

**AquaticPollutants
Thematic Annual Programming Action
(TAP)**

Terms of Reference

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Disclaimer

This publication reflects only the views of the AquaticPollutants ERA-NET Cofund project and the European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained herein.

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1. Background

1.1 A Tool for Alignment

The AquaticPollutants project is a European Commission funded ERA-NET Cofund Action built on the collaboration of the Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) on Water, Oceans and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), which aims to strengthen the European Research Area (ERA) in the field of clean and healthy aquatic ecosystems. In order to reach this objective, the project supports the development of the AquaticPollutants Thematic Annual Programming (TAP – Work Package 6, Task 6.2). This document sets out the proposed implementation of the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants TAP Action starting in 2022 and presents the procedure for setting up the Action. The ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants TAP Action 2022 will draw from the experience and lessons of the 1st Water JPI TAP Action referred to as AQUATAP_ES, which was implemented by the Water JPI and coordinated by Irish EPA. Note, this document is based on the Terms of Reference of the TAP Action in the WaterWorks2015 ERA-NET Cofund.

Huge risks derive from the occurrence of contaminants of emerging concern (CECs) and pathogens, especially antimicrobial resistant bacteria, in water bodies and the oceans. To face these challenges in a comprehensive way and to provide multidisciplinary solutions for a safe and healthy aquatic environment, the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants aims to further alignment of national research, development and/or innovation (RDI) programmes and projects related to water challenges. The TAP is one of the tools of alignment that is being leveraged for this purpose.

*“Alignment is the strategic approach taken by Member States to modify their national research programmes, priorities or activities as a consequence of the adoption of joint research priorities in the context of Joint Programming, with a view to improving the efficiency of investment in research at the level of Member States and the European Research Area (ERA).”*¹ In general, both the Member States and the Associated Countries may coordinate to reach further alignment via (joint) actions. The goal is a greater coordination and complementarity among national research priorities, programmes and activities around jointly identified strategic priorities (e.g. a Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas, SRIA). The desired outcome is increased efficiency of public funding and research by avoiding duplication across Europe and beyond.

1.2 The TAP Concept

A TAP Action is a “light alignment” tool aimed to foster the alignment of national research programmes, promoting the international cooperation and coordination of national research projects. It has a finite time frame. It relies on the establishment of a network or cluster of excellence of national projects focussed on specific RDI needs from new or already started national calls in order to partner them, creating a critical mass of research and technological excellence, and ensuring the integration and sharing of knowledge. Specific outputs and added value of the cluster are listed in the chapter 2.4. In a nutshell, activities include biannual working meetings of the cluster which allow exchange on approaches, methods, and data.

¹ Source: ERA-Learn 2020 Policy Brief on impact assessment of networks, 2015.

2. AquaticPollutants Thematic Annual Programming Action

The ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants aims at pooling resources from participating research programme owners / managers from European, associated and third countries to implement a joint transnational call for proposals with European Commission co-funding (Call 1) and two additional calls (Call 2 and 3) with European Commission support for implementation. All the three calls are interconnected by mutual complementarity.

The first call is a [Joint Transnational Call](#)² (JTC) for research proposals which address the combined challenges of the Water JPI, JPI Oceans and JPI AMR. The ambition was to strengthen knowledge building on the issues of risk management of emerging pollutants, pathogens and antimicrobial resistances in aquatic ecosystems (freshwater, groundwater, marine), their spread in the environment “from the source to the mouth”, their effect on human health as well as strategies and concepts to reduce those effects and their input into the ecosystems.

The two additional calls supplement the JTC. These two calls aim at strengthening alignment activities of the three JPis and their Member States, and provide optional support for researcher mobility. Specifically, the idea of the second AquaticPollutants call, [Transfer Project](#)³ (Additional call for proposals on Scientific Networking and Transfer Projects, TP – without European Commission co-funding), is to develop new methods for knowledge transfer in order to increase the dissemination and impact of the results of the JTC projects. This TP is a transnational project with a consortium of institutions funded by the countries (Funding Partner Organisations, FPOs) participating in this call. The TP will develop new communication strategies for better impact of RDI results and will support all co-funded call projects with networking, transfer of results and public relations using its own developed research approach. As such, the TP supports a wider dissemination of RDI project results and increases uptake of these outcomes.

