

# Rhone-Mediterranean and Corsica basins

## Improvement of knowledge of water volumes abstracted for irrigation



### Country

France

### Client

Agence de l'Eau Rhône, Méditerranée et Corse

### Date

2007

### Sogreah's services

- ▶ Construction of a tool for calculating water volumes abstracted for irrigation
- ▶ Analysis of results: water abstracted in the various regions
- ▶ Recommendations to the water agency for improving source data reliability

### Background

The Rhone-Mediterranean & Corsica (RMC) basins are said to represent 63% of total water volumes abstracted for agriculture in France.

Abstracting water for irrigating crops can lead to local imbalances and, especially during low-flow periods, increase the vulnerability of water resources.

### Objectives

This study is aimed at improving the available knowledge of water volumes abstracted for irrigation in order to manage resources more efficiently. It ties in with the requirement to identify the pressures and impacts to which surface and subsurface water bodies are subjected in the framework of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD).

### Implementation of the study

- ◆ Drawing-up of a methodology for evaluating water volumes abstracted for irrigation, applied to the water bodies and suitable for being updated annually.
- ◆ Testing and validation of the methodology on pilot areas: the Aude, Côte d'Or and Vaucluse départements.
- ◆ Application of the methodology to the entire area covered by the RMC water agency (30 départements).

### Description

The tool can be used for calculating water volumes abstracted using three methods:

- ◆ The first only uses the agency's billing information, and is interesting as of 2003, the year when a more detailed census of irrigating farmers was carried out

and meters were brought into general use;

- ◆ The second only uses the agricultural census information for reference;
- ◆ The third one combines these two information sources and is useful for the northern parts of the basin, where individual irrigation predominates, and less is known about farmers using irrigation.

A result analysis by *département* is proposed. Improving the results involves making the data more reliable by installing meters, improving billing questionnaires and collecting information on permits from the regional agriculture and forestry directorates (DDAF).

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