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Conference Services

Please find attached the presentation by Ms. Josefina Maestu, Ministry of Environment, Spain to the Plenary Session 3 - Economic governance aspects of sustainable water management, Second Preparatory Conference to the 15th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, Zaragoza, Spain, 12 - 13 March 2007.



Second Preparatory Conference to the 15th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

Plenary Session III

Prices of water services and efficiency of water use in Spain

PRECIOS Y USO EFICIENTE DEL AGUA EN ESPAÑA







Some issues on the economic dimension of water

The questions

- Good water management as strategic factor for development and peace.
- Questions of biased decisions in relation to water allocation and those affecting investment in the water sector.
- · The issue of ecosystem values

The contribution to the answers through a case study: Spain $\,$

- In water scarce countries good governance to sustain growth requires improving the
 efficiency in water use and water allocation.
- Pricing and water transactions key instruments to improve efficiency.
- Potential of economic instruments to contribute in conflict resolution.
- The Water Framework Directive and the ecosystem values.







Prices and pricing policies are important as an incentive to improve water use.

Specially important for areas with water scarcity where development and higher income levels cannot be reflected in higher per capita use.



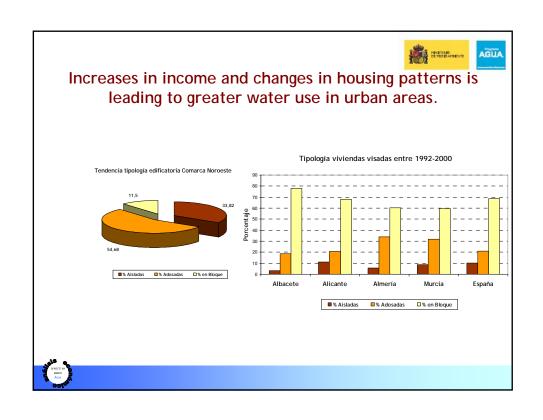


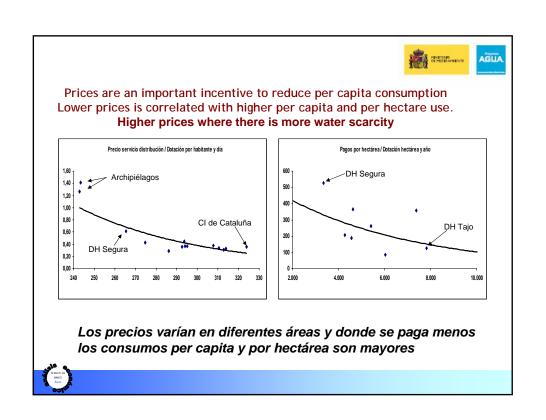


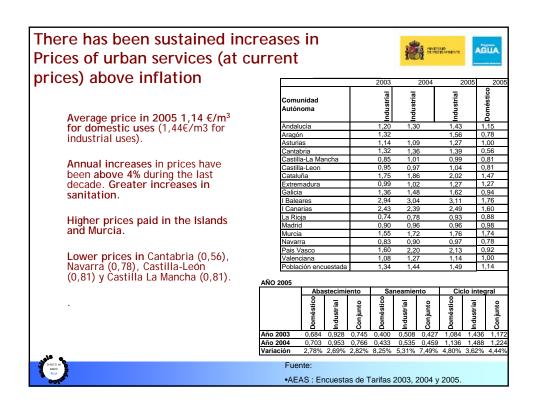
Higher income leads to greater water use per capita.

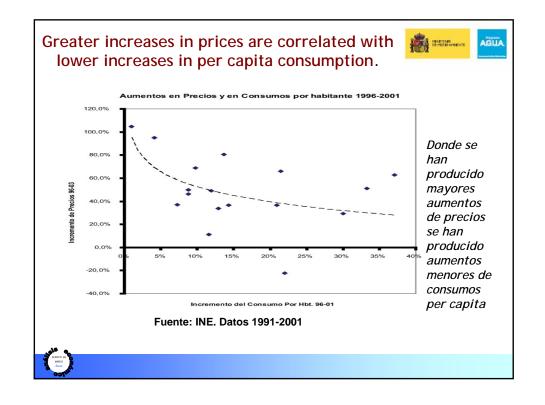
This is a problem in areas with scarcity