The AquaticPollutants TAP Action has the role of the third ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants call (second additional call). It is a network of national projects focussed on specific RDI needs that addresses topics close to the AquaticPollutants call content. In this way, it will complement the co-funded call theme while aligning national programmes relevant for this theme. Furthermore, it leverages the impact of SRIAs of JPis on Water, Oceans and AMR by focussing on the thematic areas of the three JPis. Moreover, it will employ a multi-disciplinary approach including economic, ecological, societal and technological disciplines and perspectives.

Interested funding organisations will either include in their national calls the same call text on a specific RDI need, or select projects in this area from new calls or possibly already started calls and request the selected projects to join an international cluster (so called TAP Cluster on emerging pollutants and pathogens) organised by the participating FPOs.

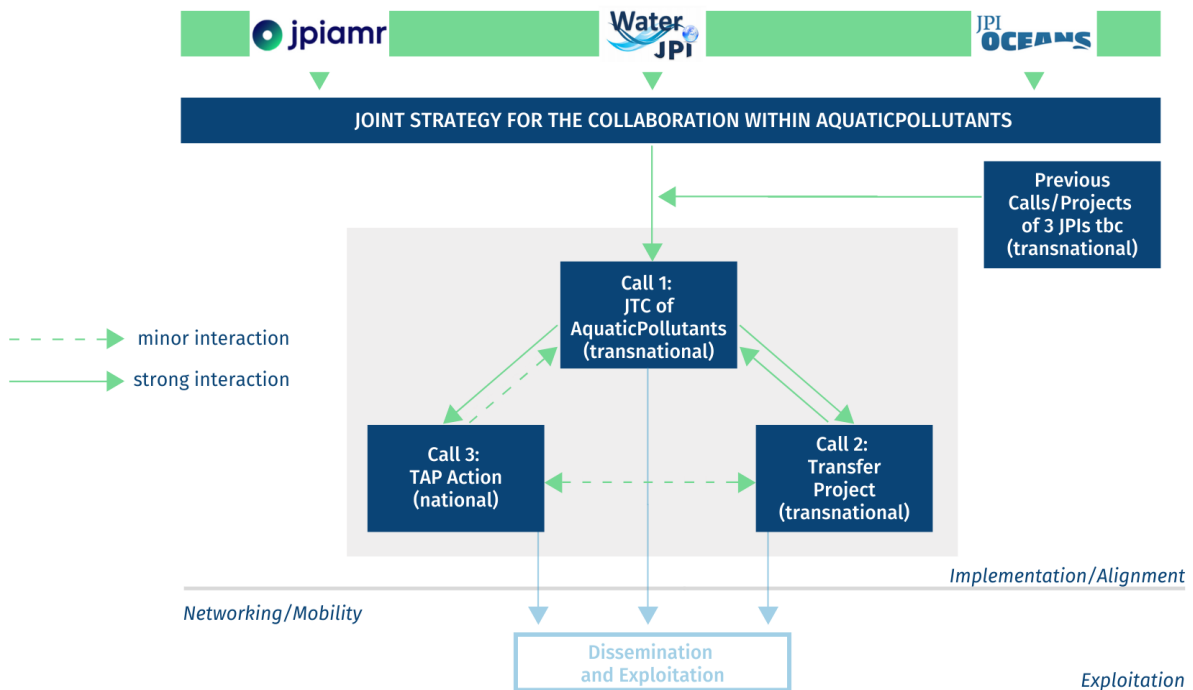
Thereby, the Action will create an opportunity for broader cross-border cooperation, greater collaboration and a more unified focus on water RDI across Europe and beyond. It will allow

² <http://www.waterjpi.eu/joint-calls/joint-call-2020-aquaticpollutants>

³ http://www.waterjpi.eu/implementation/thematic-activities/aquaticpollutants_call-announcement_transfer-project_200317.pdf

coordination between the individual projects, lead to a greater impact at the European and global level, and address research gaps and avoid duplication.

Figure 1: ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants concept and methodology



The Action is open to all members of ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants and members of the participating JPIs.

2.1 Theme: Measuring of Inputs and Taking Actions to Reduce CECs, Pathogens and Antimicrobial Resistant Bacteria in the Aquatic Ecosystems (inland and marine)

The general theme of the presented TAP Action is “contaminants of emerging concern and pathogens”. Specifically, the aim of this theme is reduction of effects of CECs, including chemicals, pathogens, antimicrobial resistant bacteria and (micro)plastics in the aquatic ecosystems (inland and marine) and subsequent impacts on human, animal, plants and ecosystems. The goal of the TAP Action is helping to broaden and/or transfer knowledge on the characterization and transformation of physical, chemical or biological CECs and methodologies and strategies to remediate and reduce these contaminants in aquatic ecosystems.

