

Basic information	
1997/0067(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Directive	Procedure completed
Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive Amended by 2006/0129(COD) Amended by 2006/0297(COD) Amended by 2008/0015(COD) Amended by 2011/0429(COD) Amended by 2013/0192(COD) Amended by 2022/0344(COD) Subject 3.70.04 Water control and management, pollution of waterways, water pollution	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	DELE EP Delegation to Conciliation Committee		LIENEMANN Marie-Noëlle (PSE)
	Former committee responsible		Former rapporteur
	ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy		LIENEMANN Marie-Noëlle (PSE)
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection		WHITE Ian (PSE)
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection		JACKSON Caroline (PPE)
	Former committee for opinion		Former rapporteur for opinion
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development		CUNHA Arlindo (PPE)
	BUDG Budgets		
	ENER Research, Technological Development and Energy		IZQUIERDO COLLADO Juan de Dios (PSE)

	PECH Fisheries		
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meetings	Date
	Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)	2251	2000-03-27
	Environment	2106	1998-06-16
	Environment	2062	1997-12-16
	Environment	2076	1998-03-23
	Environment	1990	1997-03-03
	Environment	1905	1996-03-04
	Environment	2017	1997-06-19
	Environment	2033	1997-10-16
	Environment	2165	1999-03-11
	Social Affairs	2208	1999-10-22

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
04/03/1996	Debate in Council		
26/02/1997	Legislative proposal published	COM(1997)0049 	Summary
03/03/1997	Debate in Council		
14/05/1997	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
19/06/1997	Debate in Council		
16/10/1997	Debate in Council		
16/12/1997	Debate in Council		
23/03/1998	Debate in Council		
16/06/1998	Debate in Council		
24/06/1998	Vote in committee, 1st reading		Summary
24/06/1998	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A4-0261/1998	
10/02/1999	Debate in Parliament		
17/06/1999	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1999)0271 	Summary
26/07/1999	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
26/07/1999	Committee report tabled for plenary confirming Parliament's position	A5-0004/1999	
16/09/1999	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T5-0013/1999	
22/10/1999	Council position published	09085/3/1999	Summary
28/10/1999	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading		

25/01/2000	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		Summary
25/01/2000	Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	A5-0027/2000	
15/02/2000	Debate in Parliament		
16/02/2000	Decision by Parliament, 2nd reading	T5-0054/2000	Summary
27/03/2000	Parliament's amendments rejected by Council		
23/05/2000	Formal meeting of Conciliation Committee		Summary
28/06/2000	Final decision by Conciliation Committee		
18/07/2000	Joint text approved by Conciliation Committee co-chairs	3639/2000	
21/08/2000	Report tabled for plenary, 3rd reading	A5-0214/2000	
06/09/2000	Debate in Parliament		
07/09/2000	Decision by Parliament, 3rd reading	T5-0369/2000	Summary
14/09/2000	Decision by Council, 3rd reading		
23/10/2000	Final act signed		
23/10/2000	End of procedure in Parliament		
22/12/2000	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1997/0067(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Directive
Amendments and repeals	Amended by 2006/0129(COD) Amended by 2006/0297(COD) Amended by 2008/0015(COD) Amended by 2011/0429(COD) Amended by 2013/0192(COD) Amended by 2022/0344(COD)
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 175-p1
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	CODE/5/12662

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A4-0261/1998 OJ C 292 21.09.1998, p. 0004	24/06/1998	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0114/1999 OJ C 150 28.05.1999, p. 0282-0419	11/02/1999	Summary
Committee final report tabled for plenary, 1st reading		A5-0004/1999		

/single reading		OJ C 054 25.02.2000, p. 0010	26/07/1999	
Text adopted by Parliament confirming position adopted at 1st reading		T5-0013/1999 OJ C 054 25.02.2000, p. 0055-0076	16/09/1999	Summary
Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading		A5-0027/2000 OJ C 339 29.11.2000, p. 0006	25/01/2000	
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading		T5-0054/2000 OJ C 339 29.11.2000, p. 0062-0136	16/02/2000	Summary
Report tabled for plenary by Parliament delegation to Conciliation Committee, 3rd reading		A5-0214/2000 OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0014	21/08/2000	
Text adopted by Parliament, 3rd reading		T5-0369/2000 OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0196-0252	07/09/2000	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Council position	09085/3/1999 OJ C 343 30.11.1999, p. 0001	22/10/1999	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(1997)0049  OJ C 184 17.06.1997, p. 0020	26/02/1997	Summary
Supplementary legislative basic document	COM(1997)0614  OJ C 016 20.01.1998, p. 0014	26/11/1997	Summary
Supplementary legislative basic document	COM(1998)0076  OJ C 108 07.04.1998, p. 0094	17/02/1998	Summary
Reconsultation	SEC(1999)0581 	28/04/1999	
Modified legislative proposal	COM(1999)0271  OJ C 342 30.11.1999, p. 0001	17/06/1999	Summary
Commission communication on Council's position	SEC(1999)1706 	26/10/1999	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2000)0047  OJ C 177 27.06.2000, p. 0074 E	07/02/2000	
Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading	COM(2000)0219 	05/06/2000	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	COM(2000)0477 	26/07/2000	Summary
	COM(2007)0128		

