Assessment and management of flood risks

2006/0005(COD) - 23/10/2007 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish a framework for the assessment and management of flood risks, aiming at the reduction of the adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity associated with floods in the Community.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment and management of flood risks.

CONTENT: the proposal creates an EU framework for flood risk management that builds on and is closely coordinated with Directive 2000/60/EC (Water Framework Directive), the cornerstone of EU water protection policy.

A three-step process is proposed:

(1) First, Member states will undertake a **preliminary flood risk assessment** of their river basins and associated coastal zones. This assessment shall be based on available or readily derivable information, such as records and studies on long term developments, in particular impacts of climate change on the occurrence of floods. The preliminary flood risk assessment should be completed by **22 December 2011**.

(2) Where real risks of flood damage exist, Member States shall then develop **flood risk maps**, covering the geographical areas which could be flooded according to the following scenarios: (a) floods with a low probability, or extreme event scenarios; (b) floods with a medium probability (likely return period 100 years); (c) floods with a high probability, where appropriate.

On the basis of a preliminary flood risk assessment, Member States shall, for each river basin district, or unit of management, or portion of an **international river basin district** lying within their territory, identify those areas for which they conclude that potential significant flood risks exist or might be considered likely to occur. Flood hazard maps and flood risk maps must be completed by **22 December 2013**.

(3) Lastly, on the basis of the flood risk maps, **flood risk management plans** must be drawn up for these zones. These plans shall take into account relevant aspects such as costs and benefits, flood extent and flood conveyance routes and areas which have the potential to retain flood water, such as natural floodplains, the environmental objectives of Directive 2000/60/EC, soil and water management, spatial planning, land use, nature conservation, navigation and port infrastructure.

The plans shall address all aspects of flood risk management **focusing on prevention, protection, preparedness**, including flood forecasts and early warning systems and taking into account the characteristics of the particular river basin or sub-basin. Flood risk management plans may also include the promotion of sustainable land use practices, improvement of water retention as well as the controlled flooding of certain areas in the case of a flood event. Flood risk management plans must be completed and published by **22 December 2015**.

Public information: Member States shall encourage active involvement of interested parties in the production, review and updating of the flood risk management plans. The plans, risk assessments and flood risk maps must be made available to the public.

Transitional measures: Member States may decide to make use of flood hazard maps and flood risk maps finalised before 22 December 2010, if such maps provide a level of information equivalent to the requirements of the Directive. They may also decide to make use of flood risk management plans finalised before 22 December 2010, provided the content of these plans is equivalent to the requirements set out in the Directive.

Reviews and reports: the preliminary flood risk assessment, or the assessment and decisions on transitional measures, shall be reviewed, and if necessary updated, by 22 December 2018 and every six years thereafter. The flood hazard maps and the flood risk maps shall be reviewed, and if necessary updated, by 22 December 2019 and every six years thereafter. The flood risk management plan(s) shall be reviewed, and if necessary updated, by 22 December 2021 and every six years thereafter.

The Commission shall, by 22 December 2018, and every six years thereafter, submit a report on the implementation of this Directive. The impact of climate change shall be taken into account in drawing up this report.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 26/11/2007.

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