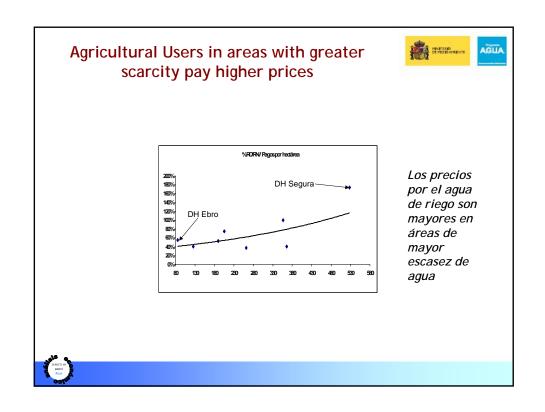


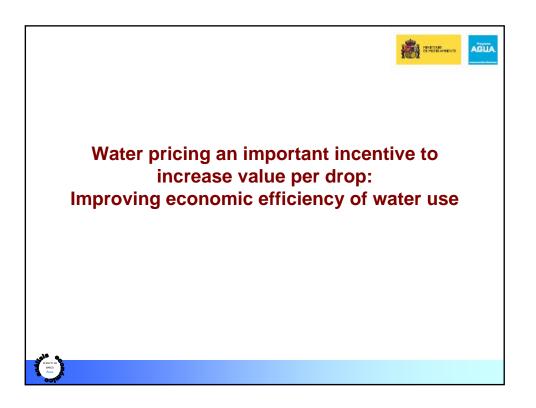


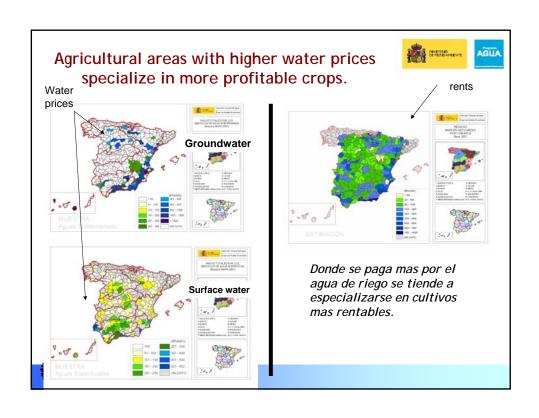


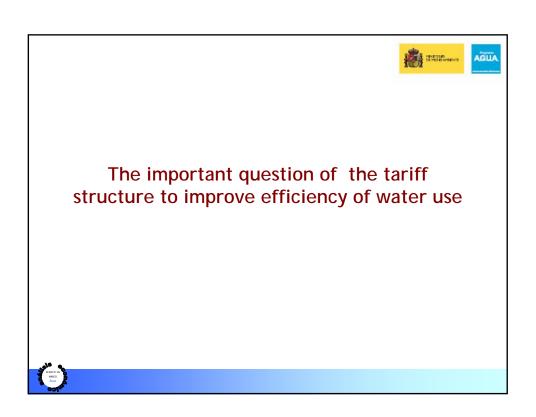












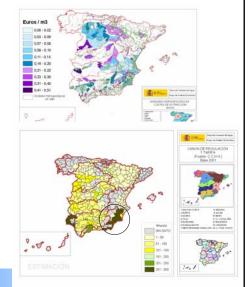
In Mediterranean agriculture in Spain groundwater use is important. Pumping costs are related to volume whilst surface water is mainly charged per hectare.





 The highest cost of ground water in the Segura River basin (0,74 €/m3)

- In average costs for groundwater abstraction for farmers is 0,12 €/m³.
- Costs of bulk surface water around 0,02 €/m3 although higher costs where there are water transfers (0,14 €/m3)







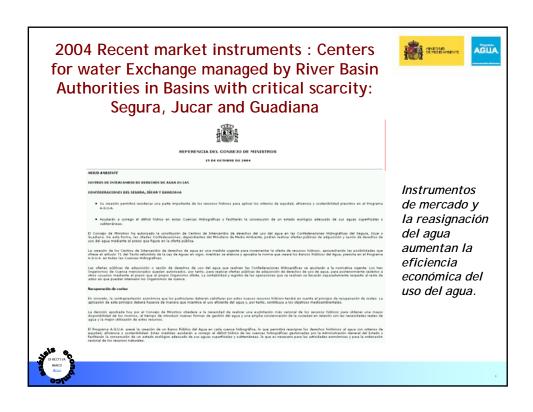


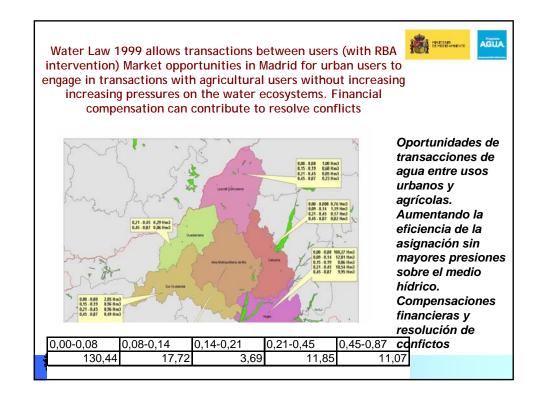
Flexibilization of water rights systems to allow water transactions can "resolve" needs for additional water without building ifraestructures and contibuting to conflict resolution

Important role of the

River Basin Administration to regulate markets to avoid environmental effects and especulative prices.











The approach of the Water Framework Directive and the issue of ecosystem values



The WFD: a pragmatic approach





- Objective to improve status of water bodies in the EU: improving ecological quality and avoiding further deterioration. Ecosystem values become an objective and are not questioned or valued.
- 2009 programs of measures in place to achieve objectives of improving ecosystem functioning in 2015 (some justified derogations allowed.
- The WFD asks to look at cost-efficient measures so no valuation of benefits but requires comparing costs of the measures.
- The issue of valuing ecosystem services become an issue when there is a need to justify derogations: if benefits justify the costs.
- Need to consider that our starting point in EUROPE is a "very deteriorated water status". This is different in countries where the important issue is to value existing quality to avoid deterioration.







Key messages and recommendations

- Growth can lead to greater pressures on water ecosystems and there is a role for economic instruments, specially in water scarce countries, to insure efficiency of water use.
- 2.- Growth in water scarce countries can be achieved by increasing value per drop. Water pricing (reflecting the cost of providing the services) and tariff structures provide an important incentive for this.
- 3.- Water reallocation through regulated agreements among users (in exchange of compensation) can help improve economic efficiency of water use and facilitate growth without deteriorating the water ecosystems. Further work may be required to look into the appropriate regulatory framework to facilitate agreements without increasing environmental problems and avoiding speculation on a vital resource.
- 4.- Further work may be required in understanding the role of transactions for dealing with conflict resolution. This may include considerations about benefit sharing and types of compensation agreements. This is specially important in water scarce countries and transboundary waters.
- 5.- The pragmatic approach of the WFD for dealing with ecosystem services.