CECs is a designation that can be attributed either to contaminants that have appeared recently or to those that are present in the environment for some years, but which only recently have raised concerns about their ecological or human health impacts.⁴ The spectrum of these contaminants is very broad and they are mostly derived from anthropogenic sources, especially from urban areas, agriculture, industry as well as maritime activities, and consequently end up in our rivers, estuaries

⁴ Please consult the [Water JPI Knowledge Hub on CECs Stakeholder Brief](#).

and coastal ecosystems. These contaminants and their transformation products have been detected at concentrations significantly higher than expected and are more persistent and more disseminated than previously known. The occurrence of pathogens and CECs in water resources, which is continuously rising, is one of the most serious risks in our environment and is considered a major factor particularly in the degradation of water quality. Antimicrobial resistant organisms and genes are now found widespread throughout the environment and pose a serious emerging threat. Some of these pollutants and pathogens are known to harm aquatic ecosystems even in very low concentrations and in turn can negatively influence the provision of safe and clean water for drinking water purposes. Furthermore, as current findings indicate, it takes time till the impact of CECs on environmental and human health is made evident. The current knowledge of potential effects of these contaminants on environmental and human health is thus still limited.

To reduce or, even better, avoid the input of pollutants and pathogens into the environment, a holistic catchment approach to better understand the effects is necessary. The whole water cycle, from groundwater and sources through the river basins and eventually, for some of them, to the estuaries and oceans, has to be considered.

Following the priorities identified in the Strategic and Research Innovation Agendas (SRIAs) of the three participating JPIs on [Water](#)⁵, [Oceans](#)⁶ and [Antimicrobial Resistance](#)⁷, the theme of the TAP Action focuses in particular on multidisciplinary approaches to:

- the development of methodologies and strategies to remediate and reduce CECs (at the sources, on their pathways and end-of-pipe), including their environmental effects on water, soil, sediment and sludge and subsequently their effects on living organisms, ecosystems and human and animal health;
- the determination and modelling of the contribution of existing wastewater and excreta treatment technologies to the emergence and spread of AMR in aquatic ecosystems;
- the characterization of the exposome (including cocktail of contaminants, individual and collective behaviour and interactions between stresses of different natures);
- the evaluation of governance tools for new risk linked to contamination considering the reactions of public communities;
- the impact of CECs occurrence and AMR on the ecosystem services at the level of the catchment, and into the river basin management planning.

2.2 Supporting Countries

The countries which will take part in this joint action are:

- Czech Republic (CZ)
- France (FR)
- Ireland (IE)
- Spain (ES)
- Sweden (SE).

⁵ http://www.waterjpi.eu/mapping-agenda/strategic-research-and-innovation-agenda-sria/waterjpi_sria2025_web.pdf

⁶ <https://www.jpi-oceans.eu/introduction>

⁷ https://www.jpiamr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/JPIAMR_SRIA_final.pdf

A number of countries have expressed interest and still have to investigate the best way to join this activity and/or possibility of joining. One of these countries is Egypt (EG).

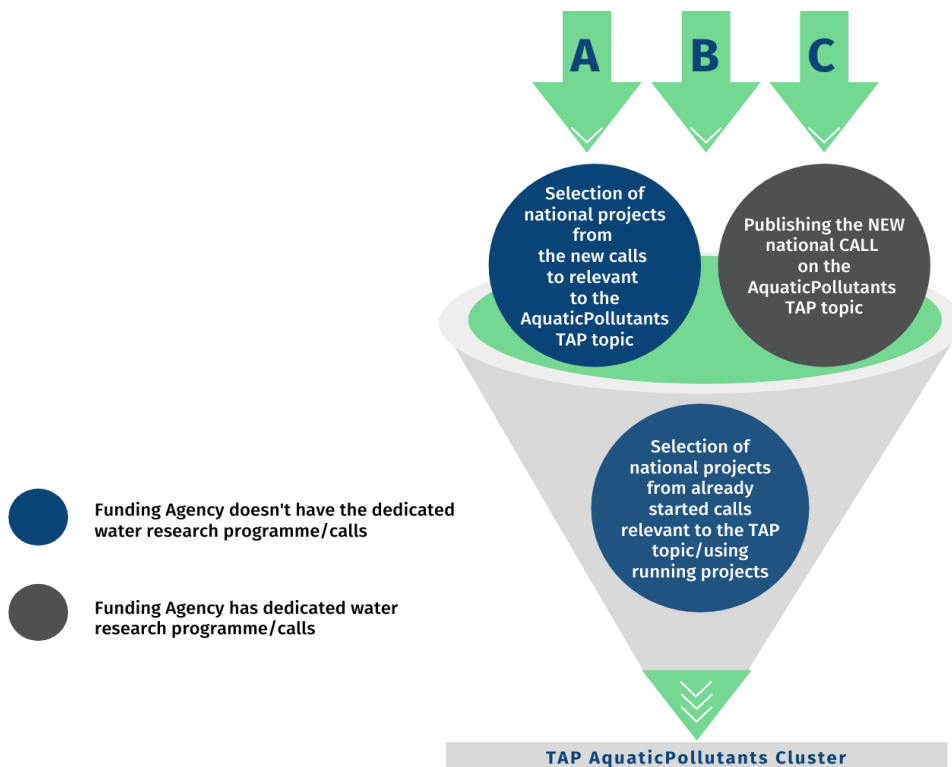
Participation of other countries will remain open until six months after its kick-off meeting in January 2022. However, it is strongly recommended to join before the kick-off meeting.

