

Watersens Open Day

June 19, 2026

**Autorità di bacino distrettuale Appennino Settentrionale
Lucca (Italy), via Vittorio Veneto n. 1
Salone Raffaello Nardi**

Framing the open day theme on the double-edged sword of decentralisation

The Promise

We acknowledge why we are moving toward decentralised models. Localized water reuse, community-level agricultural adaptation, and agile urban responses are necessary.

Water is a global issue, but its impacts - and often its best solutions - are intensely local.

The Challenge (the "Ripple Effect")

We highlight the central governance tension. When we decentralise, we risk fragmentation.

If every municipality or industry optimizes only for its own needs, we risk losing sight of the broader forest-to-sea view.

A decision upstream inevitably causes a ripple effect downstream.

The role of the Basin Authority in decentralisation scenarios

The Basin Authority is not a barrier to local action, but rather the "anchor" or "connective tissue."

It is about systemic resilience: while daily management and reuse can be decentralised, systemic risks - like severe droughts or networked hydraulic risks (floods) - require a unified, macro-level strategy.

The goal and job at the Basin Authority is to provide the canvas on which all of local, decentralised initiatives can be painted without clashing.

Registration link

[WATERSENS OPEN DAY Navigating multilevel governance of water](#)

Navigating multilevel governance of water decentralization

A multilevel water management open day roundtable

Format: 10-minute presentations followed by a dynamic, discussant-led roundtable and synthesis.

Time	Session	Speaker
	Part I: Opening & Context Setting	
09:00 - 09:15	Institutional Welcome	Ms. Gaia Checcucci, Secretary General, Northern Apennine District Basin Authority (Event Host)
		Mr. Mario Pardini, Mayor of Lucca
09:15 - 09:30	Project Presentation	Prof. Daniel Castro, Project Coordinator, Uni Cantabria
	Part II: Regulation, Planning & Performance	
09:30 - 09:40	The Water Balance in the Water Management Plan of the Northern Apennine District Basin Authority	Ms. Isabella Bonamini, head of "Water Protection and Management" - Northern Apennine District Basin Authority
09:40 - 09:50	The regional water protection plan	Mr. Marco Masi, sector "Water, Land and Coast protection" of Tuscany region
9.50 - 10.00	Indicators as Regulating Levers: Water/wastewater performance, investments, and tariffs of the integrated water service	Mr. Alessandro Mazzei, General Director of AIT - Water Services Authority of Tuscany
10.00 - 10.10	Indicators as Regulating Levers: Water/wastewater performance, investments, and tariffs regarding agriculture	Ms. Francesca Tonelli, president of Consortium for the Reclamation and Irrigation of the Lunense Canal
	Part III: Territorial Governance Challenges	
10.10 - 10.20	Application of water reuse: reuse of wastewater in the Pistoia horticultural district	Ms. Gaia Checcucci, Secretary General, Northern Apennine District Basin Authority
10.20 - 10.30	Rural Development and Agriculture: The challenges of decentralisation	Mr. Fabio Zappalorti, director of ANBI – National Association of Consortia for the Management and Protection of Land and Irrigation Water
10:30 - 10:40	The Urban View: Governance challenges of decentralisation	Mr. Michele Conti, ANCI - National Association of Italian Municipalities
	Coffee Break	
11.00 - 11.10	Networked Hydraulic Risk Management: Links and impacts of decentralisation	Mr. Roberto Pandolfi, director of Consortium for the Reclamation and Irrigation Toscana Costa (CB5)
11.10 - 11.20	Human First: Decentralisation impact on managing urban water and wastewater from a PPP (Public-Private Partnership) perspective	Mr. Roberto Cecchini, Head of Operational Management of Acque Spa – integrated water service manager of Basso Valdarno
11.20 - 11.30	Closing the Cycle: Decentralised reuse – an industrial viewpoint	Ms. Alessia Pera, Confindustria Toscana Nord
	Part V: Interactive Roundtable & Conclusions	
11:30 - 12:45	Roundtable Q&A: Discussants field targeted questions to the speakers to weave a cohesive thread of arguments around decentralisation promises vs. governance reality.	Led by two Discussants
12:45 - 13:00	Wrap-Up & Conclusions: Summary of key points gathered during the presentations and roundtable.	Prof. Jorge Rodriguez and Seg. Gen. Ms. Gaia Checcucci

Call to action for the roundtable: hints and sample questions

Discussants will encourage the speakers to move beyond theoretical presentations.

"Today is not just about sharing what we do well. As discussants we will press our speakers on the frictions. Where are the regulatory bottlenecks? Where do our jurisdictions overlap or clash? How will EU regulatory framework help? Let's use this time to find practical governance solutions."

