

EUROPARC Webinar 2023: Transboundary Cooperation

Water Governance of Crossborder Rivers in the European Nature Park of Scarpe-Escaut Plains

Thursday 7th of September, 2023

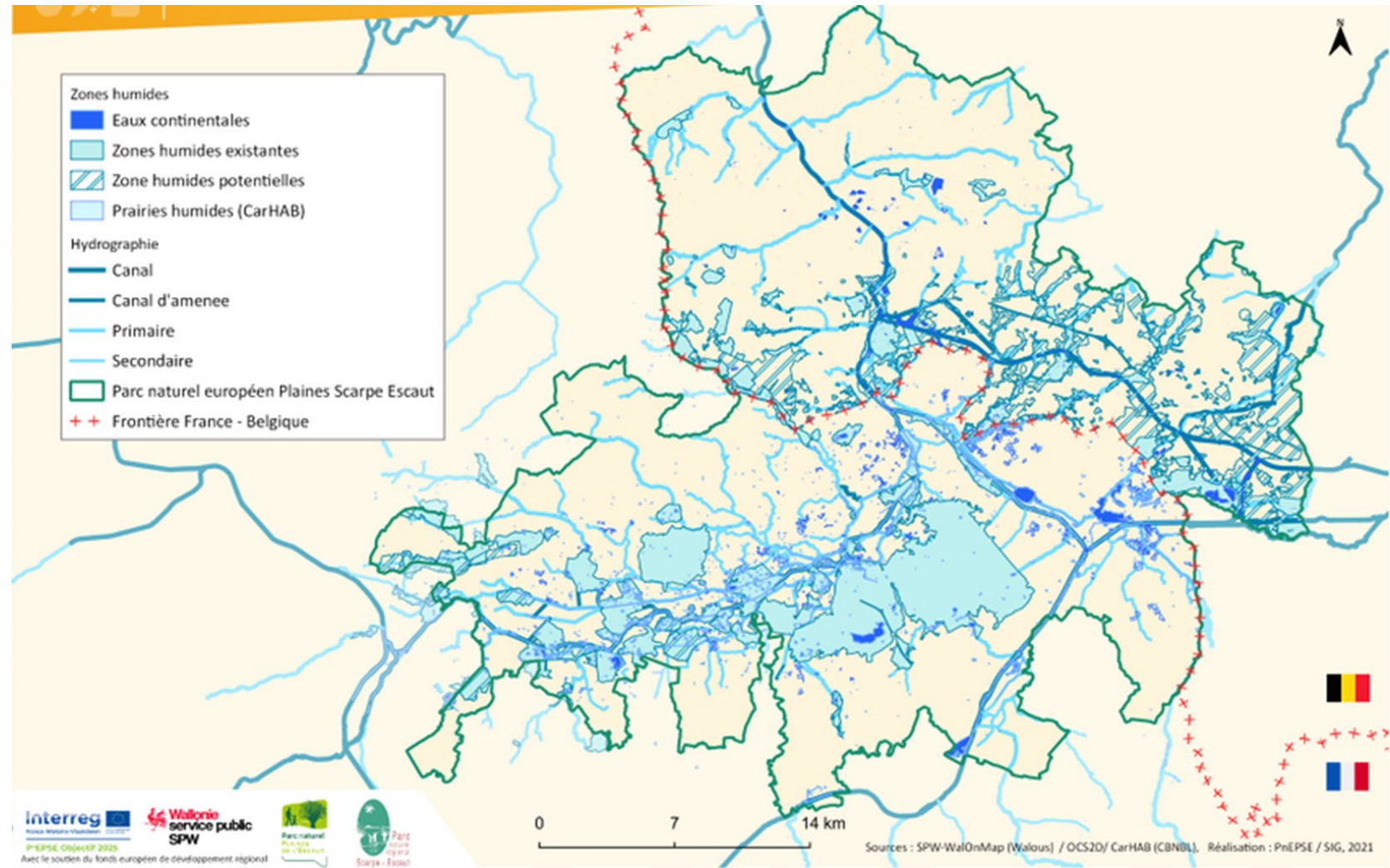
Lisa Bardot



1- Presentation of the topic & the solutions

Cross-border watercourses management

- Landscapes, biodiversity and ecosystems are based on water
- The EGTC doesn't have proper competencies regarding water management
- 3 case studies to illustrate the differences between international agreements; between French and Belgian regulation and the lack of cross-border maintenance coordination.



Legal and administrative obstacle

- **Legal and administrative asymmetry** between French and Walloon rivercourses management.
- **No legal obligation of cross-border cooperation**, which is purely voluntary.
- **This generates tensions between the stakeholders** (misunderstanding and ignorance of the functioning of both administrations).



Possible Solutions



- Calling upon the States on **the need to set up the European mechanism for cross-border cooperation (ECBM)**
- **Amend French and Belgian laws** to force cooperation with partners.
- Experiment the **drafting of management plans for transboundary rivers/basins.**
- **Promote cultural/administrative inter-knowledge** and guide the coordination of partners.

2- How will we base our future actions on regarding the findings ?

- **Inter-knowledge is the key** to keep working on the dynamic but need to bring together French and Belgian managers on operational aspects.
- **Focus on small scale experiments**, both in terms of the issue addressed, space, stakeholders engaged and where tensions are absent.



3- How did we work with b-solutions programme ?

A 3 months work:

- 2 preparatory meetings with the expert
- 1 bibliography / list of documentary resources
- 1 contact list of persons to interview
- 1 meeting to present the findings

Before & after:

- Drafting of the application file
- Communication work once the report is approved



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FINAL REPORT OF THE EXPERTISE

Water governance in a Franco-Belgian European Natural Park

Name of the advised entity: **European Natural Park Plaines Scarpe Scheldt (Parc Naturel Européen des Plaines Scarpe Escaut)**

Name of the expert contracted for the advice case: **Dr. Pauline Pupier**

Date: **21/05/2023, English version, Strasbourg**

Thanks for
your attention
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