2.3 Selection of National Projects

TAP Actions are clusters of national projects, considering either new projects being funded as part of new national calls with the topic of the TAP Action included in the National Call documentation; or new national projects of relevance to the topic of the TAP Action (i.e. funded as part of new national calls without specification of the topic of the TAP Action included in the National Call documentation); or old already running national projects that were funded within a previously announced call and their contract was modified and budget increased. "Old" projects need to be running during the total duration of the TAP (i.e. until December 2023).

Depending on the funding mechanisms at national level, three scenarios were identified for the process of nominating national projects to participate in the TAP Action (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Selection of national projects



Scenario A:

- funding organisations include the short topic description as part of their individual 2020 - 2022 national calls (or prepare a new call, especially to nominate new projects for TAP);
- funding organisations award projects at national level submitted in response to the TAP Action topic.

Scenario B (Countries without national RDI programmes and/or bottom-up funding organisations):

- funding organisations identify (running) national projects awarded before January 2022 relevant to the theme of the TAP Action;
- funding organisations invite the coordinators to join the TAP Action with additional new national funding to cover the TAP Action-related activities;
- selected projects need to be running until the end of 2023.

Scenario C (Countries without national RDI programmes and/or bottom-up funding organisations):

- funding organisations identify (running) national projects awarded before January 2022 relevant to the theme of the Thematic Annual Programming Action;
- funding organisations invite the coordinators to join the Thematic Annual Programming Action using their existing budget (i.e. no new funding) to cover Thematic Annual Programming-related activities;
- selected projects need to be running until the end of 2023.

When nominating national projects to participate in the TAP Action, research funding organisations should bear in mind, among other issues, the time availability of the nominees. Following the lessons learned from the previous JPIs alignment activities, it is highly recommended not to include only high-profile senior scientists whose work schedule tends to be quite tight, but also early-career scientists and professionals who may dedicate more time to the TAP Action's activities. Apart from that, research funding organisations should apply due diligence regarding the disciplinary and gender diversity of the cluster.

2.4 Expected Outputs and Added-Value

It is envisaged that the TAP Action will carry out its networking and knowledge sharing activities:

- via two meetings per year;
- via online forum; and
- remotely (time input required) in between the meetings.

Expected Outputs

The expected outputs of the AquaticPollutants TAP Action may include (but are not limited to):

- creation of a leveraging network, which would not necessarily exist without this action – increasing transnational synergies of projects funded in national schemes;
- fostering research coordination and promoting sharing of results, data and other resources;
- fostering mobility and sharing of infrastructure;
- preparing policy briefs, stakeholder briefs, joint scientific publications, etc. that will be translated into the official languages of countries participating in the Action;
- facilitating mutual learning;
- developing common and cohesive practices/methodologies; and
- delivering knowledge for policy making, anticipate scientific and technological needs and provide efficient scientific support for strategic and political decision making in the specific field.

Expected Added-Value for Funders

It is expected that the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants TAP Action will:

- contribute to knowledge transfer to similar scientific platforms, decision makers and private sector;
- bring together researchers in a more collaborative manner;
- avoid duplication;
- provide access to other RDI infrastructures;
- contribute to alignment at project-, programme-, researcher-, and institution level; and
- strengthen collaboration between the freshwater, marine and health research areas, in line with the main AquaticPollutants Call.