Follow-up document		22/03/2007	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2009)0156 	01/04/2009	Summary
Follow-up document	SEC(2009)0415 	01/04/2009	
Follow-up document	SEC(2009)1114 	03/08/2009	
Follow-up document	COM(2011)0875 	31/01/2012	Summary
Follow-up document	SEC(2011)1544 	31/01/2012	
Follow-up document	COM(2012)0670 	14/11/2012	Summary
Follow-up document	SWD(2012)0379 	14/11/2012	
Follow-up document	SWD(2015)0050 	09/03/2015	Summary
Follow-up document	SWD(2015)0053 	09/03/2015	
Follow-up document	SWD(2015)0054 	09/03/2015	
Follow-up document	SWD(2015)0055 	09/03/2015	
Follow-up document	SWD(2015)0056 	09/03/2015	
Follow-up document	SWD(2016)0178 	18/05/2016	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2019)0095 	26/02/2019	Summary
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0030 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0031 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0032 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0033 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0034 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0035 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0036 	26/02/2019	

Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0037 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0038 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0039 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0040 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0041 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0042 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0043 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0044 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0045 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0046 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0047 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0048 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0049 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0050 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0051 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0052 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0053 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0054 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0055 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0056 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0057 	26/02/2019	
	SWD(2019)0058		

Follow-up document		26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0059 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0060 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0061 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0062 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0063 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0064 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0065 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0066 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0067 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0068 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0069 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0070 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0071 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0072 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0073 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0074 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0075 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0076 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0077 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0078 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0079 	26/02/2019	

Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0080 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0081 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0082 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0083 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2019)0084 	26/02/2019	
Follow-up document	SWD(2021)0248	13/09/2021	
Follow-up document	SWD(2021)0249	13/09/2021	
Follow-up document	SWD(2021)0250	13/09/2021	
Follow-up document	SWD(2021)0251	13/09/2021	
Follow-up document	SWD(2021)0252	13/09/2021	
Follow-up document	SWD(2021)0253	13/09/2021	
Follow-up document	SWD(2021)0254	13/09/2021	
Follow-up document	SWD(2021)0255	13/09/2021	
Follow-up document	SWD(2021)0256	13/09/2021	
Follow-up document	COM(2025)0002 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0013 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0014 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0015 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0016 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0017 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0018 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0019 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0020 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0021 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0022 	04/02/2025	
	SWD(2025)0023		

Follow-up document		04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0024 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0025 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0026 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0027 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0028 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0029 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0030 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0031 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0032 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0033 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0034 	04/02/2025	
Follow-up document	SWD(2025)0035 	04/02/2025	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	CZ_SENATE	COM(2012)0670	01/07/2013	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES0994/1997 OJ C 355 21.11.1997, p. 0083	01/10/1997	Summary
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0171/1997 OJ C 180 11.06.1998, p. 0038	12/03/1998	
CSL/EP	Joint text approved by Conciliation Committee co-chairs	3639/2000	18/07/2000	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act
Directive 2000/0060 OJ L 327 22.12.2000, p. 0001 Summary

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 26/10/1999 - Commission communication on Council's position

The Commission acknowledges that the Council's common position in particular in terms of technical specification further develops the original proposal. The Commission also welcomes the inclusion of a good number of the European Parliament's amendments inter alia on the inclusion of wetlands, public consultation, reporting, the role of Parliament in the further development of proposal on priority substances and a number of definitions or precision of existing definitions. The Commission nevertheless disagrees with the common position on a number of points as indicated above, in particular the provisions on timetable for implementation, charging, and the way reference is made to commitments under international agreements and in particular to the OSPAR, Barcelona and HELCOM conventions.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 23/10/2000 - Final act

PURPOSE : to establish a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, notably the protection of inland surface water, transitional waters, coastal waters and ground water. **COMMUNITY MEASURE** : Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy. **CONTENT** : the framework Directive relating to water aims to prevent further deterioration and protects and enhances the status of aquatic ecosystems, and with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic based ecosystems. In addition, it aims to combat pollution in a general way and foresees in this respect the phasing out or stopping altogether of discharges, emissions and losses of priority hazardous substances, with the ultimate aim of achieving concentrations in the marine environment. These substances should be ceased or phased out at the latest within 20 years of their identification as hazardous substances. Furthermore, the Directive aims to: - define the integrated policies and coherent in the field of water; - create a safety net which enables problems, which are not currently adequately dealt with, to be detected and which means that measures shall have to be taken in order to re-establish the situation; - create a solid base for the collection and the analysis of a large volume of information on the state of the marine environment in view of providing the essential information which would allow the competent authorities to define reasonable and sustainable policies; - establish transparency in this field thanks to the publication and the diffusion of information and public consultation. The Water policy shall be implemented on the basis on management plans of the river basin district. For each district, the Directive requests: - an evaluation of the characteristics of the district; - establishing a programme of measures aiming to make concrete the objectives of the Directive; - undertaking an analysis of the characteristics of a river basin in order to set up a management plan of the river basin district, and to consult the general public on this management plan. **ENTRY INTO FORCE** : 22/12 /00. **DEADLINE SET FOR TRANSPOSITION** : 22/12/2003.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 11/02/1999 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The EP voted to endorse the heavily amended Commission proposals for an EU framework directive on water which aim to protect surface water, coastal and territorial water. Mr. Ian WHITE (UK, PES) was the Rapporteur. The following concerns of the Parliament were incorporated in the amendments : - The need to take account of the vulnerability of aquatic ecosystems located near coasts or estuaries or in gulfs or relatively closed seas, as their equilibrium is strongly influenced by the quality of the river basin water flowing into them. - Member States which have progressed further than the Community in limiting pollution through the discharge of all pollutants or groups of pollutants representing an unacceptable risk to the environment and/or to the population shall be allowed to have more stringent restrictions. - Goal to reduce the load of hazardous substances by 50% by 2010, by 75% by 2015 and by close to zero by 2020, taking 1995 as a reference year. - Where economic instruments are used properly as part of a programme of environmental protection measures, management can be improved and more rational use of resources encouraged. - The principle of sound water policy should not be permanently waived purely to promote the sustainable development of an economic region as a whole. - The need for

