2003-2005 **STAR** –
STANDARDISATION OF RIVER CLASSIFICATIONS: FRAMEWORK METHOD FOR CALIBRATING DIFFERENT BIOLOGICAL SURVEY RESULTS AGAINST ECOLOGICAL QUALITY CLASSIFICATIONS TO BE DEVELOPED FOR THE WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE
EC-EVK1-2002-00534 - the EU RTD project; http://www.eu-star.at/

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5	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	Uppsala, Sweden
6	Masaryk University Brno	Brno, Czech Republic
7	National Centre for Marine Research, Institute of Inland Waters	Athens, Greece
8	Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche	Brugherio, Italy
9	University of Évora	Èvora, Portugal
10	National Environmental Research Institute	Silkeborg, Denmark
11	The Environment Agency	Bristol, UK
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Problem Statement

The wide variety of assessment methods for streams and rivers in Europe provide great opportunities for developing effective biological monitoring and assessment protocols and metrics for all types of stressors and geographic regions. However, the variety of organism types that need to be considered and the multiplicity of established methodologies in current usage present significant problems for consistent inter-state interpretation and allocation of Ecological Status. Given these advantages and, more importantly, potential problems, inter-calibration of protocols and standardisation of interpretation and allocation of Ecological Status is crucial to the implementation of the WFD.

Project abstract

The WFD sets a framework for monitoring the Ecological Status of rivers using a range of taxa. A common European Standard is required for this purpose. Aims of STAR are to:

1) cross-calibrate and integrate assessments using different methods and taxonomic groups
2) recommend which procedures to use in which situations
3) define the precision and reliability of each method and
4) assist the EU in defining the boundaries of classes of Ecological Status.

The NAS proposal will support and extend these aims by

5) increasing the geographic coverage of the project
6) defining the spatial scale over which different taxonomic groups can be used
7) developing species trait analysis as a unifying concept for bioassessment and
8) defining optimal procedures for collecting and processing samples.

Outputs will include a Decision Support System and recommendations for a CEN standard for assessing Ecological Status from multiple sources of ecological data.