

Land-use and water resources planning systems in Portugal – driving from conceptual boundaries into real synergies?

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ABSTRACT

Spatial planning and development are critical components in maintaining and restoring water quality in streams, lakes, wetlands, estuaries and aquifers, as well as, crucial to prevent water-associated risks and to adapt to global change. An effective articulation between spatial planning, development control and water resources planning and management measures can contribute to the successful implementation of the Water Framework Directive 'basic measures' and can, consequently, help to encourage the sustainable management and protection of water resources. The way land use and water resources planning systems are tied and articulated, is a key issue for the deployment of the above mentioned potential. This article develops a critical analysis of the integration of the spatial planning and water resources planning systems in Portugal, and reveals new insights and conditionings for more productive synergies between these systems. Firstly it presents a literature review on spatial planning and water resources planning, with particular focus on arguments and the appeal for stronger ties. Secondly it concentrates on the Portuguese planning systems, questioning: i) how the Law on Spatial Planning and Urban Development establishes the main features of the spatial planning procedures and plan contents regarding water resources, and ii) how it brings new expectations for the adoption of more environmentally sustainable planning and water resources management practices. In addition, it analyses how the WFD and the Portuguese Water Law have introduced new challenges for the integration of water resources management concerns into spatial planning and, especially, urban development determinants.

KEY WORDS: *water resources planning, spatial planning, borders and interfaces, WFD, Portugal.*