Theme 1: bridging policy, planning, and financial reality

These questions connect the broader project vision with regional planning and the financial levers needed to make it work.

To Prof. Jorge Rodriguez (Project Leader)	"WATERSENS outlines the theoretical promises of decentralisation. From your comparative research, where is the biggest gap between the promise of decentralised water governance and the reality of its implementation?"
To Basin Authority Representative	"Decentralised reuse is fantastic in theory, but rivers flow across administrative borders. How do we encourage highly localized reuse initiatives without losing the systemic, macro-level control required for effective basin-wide planning?"
To Water Services Authority Representative	"Indicators and tariffs are powerful levers. However, in a decentralised model, smaller or less-resourced entities might struggle to meet stringent performance indicators. How do we design a tariff and investment system that drives efficiency without punishing smaller municipalities?"

Theme 2: the territorial divide - urban vs. rural needs

These questions explore the distinct challenges faced by cities compared to agricultural areas, seeking common ground.

To Regione Toscana Representative	"Agriculture is deeply rooted in local territories, yet highly vulnerable to systemic climate shifts. Does decentralising water governance empower rural communities to be more resilient, or does it risk leaving them isolated during severe droughts?"
To ANCI Representative (Urban View)	"Municipalities are on the front lines of citizen demands. From the urban perspective, what is the single biggest governance bottleneck - is it a lack of funding, overlapping jurisdictions, or regulatory red tape?"
Cross-Question (RT & ANCI)	"Water doesn't care about municipal or rural boundaries. How can urban centers and rural agricultural zones negotiate water-sharing agreements effectively under a decentralised framework?"

Theme 3: risk, operations, and the private sector

These questions ground the debate in the physical realities of infrastructure, risk management, and industrial economics.

To Reclamation Consortium Rep (Hydraulic Risk)	"Decentralising risk management sounds potentially dangerous if not perfectly coordinated. How do you maintain a unified, 'networked' safety net for flood and drought risks while allowing for decentralised local actions?"
To Acque Spa / Geal Spa Rep (PPP)	"You manage the 'Human First' aspect of this service. Does a decentralised governance structure make Public-Private Partnerships more agile and responsive to local needs, or does it just multiply the bureaucratic complexity of your contracts?"
To Lucca Industrialists Association (Industrial Reuse)	"Industry is eager to 'close the cycle' and reuse water but often faces hurdles. What is the primary regulatory or governance barrier that currently prevents industries from fully embracing decentralised water reuse?"

Closing "Lightning Round".

The discussants end the roundtable and hand it over to the final summarizer with a question to all speakers (1-minute rapid response):

"If you could wave a magic wand and change one specific regulation or governance structure tomorrow to make multilevel water management actually work, what would it be?"

Post-Event Feedback Survey

Thank you for joining us for the multilevel water management open day / roundtable "Navigating multilevel governance of water decentralisation".

To ensure that today's insights translate into real policy action - and to help us design even better future events - please take 2 minutes to share your genuine feedback.

Section 1: the format & experience

We tried a rapid-fire, discussant-led format today to maximize debate. Did it work?

1. How would you rate the overall value of today's roundtable?
 1 - Poor (Not relevant to my work)
 2 - Fair
 3 - Good
 4 - Very Good
 5 - Excellent (Highly relevant and actionable)
2. How effective was the format (10-minute rapid presentations followed by the targeted roundtable debate) compared to traditional conferences?
 Much more effective
 Somewhat more effective
 About the same
 Less effective (I would have preferred longer individual presentations)

Section 2: the content & the "unsaid"

Help us identify what we hit on the head, and what we missed.

3. Which overarching theme resonated most with the current challenges your organization / context faces? (Select up to two)
 bridging policy, tariffs, and basin planning
 the territorial divide: urban vs. Rural/Agricultural needs
 managing networked risks (floods/droughts/contaminants)
 industrial water reuse and the circular economy
 public-private partnerships and utility management
4. Was there a specific regulatory bottleneck, governance friction, or perspective that you felt was overlooked or under-addressed in today's debate?
[_____]
5. In one sentence, what is the single biggest action item or takeaway you are bringing back to your organization from today?
[_____]

Section 3: next steps

Let's keep the momentum going.

6. How would you like to stay involved as we synthesize today's findings? (Check all that apply)
 Please send me the final Summary Report / Policy Brief.
 I am interested in participating in future, smaller working groups on specific governance bottlenecks.
 I have additional data/case studies from my organization that I would like to submit to the project team.

Name (Optional): _____

Organization (Optional): _____

Email Address (If you checked any boxes in Question 6): _____