a cost-benefit study : within five years from the date of implementation of this Directive, the Commission, with the assistance of the appropriate authorities in the Member States, shall carry out a cost-benefit study for the purpose of determining the amount of investment that has been required for the implementation of this Directive. - For each river basin district, an assessment of the impact of human activity on the adjoining maritime areas into which the waters of the river basin district flow should be completed within five years of the entry into force of this Directive. - The Member States shall present an action plan showing how they intend to achieve the status of each body of water identified under Article 8 (1), so that the treatment facilities can be minimised to meet the requirements of Directive 80/778/EEC. The action plan shall emphasise the measures required for pollution prevention at source and reduction of pollution from point sources and diffuse sources. - The Commission shall publish a report on the implementation of this Directive at the latest 12 years after the date mentioned in Art. 29, and every six years thereafter, and shall submit it to the European Parliament and to the Council.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 16/09/1999

The European Parliament confirmed its first reading in the context of the codecision procedure of the text that it adopted on 11.02.1999 concerning this amended proposal for a directive.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 07/09/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, 3rd reading

In approving the report drafted by Mrs Marie-Noëlle LIENEMANN (PES, Fr), the European Parliament adopts the legislative resolution on the joint text approved by the Conciliation Committee for a European Parliament and Council directive establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 26/11/1997 - Supplementary legislative basic document

The amendments proposed by the Commission concern mainly Article 21 of the initial proposal regarding Community strategies against pollution by certain substances. The principal advantage of this article is that it is based on an approach including all sources of pollution, not only processes, and makes it possible to choose the appropriate measures and response. This approach is maintained in the amended proposal. The principal objective of the amendments to Article 21 may be summarized as follows: a) method of establishing priorities among the dangerous substances concerned b) establishing a framework for actions concerning priority substances including: - localizing major discharges of the substances concerned, including both processes and products - analysis to determine the appropriate level of regulation and the most cost effective measures for reducing pollution, use of the best available technology principle in the case of processes. in accordance with the combined approach and the existing provisions of Directive 76/464/EEC.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 16/02/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

In approving the Council's common position, MEPs voted in favour of Mrs. Marie-Noëlle Lienemann's (PES, Fr) report which contains a number of amendments to the common position. The amended recitals draw attention to a number of concerns including : - water is not a commercial product like any other but, rather, a heritage which must be protected, defended and treated as such; - good water quality will secure the drinking water supply for the population; - environmental objectives should be set to ensure that good status of surface water and groundwater is achieved throughout the Community and that deterioration in the status of waters is avoided at EU level; - the ultimate aim is to achieve complete elimination of all anthropogenic pollutants and background concentrations of naturally occurring substances; - there is no natural right to discharge hazardous or radioactive substances into water; scientific and technical progress allows the application of progressively less polluting production technologies; - coastal fisheries, despite being located outside river basins, should be recognised as being one of the economic activities most affected by all forms of environmental deterioration within such basins. The Parliament sets a number of target dates to achieve particular objectives. It wants to see the goal of good 'surface water' achieved within 10 years of the Directive coming into force rather than 16 and a similar date for good 'groundwater'. Parliament voted to include 'radioactive substances' in the list of pollutants and also voted for levels close to 'zero discharge' by 2020 and for water-pricing policies to come into effect by 2010. However, another amendment provides for exemptions 'in order to allow a basic level of water use for domestic purposes at a more affordable price', while a further amendment allows for pricing policy 'to take account of the specific geographical and climatic characteristics of the various regions'.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 01/10/1997 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

The Committee endorses the proposed framework directive as a whole. It improves earlier legislation by clarifying the relevant rules through a total or partial repeal of those directives which have become obsolete in practice. At the same time it retains the *acquis communautaire* which has served to create the EU's water policy, as requested by the ESC in its opinion on the communication. The ESC takes the view that financial transfer mechanisms should be devised so that future increases in the cost of water can be reinvested in conservation measures and costs do not rise for those most affected. In order to provide guidance on the possible ways of complying with the objectives of transnational river basin management plans which include non-EU countries, the ESC urges the Commission to introduce and/or strengthen the following: - international institutional agreements covering both objectives and policies at a level higher than the Community; - action on more limited pollution problems, boosting voluntary agreements with non-Community productive sectors, official bodies, users, etc.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 17/02/1998 - Supplementary legislative basic document

