question referring to the extent to which the WFD objectives are impeded or affected by agricultural practices

The barriers, which are deterring the synergies between CAP and WFD were identified in the areas presented in Figure 11 resulting that limited knowledge and information is the main cause la these weaknesses.

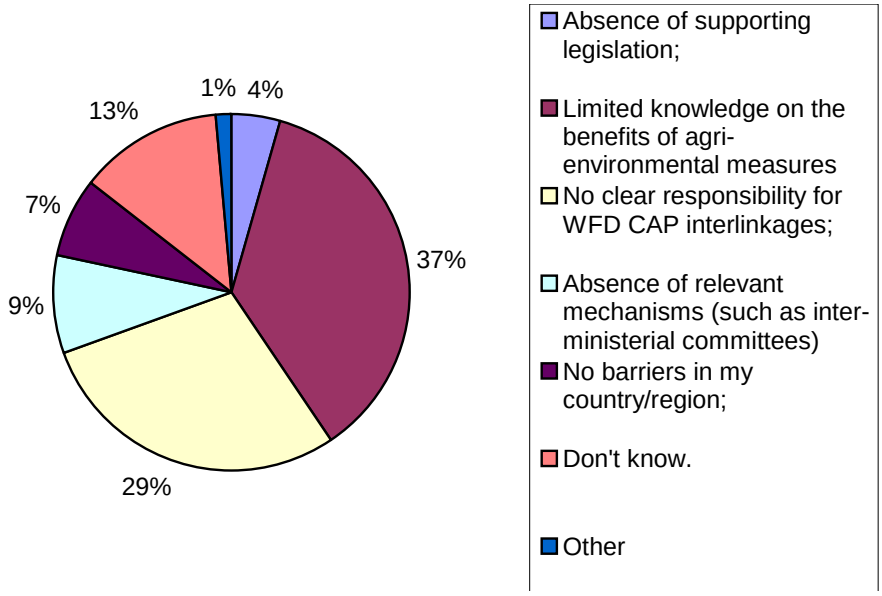

Figure 11 The barriers identified in considering the WFD objectives in relation to the national implementation of the CAP

The situation previously described is caused by the missing interlinkages between water management and CAP within the advisory farm services provided in each country. The explanation is presented in Figure 12.

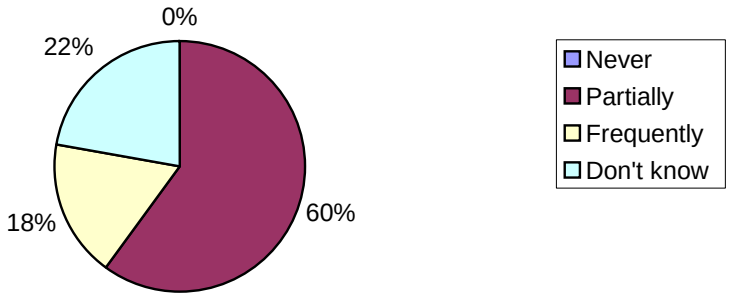

Figure 12 Answers to the question: "Do farm advisory services currently consider WFD – agriculture interlinkages in their activities?"

As shown in Figure 12, most of the consultancies provided to farmers are related to WFD and agriculture interlinkages, being more or less related to traditional agricultural practices, oriented to high crops and nutrients control.

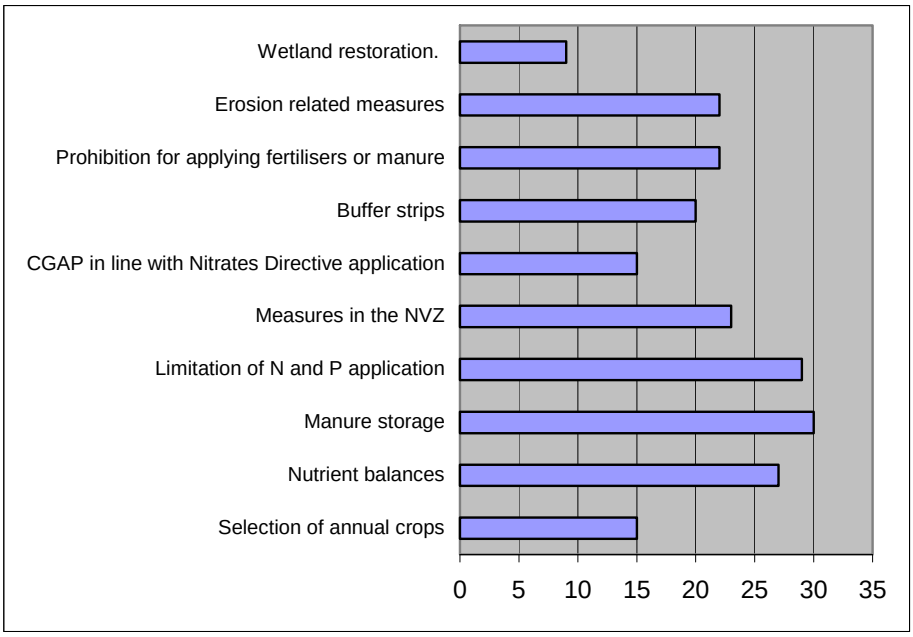

Figure 13 Answers given to the question "Where the most of the farm practical management advice is targeted?"

