

**AN INTEGRATED WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF THE RIVER  
AXIOS DURING THE 1998 LOW FLOW SEASON**

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**ABSTRACT**

Physico-chemical and benthic macroinvertebrate data were used to determine pollution levels in the River Axios during the 1998 low flow season. Benthos was collected using a three-minute kick/sweep technique and artificial colonisation samplers. Colonisation samplers became exposed because of dramatic water fluctuation, which suggests that samplers cannot be used in a river with such a dramatically fluctuating low flow summer. According to the LQI, overall water quality was given a moderate to poor rating, and no obvious trend existed in the deterioration and ameloration of benthic communities. Human activities (e.g. damming) affect significantly the physico-chemical parameters and the invertebrate community in an unpredictable manner.