The proposal for a directive establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy contains in its Annex V a general outline for technical specification for definition, classification and monitoring of the ecological and chemical status of ground waters. The proposed directive empowers the Commission to lay down the required technical details in Annex V at a later stage, through a committee procedure. As the work has now progressed to a stage where a consolidated Commission position is required, this proposal for modification of Annex V has been submitted. The proposed measures mainly consist of a number of technical specifications concerning the monitoring and the presentation of the results of monitoring of the ecological and chemical status of surface waters and the quantitative and chemical status of ground waters. The burden of analysis, classification and reporting which they impose falls principally on the Member States.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 05/06/2000 - Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading

The Commission accepted fully, in part or in principle, 47 of the 61 amendments adopted by the Parliament. Those rejected include: - the statement that water is a common heritage rather than a commercial product. The proposal does not treat water as a commercial product but protects water as an environmental and social good. - the statement that there is no natural right to discharge hazardous substances into water. The function of this amendment is unclear and the proposal does not make reference to any "rights" of polluting. - the definition of "hazardous substances" is not accepted. The proposal defines clear criteria for selection of "hazardous substances" and the definition is therefore unnecessary. Moreover, the proposed definition deviates in important detail from the generally recognised definitions of hazardous substances. The amendments accepted in part include that amendment requesting proposals for continuous reduction of discharge, emissions and losses one year after the adoption of the priority list. Reference to the aim of levels close to zero by December 2020 is accepted in redrafted wording which reflects the essentially aspirational and political nature of this amendment. The amendment requesting shortening of the timetable for implementation from 16 years to 10 is considered too strict. The Commission does agree that shortening is needed and suggests a global solution with a certain shortening of the deadline in combination with stricter conditions for achieving the environmental objectives. With the deletion of a six-year extension period, in combination with a no-deterioration clause, more stringent criteria for extensions, for less stringent environmental objectives and for compliance as requested by Parliament the Commission accepts the 16 years of the common position as an overall date for achieving the environmental objectives. Appropriate amendments have been made to this effect.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 22/03/2007 - Follow-up document

This Communication summarises the first report on progress with implementation of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC – WFD). It also makes recommendations for the next important milestone: the river basin management plans. These plans, which are due by December 2009, will bring further real improvements for the whole water system in the form of programmes of measures, which must be operational by 2012 and deliver the environmental objectives of the Directive by 2015.

Reports from the Member States on their initial obligations under the Water Framework Directive show some encouraging results, although there are major shortcomings in some areas. There is still time to remedy the gaps before 2010, when the first river basin management plans have to be adopted.

The poor transposition and the lack of economic analysis are the biggest gaps in WFD implementation so far. While international cooperation needs to be enhanced in many cases, significant improvements have been observed in some regions, such as the Danube.

Further progress is needed in areas such as:

1) Recommendations to the Member States: Member States have to complete the first river basin management plans by the end of 2009, and they have to put a water pricing policy in place in 2010. Learning from experience with implementation to date, there is still ample time to improve the situation and close gaps on data. Moreover, the obligation to inform and consult the public when preparing the management plans will require more transparency and justification on what measures are necessary and cost-effective, and what exemptions can be justified. The Commission therefore urges the Member States to focus especially on the following three areas:

- **Overcoming the current shortcomings:** Member States are encouraged to: (i) fully implement other relevant EU legislation, in particular on urban wastewater and nitrates; (ii) put in place all the economic instruments required by the Directive (pricing, recovery of costs of water services, environment and resource costs, and the polluter pays principle). Full exploitation of these economic instruments will contribute to truly sustainable water management; (iii) put in place a comprehensive national ecological assessment and classification system as the basis for implementing the Directive and meeting its "good ecological status" objective. The deficiencies of the current intercalibration exercise must be remedied as soon as possible. Only complete, robust and reliable ecological assessment will generate faith in the WFD and ensure its credibility; (iv) improve the methodologies and approaches on some key issues (such as designation of heavily modified water bodies, criteria for assessing risk or addressing groundwater quantitative status) and enhance comparability between the Member States, in particular in international river basins; (v) considerably reduce the existing data gaps and shortcomings of the analysis as part of preparation of the river basin management plans;
- **Integrating sustainable water management into other policy areas:** Member States are encouraged to: (i) make sure that infrastructure and sustainable human development projects undergo an appropriate environmental impact assessment; (ii) ensure the allocation of the appropriate funding. To reach this objective, it is important to make the best use of the potential of national funds and EU financing instruments, such as the Common Agricultural Policy and the Cohesion Policy;
- **Making the best use of public participation:** public participation should be seen as an opportunity. The ongoing work on voluntary reporting and the Water Information System for Europe will assist in informing the public in a transparent way.

2) Commission actions: it is clear that the Member States still have an ambitious and challenging task ahead if they are to make WFD implementation successful. The Commission realises that it has an important role to play. In this respect, the Commission is planning the following actions, which are in line with the WFD and, in some cases, have a wide-reaching aim.

