

Water policy: establishment of environmental quality standards (EQS)

2006/0129(COD) - 16/12/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to lay down environmental quality standards (EQS) in the field of water for priority substances and certain other pollutants.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Directive 2008/105/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directives 82/176/EEC, 83/513/EEC, 84/156/EEC, 84/491/EEC, 86/280/EEC and amending Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT: having reached agreement with the Parliament at second reading, the Council adopted a Directive laying down environmental quality standards (EQS) for EU surface waters.

The Directive sets limit values for **33 pollutants**, including pesticides, heavy metals and biocidal products. These limits concern pollution peaks as well as annual average values. Member States must adopt the necessary measures to comply with these standards by 2015 in accordance with the provisions of the framework Directive in the field of water policy (Directive 2000/60/EC).

A new Annex III contains a list of 13 substances subject to review for possible identification as priority substance or priority hazardous substances. The Commission shall report the outcome of its review to the European Parliament and to the Council by 13 January 2011. It shall accompany the report, if appropriate, with relevant proposals, in particular proposals to identify new priority substances or priority hazardous substances or to identify certain priority substances as priority hazardous substances and to set corresponding environmental quality standards for surface water, sediment or biota, as appropriate.

The new Directive requires Member States not only to monitor river pollution and establish long-term trends but also to analyse its origin and **draw up an inventory**, including maps, if available, of emissions, discharges and losses of all priority substances and pollutants listed in Part A of Annex I to this Directive for each river basin district or part of a river basin district lying within their territory, including their concentrations in sediment and biota, as appropriate.

Member States may designate **mixing zones** adjacent to points of discharge. Concentrations of one or more substances listed in Part A of Annex I may exceed the relevant EQS within such mixing zones if they do not affect the compliance of the rest of the body of surface water with those standards.

On the basis of reports from Member States, including reports in accordance with Article 12 of Directive 2000/60/EC and in particular those on transboundary pollution, **the Commission shall review the need to amend existing acts** and the need for additional specific Communitywide measures, such as emission controls.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 13/01/2009.

TRANSPOSITION: 13/07/2010.