

Water policy: priority substances

2011/0429(COD) - 02/07/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 646 votes to 51, with 14 abstentions a legislative resolution on the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directives 2000/60/EC and 2008/105/EC as regards priority substances in the field of water policy.

Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary are the result of a compromise negotiated between the European Parliament and the Council. They amend the proposal as follows:

Environmental quality standards (EQS): the amended text provides that the revised EQS for existing priority substances should be taken into account for the first time in river basin management plans covering the **period 2015 to 2021**. The newly identified priority substances and their EQS should be taken into account in the establishment of supplementary monitoring programmes and in preliminary programmes of measures to be submitted **by the end of 2018**.

With the aim of achieving good surface water chemical status, the revised EQS for existing priority substances should be met **by the end of 2021** and the EQS for newly identified priority substances **by the end of 2027**.

Technical guidelines on monitoring strategies and analytical methods for substances, including sampling and monitoring of biota, shall be developed, to the extent possible, by 22 December 2014, as part of the existing implementation process of Directive 2000/60/EC.

Specific provisions for pharmaceutical substances: the new legislation recognises the risk of contamination of water and soil by pharmaceutical residues. Pursuant to Directive 2000/60/EC, the Commission shall, within two years, draw up a **strategy** against pollution of water by pharmaceutical substances. Among other things, this will include proposals enabling, to the extent necessary, the environmental impacts of medicines to be taken into account more effectively in the procedure for placing medicinal products on the market. The Commission will propose measures to be taken at Union and/or Member States level, as appropriate, to address the possible environmental impacts of pharmaceutical substances on the environment.

Watch lists: the first watch list established by the Commission shall contain a maximum of **10 substances or groups of substances** and shall indicate the monitoring matrices and the possible methods of analysis not entailing excessive costs for each substance.

Diclofenac (CAS 15307-79-6), **17-beta-estradiol** (E2) (CAS 50-28-2) and **17-alpha-ethinylestradiol** (EE2) (CAS 57-63-6) shall be included in the first watch list, in order to gather monitoring data for the purpose of facilitating the determination of appropriate measures to address the risk posed by those substances.

Once adopted, the first watch list shall be **updated every two years**. The duration of a continuous watch list monitoring period **for any individual substance** shall not exceed **four years**.

For the first watch list, the monitoring period shall commence within six months of the establishment of the watch list. For each substance included in subsequent lists, Member States shall commence monitoring within six months of its inclusion in the list.

Monitoring stations: the amended text stipulates that each Member State shall select **at least one monitoring station**, plus one station if it has more than one million inhabitants, plus the number of stations equal to its geographical area in km² divided by 60 000 (rounded to the nearest integer), plus the number of stations equal to its population divided by five million.

Maps presenting the chemical status of water with respect to certain substances: in the river basin management plans, Member States may provide **additional maps** that present the chemical status information for one or more of the following substances **separately** from the information for the rest of the substances identified in Part A of Annex I to this Directive: (i) substances behaving like ubiquitous PBTs; (ii) newly identified substances; and (iii) substances for which revised, stricter EQS are established.

Coordination: the text provides for the exploration of potential synergies with a view to identifying possible areas where data gathered through implementation of Directive 2000/60/EC can be used to support REACH and other relevant substance evaluation procedures.

Public awareness: environmental information on the status of Union surface waters and on the achievements of strategies against chemical pollution is made available to the public in a timely manner. With a view to strengthening access and transparency, a **central portal** providing information on the river basin management plans and their reviews and updates should be accessible to the public electronically in each Member State.

In order to improve the information basis for future identification of priority substances, in particular as regards emerging pollutants, **implementing powers** should be conferred on the Commission in respect of the establishment and updating of a watch list.

Review: the Commission shall review the adopted list of priority substances **at the latest four years after the date of entry into force** of this Directive and at least every six years thereafter, and come forward with proposals as appropriate.