- **Action 1: Renewing the partnership with the Member States:** the Commission is committed to continuing the successful cooperation under the Common Implementation Strategy. This joint work programme together with the Member States and other countries, and with the involvement of stakeholders and NGOs, promotes common understanding, best practice and information exchange on some of the key issues. The Commission is convinced that this approach has already delivered better results than a more formalistic approach to implementation. However, if it should become evident that it is likely to fail, the Commission will not hesitate to use its powers under the Treaty. In addition, the Commission will continue helping the EU-12 Member States to implement EU water policy and being involved in international river conventions;
- **Action 2: Ensuring integration into other EU policies:** considerable progress has already been made in integrating water policy into other EU policy areas, in particular agriculture, energy, transport, research, external relations and regional development. The joint and open discussions between the different competent authorities at EU and Member State level involving all relevant stakeholders and NGOs have produced valuable results and conclusions. The Commission is committed to continuing its leadership role in this area by exploring further ways of strengthening the integration of water-related considerations into other EU policies and legislation. The aim is to make other policy areas contribute even more effectively to protecting the water environment and achieving the objectives of the WFD, the Flood Risk Management Directive and other Community water legislation. There is a window of opportunity in the upcoming discussions on the future of the Common Agriculture Policy of further integrating water policy and agricultural policy. On cohesion policy, the Commission will continue efforts to ensure that assistance from the Funds is consistent with water policy. Transport (navigation) and energy (hydropower) policies will continue to be implemented in a way that reduces negative impacts on the aquatic environment. Moreover, implementation of the Seventh Framework Programme for Research will need to maintain a water focus;
- **Action 3: Promoting the use of economic instruments:** the Commission will make the use of economic instruments a priority in the context of implementation and stimulate further exchanges of information with and between Member States on best practices, including more use of the existing guidance documents. Moreover, the Commission is also looking at promoting benchmarking between water operators;
- **Action 4: Addressing climate change in water management:** climate change impacts, including increased flooding and droughts, could enhance the risk of non-attainment of the objectives of the WFD. The increased risk on extreme events is partly addressed by the proposal for a Directive on floods. The results of an in-depth analysis on water scarcity and droughts will be included in a Communication planned for mid-2007. The Commission will also encourage full use to be made of existing possibilities for including climate change into river basin management plans, and will encourage further integration of climate change, mitigation and adaptation strategies, into the implementation of EU water policy;
- **Action 5: Setting up an ambitious Water Information System for Europe (WISE):** the Commission and the European Environment Agency are committed to developing WISE by 2010. WISE will serve as the focus for wider efforts to modernise and streamline the collection and dissemination of information for European water policy. It is an integral part of wider initiatives such as the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) and INSPIRE.

In conclusion, this first report on the implementation of the WFD illustrates that we have made significant steps forward 'Towards Sustainable Water Management in the European Union'. Together with the water-related directives that are still under negotiation, the WFD provides all the tools needed to achieve truly sustainable water management in the EU for years to come. However, there is still a long and challenging road ahead for Member States to implement these tools in the best possible way. Member States have to deploy considerable efforts to achieve this.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 22/10/1999 - Council position

The common position reached by the Council essentially aims at preventing deterioration of ecological status and pollution and restoring all bodies of surface water and groundwater with the aim of achieving good status at the latest 16 years after the entry into force of the Directive. taking the identification of river basin districts as a basis, Member States are to provide management plans (containing inter alia the river basin's characteristics, monitoring of the water status and coordinated programmes of measures) which are subject to public consultation and aim to achieve good water status through a phased implementation of the measures they envisage. The common position takes into account the interaction between surface water and groundwater, the impact of human activity, e.g. industry, agriculture, energy production and transport, the quality and quantity aspects and contributes to mitigating the effects of floods and droughts, to providing a sufficient supply of good quality water for users, to protecting territorial and marine waters, to achieving the objectives of relevant international agreements (e.g. aiming at the prevention and elimination of pollution) and to progressively reducing the emissions of hazardous substances. The common position is very close in overall structure and approach of the Commission's initial proposal, and retains the majority of its provisions. Very few new elements are introduced in the text which incorporates either in their totality or in part, the 77 amendments put forward by the European Parliament. A new article specifies the requirements for application of the combined approach for control of point and diffuse sources. A number of definitions were reformulated in order to clarify their scope of application and their content. The former Annex II has been considerably improved and expanded in terms of technical and scientific detail, taking over also information requirements for analysis of human activity from the former Annex III. A new Annex III takes over the technical specification for the economic analysis from the former Annex III. The former Annex III has, consequently been deleted. The technical specifications of Annex III is considerably simpler than the Commission proposed but this simplification is complemented by the possibility for adaptation to technical progress through Committee procedure.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 26/07/2000 - Document attached to the procedure