Expected Added-Value for Researchers

It is expected that the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants TAP Action will:

- bring together researchers in a more collaborative manner;
- provide access to other RDI infrastructures;
- provide researchers with opportunities for networking;
- facilitate cooperation;
- improve the researchers' awareness of research priorities in other countries and how their needs overlap;
- build the researchers' capacity through integrated, transnational and multi-disciplinary approaches and exchanges of good practices;
- foster knowledge exchange and transfer.

3. AquaticPollutants Thematic Annual Programming Governance

3.1 TAP Steering Committee

Funding organisations participating in the AquaticPollutants TAP Action will compose the TAP Steering Committee. The TAP Action Steering Committee will oversee and support the activities of the TAP Action and ensure their full integration in and complementarity with the overall ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants activities and the JPIs Joint strategy. Costs associated with the TAP Steering Committee activities (i.e. attendance at meetings, time, etc) will be covered by each funding organisation (i.e. in-kind contribution).

Composition

The Thematic Annual Programming Steering Committee is composed of funding organisations that have projects taking part in this activity (Table 1).

The role of the TAP Steering Committee is to:

1. Identify relevant national projects to take part in the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants TAP Action.
2. Oversee and support the activities of the TAP Action.
3. Take all decisions on management of the TAP Action.
4. Contribute to their full integration in complementarity with the joint strategy of the three JPIs.

5. Supervise the outcomes of the TAP Action cluster by means of midterm monitoring, final follow up and final seminar with the possibility to provide feedback when required by the cluster (for instance when the cluster perceives a critical issue and/or requires support).
6. Facilitate the kick-off meeting and a final meeting.

Table 1: Thematic Annual Programming Steering Committee

Country	Organisation	Contact Name	Contact Email
Czech Republic	TA CR	Baya Barbora Nuñez	baya.barbora.nunez@tacr.cz
France	ANR	Armelle Montrose	anrteam-aquaticpollutants@agencerecherche.fr
Ireland	EPA	Lisa Sheils	l.sheils@epa.ie
Spain	AEI	Abraham Trujillo	aquapollutants@aei.gob.es
Sweden	SRC	Patriq Fagerstedt	patriq.fagerstedt@vr.se
Others tbd			

Contributions

The TAP Steering Committee will contribute and support the TAP activities by:

- covering the travel and accommodation costs of the designated representatives from the nominated national projects or by approving an inclusion of these costs as part of the project budget at national level;
- if needed, covering the costs of having documents addressed to local policy-makers translated to the official language of the given country;
- providing meeting facilities or a digital platform for online meetings, when required.

Costs associated with the TAP Steering Committee activities (i.e. attendance at meetings, time, etc) will be covered by each funding organisation (i.e. in-kind contribution or from the AquaticPollutants management costs - i.e. additional cost for AquaticPollutants partners participating in the Additional Activities, basic travel budget for funding organisations' involvement and engagement).

Steering Committee Chair

The TAP Steering Committee is chaired by TA CR (the Czech Republic) who has the overall responsibility for carrying out and coordinating the setting up, implementation and evaluation of the AquaticPollutants TAP Action.

Contact

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TA CR as lead for this ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants TAP Action will act as TAP Action Administrator, during the first two years of its existence. Costs will be covered by AquaticPollutants ERA-NET Cofund management costs assigned to TA CR in advance.

TA CR will help with:

- supporting the TAP Scientific Coordinator;
- organising meetings (agenda, documentation, minutes);
- facilitating communication within the TAP Action members and with the TAP Steering Committee;
- supporting the Cluster in the preparation of the Implementation Plan of the TAP Action and its implementation;
- external communication- disseminating and creating dissemination leaflets/contents for JPIs' web pages;
- ensuring regular updates and communication between the TAP Steering Committee, ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants consortium and the three JPIs;
- circulating exploratory survey about expectations of the Action members.

3.2 Thematic Annual Programming Action Members

Composition

The AquaticPollutants TAP Action members (the cluster members) will be composed of researchers from the national funded research projects that have the formal support of their respective research funding organisation. In order to ensure geographical diversity of the cluster, no more than three projects from one country may participate.

The indicative initial membership is for 24 months. Table 2 provides the list of the national projects and their designated representatives, composing the AquaticPollutants TAP Action.

Table 2: AquaticPollutants TAP Action members

Nominating Funding Agency Country	Nominating Funding Agency	Title of National Project	Project Coordinator Organisation	Project Coordinator Name	Project Coordinator Email	Funding amount	Active from / until
CZ							
France							
Ireland							
Spain							
Sweden							
Others tbc							

The TAP Action will be chaired by a Scientific Coordinator elected by the members of the network.