The question addressing the barriers to a more effective system of farm advisory services was answered as shown in Figure 14: most of the people agreed that limited information about the compensation mechanisms provided by CAP and insufficient funds for implementing the agri-environmental measures. .

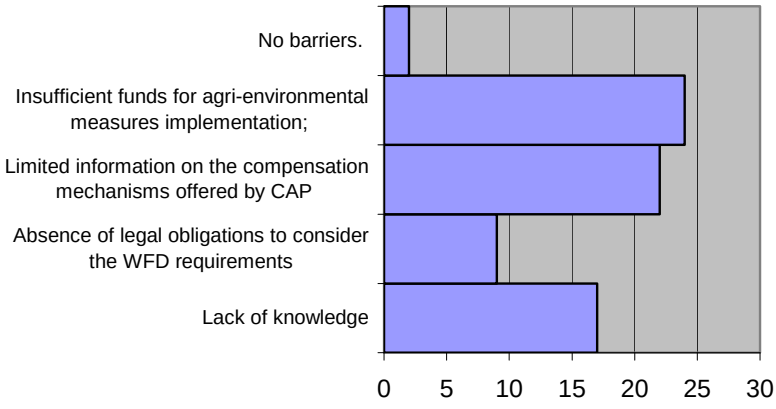

Figure 14 Barriers to a more effective system of farm advisory services

As shown in Figure 14, besides the economic constraint (not enough funds for agri-environmental measures, most of the respondents have considered that limited information and lack of appropriate knowledge are important obstacles in implementing sustainable local policies. Hence the last question referred to the appropriate tools needed to overcome these shortages, and the results are presented in Figure 15. Pilot farms, brochures, leaflets and websites are considered the most attractive forms of awareness, as well as training for trainers.

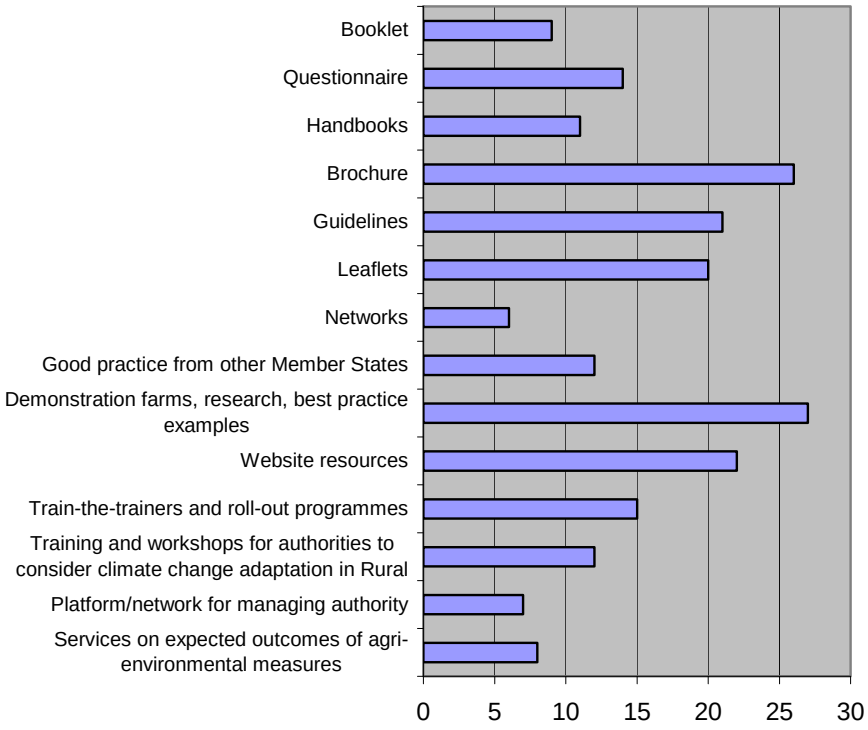

Figure 15 Most suitable products used for public and stakeholders consultation on water and agriculture, envisaged by workshop participants