Water is a major concern for environmental policies in the European Community and is one of the environmental priorities of the European Commission. The main pillar of water policies over the coming decades will be the proposed Directive establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (or Water Framework Directive). In line with recent initiatives to give more weight to economic instruments in environmental policies, the proposed Water Framework Directive promotes the use of water charging to act as an incentive for the sustainable use of water resources and to recover the costs of water services by economic sector. This will contribute to meeting the environmental objectives of this Directive in a cost-effective way. Against this background, the Commission presents this Communication with the following objectives: - to clarify the main issues related to the use of water pricing for enhancing the sustainability of water resources; - to present the rationale behind the Commission's preference for a strict application of sound economic and environmental principles in water pricing policies; - to propose a set of guiding principles that will support the implementation of the proposed Water Framework Directive and more specifically its water pricing article. The key messages of the Communication are: 1) The sustainability of water resources is at stake in many river basins from both a quantitative and a qualitative point of view. Appropriate water pricing has a key role to play in the development of sustainable water policies. 2) To play an effective role in enhancing the sustainability of water resources, water pricing policies need to be based on an assessment of costs and benefits of water use and to consider both the financial costs of providing services as well as environmental and resource costs. A price linked directly to the water quantities used or pollution produced can ensure that pricing has a clear incentive function for consumers to improve water use efficiency and reduce pollution. 3) The integration of economic and environmental objectives into Member States' water pricing policies is highly diverse at present. Overall, the full recovery of financial costs is only partly achieved, and environmental and resource costs are rarely considered. The inadequacy of water pricing policies is striking for the agricultural sector, especially in Southern Europe where it is by far the largest consumer of water and where scarcity problems are the greatest. 4) Water pricing policies in countries where the EU has a particularly strong involvement rarely integrate economic efficiency and environmental objectives. This is true for accession countries, where pricing is an important issue in the context of enlargement, as well as in the developing countries. 5) Efficient water pricing policies have a demonstrable impact on the water demand of different uses. As a result of changes in water demand, efficient water pricing reduces the pressure on water resources. This is particularly true for the agricultural sector. The available evidence suggests that farming communities can be expected to adapt to certain price increases that would result from a stricter recovery of the costs of water services. Different levels of cost recovery among countries and economic sectors, such as agriculture and industry, are likely to influence the competitiveness of these sectors both in the internal market and international trade. 6) Pricing policies that better account for the environment will build on a firmer application of the principle of recovery of costs; a wider application of pricing structures that provide incentives and the promotion of metering devices; the assessment of major environmental costs and, where feasible, the internalisation of these costs into prices; a transparent policy development process with the participation of users /consumers; and a phased implementation of pricing policies that better integrate sound economic and environmental principles. 7) Water pricing needs to be integrated with other measures to ensure environmental and socio-economic objectives are met cost-effectively e.g. preparation of river basin management plans. 8) Other sectoral, structural and cohesion policies need to be designed and implemented so as to ensure consistency and coherence with, and effectiveness of, water pricing policies. The CAP should support the sustainable use of water resources in line with the economic and environmental principles promoted in the proposed Water Framework Directive and in this Communication. The Commission fully recognises the sensitivity of the pricing issues discussed in this Communication for a wide range of stakeholders and Member States. This sensitivity should not be reason for misreading the Commission's message as an advocacy for a 'pricing alone' policy. Clearly, pricing is not the sole instrument that can (and will) solve water resource problems in Europe and elsewhere. However, pricing should be given due consideration to ensure it promotes more efficient and less polluting use of our scarce water resources. Overall, the Communication seeks to promote a fruitful debate and sharing of views that will lead to the identification of practical steps and development of guidelines for the implementation of the water pricing article of the proposed Water

Framework Directive. It is hoped that it will play an information role for stakeholders who will actively participate in the preparation of the river basin management plans and programmes of measures provided for by the Water Framework Directive. It will also support the assessment of the role water pricing may play in the context of enlargement and the implementation of the environmental acquis in accession countries. Lastly, it will supplement the EU guidelines for development policy entitled 'Towards Sustainable Water Resources Management' by stressing the key components of sustainable water pricing policies.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 01/04/2009 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents a report in accordance with article 18.3 of the Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC on programmes for monitoring of water status.

The EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), adopted in 2000, laid the foundation for a modern, holistic and ambitious water policy for the European Union and defined a clear implementation calendar to achieve its objectives, with intermediate deadlines for the achievement of specific tasks, among them:

- December 2003: transposition of the WFD into national law, identification of river basin districts and set up of administrative arrangements;
- December 2004: pressure and impact analysis of river basin districts, and economic analysis of water uses;
- December 2006: establishment of the monitoring programmes for the assessment of water status;
- December 2008: publication of the draft river basin management plans for consultation;
- December 2009: adoption of the river basin management plans;
- December 2012: programme of measures operational at the latest;
- December 2015: achievement of good status for surface and groundwater and first update of the river basin management plan.

The first Commission communication gave, in March 2007, an overview of the aims of the Directive and summarised the results of the implementation of the first two steps identified above (see [COD/1997/0067](#) in the follow up documents).

This Report and the accompanying Commission Staff Working Document responds to WFD Article 18(3) which requires the Commission to publish a report on the progress of implementation of the WFD related to Article 8 on monitoring of water status. This report is based on the information submitted by Member States in accordance with WFD article 15(2), due on 22 March 2007.

1) Reporting: all Member States have reported on the establishment of monitoring programmes in accordance with Article 8 and Annex V WFD, with the exception of Greece which has not reported and Malta, which has not reported on surface water monitoring programmes. In addition, gaps were detected in individual river basin districts or individual water categories.