Role

The role of the TAP Action members is to:

1. Select the TAP Scientific Coordinator.
2. Actively participate in the TAP activities including attendance at meetings.
3. Agree on and implement the TAP Implementation Plan.

4. Actively disseminate the activities of the TAP Action.

The TAP Action activities will be facilitated via:

- two face-to-face meetings or equivalent per year;
- online restricted forum (e.g. this could be done via a LinkedIn group for example);
- online restricted platform for sharing documents (e.g. could be done via Google docs, SharePoint, AquaticPollutants intranet, etc);
- public dissemination of its activities and outputs through the communication tools of the three JPIs;
- remote interaction in between meetings (e.g. video conferencing, WebEx).

The TAP Action members should comply with the Water JPI [Open Access](#)⁸ and Water JPI [Privacy Policy](#)⁹ as well as the AquaticPollutants Dissemination Guidelines according to the Grant Agreement number 869178 and relevant national, regional and EU regulations.

Contributions

As stated before, the TAP Action members' costs for attending meetings (travel and accommodation costs) will be covered at the discretion of the funding organisations. The arrangement should be discussed between each national project and relevant contact in the TAP Steering Committee according to their selected funding and project nomination scenario. Specifically, national funds allocated/re-allocated to the TAP Action will cover the participation of researcher(s) from the national projects selected for the Action to attend at least four meetings over two years, i.e. two meetings per year. Depending on the agreement between the FPO and the respective project, they may but do not have to also cover personnel costs, direct costs, indirect costs and more.

3.3 The TAP Scientific Coordinator

Composition

The TAP Action will be chaired by a Scientific Coordinator. The Scientific Coordinator will be selected among the researchers involved in the TAP Action during the kick-off meeting (in January 2022) by the TAP Action members themselves. Afterwards, the TAP Scientific Coordinator has to be confirmed by the TAP Steering Committee. Candidacy for this role will be on a voluntary basis.

Role

The role of the TAP Action Scientific Coordinator is to:

1. Ensure the scientific coordination of the TAP Action activities.
2. Lead the work in developing the TAP Implementation Plan.
3. Lead the work in developing the proposed TAP Action outputs.
4. Represent the cluster at the midterm guided dialogue with the TAP Steering Committee.
5. Lead the work in developing the final follow up of the TAP Implementation Plan.
6. If requested, support additional foresight exercises carried out by the JPIs in the selected scientific area of the TAP Action.

⁸ https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/oa_pilot/h2020-hi-oa-pilot-guide_en.pdf

⁹ http://www.waterjpi.eu/images/documents/water_jpi_privacy_policy-1.pdf

Contributions

Same as for the cluster members, the Coordinator's costs for attending meetings (travel and accommodation costs) will be covered by the budget of his/her respective national project/or funding organisation. An additional honorary fee of c. €10,000 will be provided to the Scientific Coordinator to cover part of his/her time committed during the two years of the TAP Action. This cost will be covered by central AquaticPollutants ERA-NET Cofund budget allocated to the TAP task.

4. Tentative Activities and Timetable for 2022 and 2023

The AquaticPollutants TAP Action related national calls or selection of new national projects will take place in the first half of 2021, with a launch date for the Action in January 2022. The TAP Action will run for a period of 24 months. The deliverables must be completed before the end of 2024 (end of AquaticPollutants). ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants Joint Transnational Call 2020 and the Transfer Project were published in February 2020.

Selected national projects must be operational during the period January 2022 - December 2023.

4.1 Timeline

January 2021: Information regarding the TAP Action included on the website of each JPI: JPI Water, JPI AMR, JPI Oceans

- A dedicated area on the JPI Water, JPI Oceans and JPI AMR websites will be used to disseminate information about the TAP Action. The three websites will be updated during the Action lifetime with the information regarding the funded projects participating in the TAP Action and the TAP Action outputs to ensure coherence.

January - July 2021: National calls following national procedures

March 2021: Recommended deadline for the confirmation of participation in the TAP Action

July 2021: Nomination of national projects and contact details sent to TA CR

- Invitation issued to the national projects by the funding organisations to participate in the AquaticPollutants TAP Action - Researchers¹⁰ from the selected national projects will be requested to send their CVs.
- TAP Steering Committee members will review the CVs of the researchers invited and identify a potential candidate for coordinating the TAP Action. The information will also be reflected in the "TAP Who is Who" package.
- Informal contact can be made to gauge the interest of these researchers in presenting their candidacy to become the Coordinator.