For the first time ever, Member States have reported electronically through WISE, the *Water Information System for Europe*. The electronic submission of reports through WISE has proven to be successful with a total of 24 Member States having reported through this channel to date. WISE provides for a more effective and streamlined reporting and is already bringing benefits in terms of avoiding double reporting of monitoring stations.

However, there are still some improvements needed to ensure that the reports submitted are clear and comprehensive. Clear and comprehensive reporting is a pre-requisite to enable the Commission to carry out a proper analysis of the implementation. Good practice examples of clear reporting include the reports of Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and the Netherlands.

2) Monitoring: in general terms, there is a good monitoring effort across the European Union.

- more than 107 000 monitoring stations were reported for monitoring of surface water and groundwater under the Water Framework Directive. On surface waters, by far the largest number of monitoring stations is located on rivers (75%), followed by lakes (13%), coastal waters (10%) and transitional waters (2%);
- in general, it appears that the provisions of Annex V to the WFD and the existing guidance documents on monitoring of surface water and groundwater have been applied, although there is room for improvement in some Member States to improve the understanding and application of the basic concepts of surveillance, operational and investigative monitoring;
- the reports from Austria, Czech Republic and Hungary can be cited as examples of good practice, showing a clear approach to the development of WFD monitoring programmes. In addition, the reports from Ireland and the United Kingdom show a significant monitoring effort to ensure confidence in the monitoring results. Finally, the efforts of the countries joining the EU in 2007 should also be acknowledged. Whilst the development of methods to assess ecological status is far from being completed in Bulgaria and Romania, the monitoring programmes have been established in accordance with the concepts of the WFD and, particularly in Romania, provide for comprehensive monitoring;
- one of the key elements of the WFD is that it sets a framework to take into account all pressures and impacts in the aquatic environment and integrates the requirements of other key existing EU water legislation as minimum basic measures. The WFD requires specific monitoring of protected areas, in particular in water bodies used for the abstraction of drinking water and in water dependent habitat and species protection areas. However, in many cases these specific requirements have not been clearly incorporated into the WFD monitoring programmes. The programmes adopted in Ireland can be cited as a positive example of an approach to meet these requirements through specific monitoring sub-nets. The integration of monitoring requirements from other Directives into the monitoring programmes under the WFD should bring benefits for planning and allocating resources for monitoring more efficiently;
- despite international coordination mechanisms being in place in many international river basin districts, only a few Member States such as Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Romania and United Kingdom have reported using them in establishing their monitoring programmes. In

order to ensure a targeted and sound planning of the programme of measures in international river basin districts, Member States need to coordinate monitoring programmes within the river basin district in order to provide an integrated assessment of the existing pressures and impacts;

- the main aim of monitoring is to assess the status of water with the assessment of ecological status of surface waters being of central importance. As has already been seen in the intercalibration exercise, there remain quite a number of gaps in the development of biological assessment methods for determining ecological status. The analysis of the information provided on monitoring programmes shows that there are still many river basin districts where the necessary assessment methods for biological quality elements are not yet in place. This is particularly true in the countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007;
- little information was delivered on the levels of confidence and precision of the overall monitoring programmes and in particular of the assessment methods for ecological status. It is therefore difficult to assess whether the monitoring programmes will deliver a sufficient level of confidence and precision for the purpose of providing a coherent and comprehensive overview of the status of water bodies across the river basin districts and to inform the decision making in relation to the programme of measures.

The river basin management plans due at the end of 2009 will provide the whole picture of the river basin districts in terms of pressures, impacts, status assessment and measures and this will enable the Commission to assess comprehensively the results delivered by the monitoring programmes.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 17/06/1999 - Modified legislative proposal