October 2021: Exploratory survey examining needs and expectations of the TAP members

- Considering their no previous experience with the TAP Action, all the members will be provided with a brief description of the Action and Who is Who document.
- Outcomes of the survey will be analysed by TA CR and, if beneficial, presented at the kick-off meeting to clarify the expectation of the TAP members from the very beginning and to simplify the initial discussion.

¹⁰ Identified within the national project research teams the national project research teams.

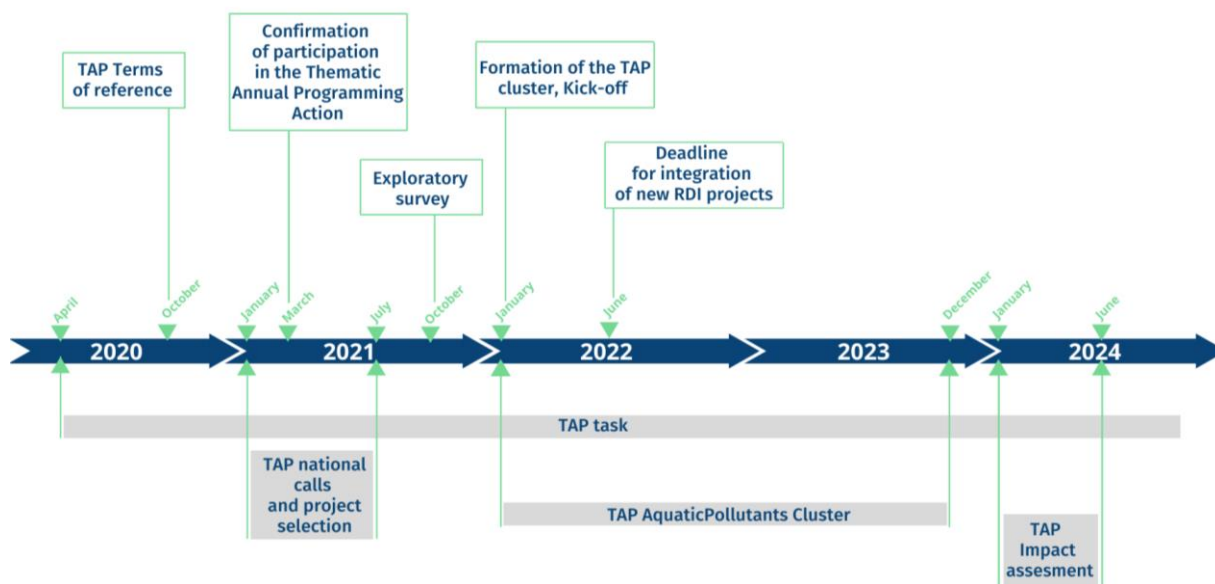
January 2022: All new national projects to be involved in the TAP Action have started

January 2022: Launch of the TAP Action at kick-off meeting

December 2023: TAP Action ends

January - June 2024: assessment of the TAP Action and related outputs

Figure 3: Timeline



4.2 AquaticPollutants TAP Action Kick-off

Once formed, all members of the TAP Action will meet face-to-face in January 2022 (kick-off meeting facilitated by TA CR in the Czech Republic, ideally back to back with an AquaticPollutants consortium meeting).

Expected attendees include researchers from the national projects (Action members) invited to participate in the TAP Action and the TAP Steering Committee members.

The objectives of the meeting are to:

- provide clarification on the processes involved, etc;
- provide an introduction platform;
- select a Thematic Annual Programming Action Coordinator based on the Who is Who package prepared using CVs provided by the nominated experts and exploratory survey about expectations of the Action members;
- select the TAP Action acronym and name;
- exchange and networking of the national projects involved in the TAP Action – Discussion on the Implementation Plan;
- clarify the Implementation Plan expectations;
- overview the previously mapped Action members’ expectations and needs in order to start the process of Implementation Plan preparation.

Costs:

- Travel costs of the researchers will be covered under the related national project budgets.
- Travel costs of the Steering Committee members will be covered by the funding organisations (i.e. as in-kind contribution or from the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants management costs dedicated to the funding organisations).
- Meeting costs will be covered under the other direct costs dedicated to TA CR for task 6.2.

4.3 Implementation Phase

The TAP Scientific Coordinator linking with the Action members will prepare a proposed Implementation Plan to meet expected outputs of TAP Action within four months from the kick-off meeting. The Implementation Plan will be sent to TA CR that will distribute it to other ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants partners or information. The plan must include:

- main objectives;
- key outputs and indicators of progress;
- target audience/stakeholders (policy makers, private sector representatives, municipalities, etc): The TAP Action Secretariat will later help the cluster to reach these stakeholders and invite them to the final seminar where conclusions of the Action will be presented to them;
- measures on how success of the Action will be evaluated.

The Implementation Phase will compose of:

- a virtual meeting platform/information sharing will be set up to facilitate the work of the TAP cluster;
- biannual working meetings;
- a midterm monitoring that will have a form of a guided dialogue between the TAP Steering Committee and the Scientific Coordinator mapping the up to date degree of accomplishment of the indicators of progress defined in the Implementation Plan;
- a final seminar including a presentation to the funding organisations and public and private stakeholders in order to achieve a better knowledge transfer;
- ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants TAP dedicated web pages will be created to provide all relevant information on this TAP Action.

See Figure 3 for outline of particular steps.

Costs:

- Travel costs of the researchers will be covered under the related national projects budgets/and or their national funding organisations where possible. Where not possible, the costs will be carried by the researchers within their current nationally funded project budget.
- Scientific Coordinator's time will be covered by the central budget of ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants in the form of a lump-sum honorary fee.
- Travel costs of the TAP Steering Committee members will be covered by the funding organisations (as in-kind contribution or as part of the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants management costs dedicated to the funding organisations).

- Meeting costs (two meetings in total including the kick-off meeting) will be covered by the Management costs - other direct costs dedicated to TA CR for task 6.2. If additional meetings will be needed, the costs will be covered by the members of the TAP Steering Committee.
- JPI websites will be used to spread the information about ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants TAP Action. All communications tools (website, newsletter, social media) may be used for communicating and disseminating the Action.

4.4 Joining the TAP Action later in 2022

This will be possible under the following conditions:

- new RDI projects tackling the selected TAP topic during the TAP Action duration; and
- integration in the TAP Action within six months after its kick-off meeting.

The conditions mentioned above, however, are valid only for the RDI projects nominated by the respective funding organisation standing outside of the Steering Committee. Steering Committee members have to follow the given timeline and, therefore, are not given the possibility to nominate their national projects later.

5. AquaticPollutants Thematic Annual Programming Action Evaluation

Monitoring of the progress indicators will be put in place to ensure that the TAP Action achieves its objectives. This evaluation will be linked to the ERA-NET Cofund **AquaticPollutants Impact Assessment activities** including a timeframe for achieving the expected outputs of the TAP Action.

Possible Indicators of progress will be defined in the Implementation Plan by the Action members and they may include:

- number of joint publications which acknowledge the TAP Action;
- number of publications produced with transnational authors/different clusters in a short timeframe;
- policy briefs and other reports for policy makers;
- stakeholder briefs and other reports for stakeholders;
- interoperable databases developed;
- standard methods/standards developed;
- comparative studies developed;
- mobility of researchers between countries evident (if permitted by the mobility restrictions due to covid-19);
- exchange of students (e.g. joint supervision of Ph.D. student);
- good attendance at online/in person meetings;
- attendance at informative meetings/workshops addressing to stakeholders (online if required by the mobility restrictions due to covid-19);
- organisation of meetings/workshops (online if required by the mobility restrictions due to covid-19);
- other.

Regardless of the types of the Indicators, at the end of the Action the Scientific Coordinator will present to TA CR at least a short follow up of the Implementation plan where actions, outcomes and achievements will be summarized. The material will be used by TA CR to compose the final report on the implementation of the TAP [Month 30], deliverable D 6.3. The final report will be later presented to the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants consortium and, if possible, also the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants Transfer Project consortium, the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants Ph.D. Forum and/or ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants RDI results roadshows in different countries.

In addition, the cluster represented by the Scientific Coordinator will present its achievements during the final seminar attended by the TAP Steering Committee and public and private stakeholders.

In view of the fact that the duration of the ERA-NET Cofund AquaticPollutants TAP Action will be very limited in time, precisely two years, the midterm monitoring will not be done in a written format. Instead, TA CR will conduct a guided dialogue with the Scientific Coordinator with the main aim to map the ongoing progress and to detect potential bottlenecks.

Depending on the character of the cluster and the content of the TAP Implementation Plan, a sustainability plan may be drafted by the TAP Steering Committee in order to allow for the TAP Action activities to continue and possibly expand the network into the future¹¹. The sustainability plan would offer further opportunities for research collaboration and possible implementation tools within the JPIs, the Partnerships, the Missions or other. However, sustainability of the Action will not be further monitored.

¹¹ However, this will need to be resourced by funding organisations and others who wish to continue.