The Commission's amended proposal accepts, in total or partially, 88 amendments out of the 133 adopted by the European Parliament in its first reading. The Commission has, therefore, accepted amendments aiming to: - clearly indicate that the prevention and the deterioration of the state of water is an objective in itself; - add a protection reference and to improve humid zones; - improve transparency and public participation. Moreover, the Commission accepts the amendments making explicit reference to the inclusion of substances affecting endocrinal functions and radioactive substances in the Directive. Because the measures concerning dangerous substances were an essential problem, the Commission welcomed amendments that called for Community action with a view to continued reduction of the discharge of dangerous substances moving in the direction of their elimination, in conformity with the Esbjerg declaration on the occasion of the 4th Conference of the North Sea. The Commission has also inserted in its amended proposal the objective of achieving some concentrations in the marine environment which are close to natural values for the substances normally present in the marine milieu, and close to zero for artificial substances of human origin. The objective of an insignificant level of anthropogenic pollution in underground waters had been added as an ultimate objective. Therefore, the Commission has preferred to insert this objective as a supplementary objective to a good state of water, without specifying a date. The basic idea of the proposed amendment is to fix prices at a level that encourages the achievement of environmental objectives had been taken into account in the proposed Directive. The Commission has also accepted the amendments attempting to specify certain conditions for derogations, in particular, natural disasters, previous human activities or natural conditions. Moreover, the Commission has adopted the amendment adding a derogation, under certain conditions, for discharges into underground water resulting from exploration operations and oil extraction, as well as other extractive industries, the storage of gas and in the framework of certain scientific and related work. The Commission accepted in part the amendment clarifying the application of quality standards for surface water destined for water supplies. Lastly, the Commission accepts in principle a certain number of amendments concerning the combined approach and programmes of measures.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 26/02/1997 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: The proposal for a directive aims to achieve three objectives no later than 2010: good surface water status in all surface water; good groundwater status in all groundwaters; compliance with all standards and objectives relating to the Protected Areas, including water used for the abstraction of drinking water. **SUBSTANCE:** The proposal responds to a request from the Council and from the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, which in June 1995 called for a fundamental review of Community water policy. It establishes a Community framework for the protection of surface water and groundwater in the Community within a common approach and with common objectives, principles and common basic measures. The proposal for a framework directive establishes the overall objective of achieving good water status and it requires: - river basin management; - an assessment of the characteristics of the river basin; - monitoring of the status of the surface water and groundwater of the river basin; - the establishment of programmes of measures to achieve the objective; - the summarizing of all the above in a 'River Basin Management Plan'; and - public consultation on that plan. In addition, it contains requirements for: - a mechanism to ensure that water use is paid for at full cost recovery prices; - the collection of various bodies of data on the status of the aquatic environment and the constraints to which it is subjected; - a feedback mechanism to inform national authorities and the Commission of particular problems; - action to combat accidental pollution; - simplified reporting procedures; and - a procedure for the development of coordinated strategies for dealing with pollution by individual pollutants or groups of pollutants; - the establishment of a network for the exchange of information and experience between water professionals throughout the Community. The timetable envisaged for the implementation of the directive is as follows: - end of 1997: Council adopts directive; - end of 1999: Member States transpose directive; - Dec. 2000 Waters used for the abstraction of drinking water designated; - Dec. 2001 (a) Analyses of the characteristics of River Basin Districts completed; (b) reviews of the environmental impact of human activity completed; (c) economic analysis of water use completed; (d) Registers of Protected Areas completed; (e) monitoring programmes operational; - Dec. 2004 River Basin Management Plans published covering 2005-2010 (these plans will be revised every 6 years); - Dec. 2006 Commission publishes first report on implementation; - Dec. 2007: Programmes of measures fully operational; - Dec. 2010 Deadline for objective of meeting 'good status' and for the objective of charging for all

uses of water (abstraction, distribution, consumption, collection, treatment etc.) to ensure full recuperation of costs; - Dec. 2013: Commission reviews directive.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 14/11/2012 - Follow-up document

This Commission report on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC) concerns an evaluation by the Commission of **river basin management plans** (RBMPs) submitted by the Member States. The report's conclusions were used to prepare the policy proposals presented in the Commission's communication on the "Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources" and will be examined in the context of the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS).

The main points of the report are as follows:

State of play: the report shows that 23 Member States have adopted and reported all their Plans. 4 Member States (BE, EL, ES and PT) have either not adopted Plans or only adopted and reported some plans. In total, the Commission has received 124 RBMPs (out of an expected 174). 75% of these concern transboundary river basins.

The report underlines that there are good examples of implementation of all aspects of the WFD. Therefore, Member States lagging behind in the approval and implementation of their RBMPs have the chance of learning from others with a view to remedy their delays.

Objective of achieving good status for all water bodies by 2015: the assessment of the RBMPs indicates that progress towards the objective is expected, but **good status will not be reached in 2015** for a significant proportion of water bodies. The information provided in the RBMPs on chemical status for surface waters is not sufficiently clear to establish a baseline for 2009.

The chemical quality of water bodies has significantly improved in the last 30 years, but the situation as regards these priority substances introduced by the WFD is **below the objectives**. All too often, in the RBMPs, exemptions are used to justify existing water uses and management practices showing no plan to achieve WFD objectives.

Monitoring and assessment: despite considerable progress, some countries show **important gaps** in the development and application of assessment methods. A clear gap in monitoring emerges from the information reported to the Commission. This shows that around 15% of surface water bodies in the EU are in unknown ecological status and 40% in unknown chemical status.

Chemical monitoring is insufficient in many Member States, where not all priority substances are monitored or the number of water bodies where monitoring takes place is limited.

Legal framework and governance: although progress has been significant, this has not taken place in most Member States, where there is a continuation of the status quo. The WFD environmental objectives appear to have been included as additional goals but **not really integrated into policy decisions**.

Appropriate **coordination** in decision making across sectors is essential. Cross-border cooperation and coordination of implementation processes is also essential to implement the WFD principle of management at the river basin scale, in particular considering that transboundary river basins cover most of the EU. Moreover, **transparency** on how the results of the consultation processes are considered is important, and there are some good examples in this respect.

Integration of quantitative and qualitative aspects in water management: shortcomings have been identified in the RBMPs in relation to the quality and availability of datasets and lack of coherent measures. Information on the impacts of climate change is included in a number of RBMPs, but in most cases it does not influence the selection of measures and it is planned to be addressed more thoroughly in the next RBMP planning cycle.

Promoting rational use through adequate water pricing: the assessment of the RBMPs shows the **poor quality of the assessment of costs and benefits**. A strong improvement in this area and the definition of a shared methodology for the calculation of costs (including environmental and resource costs) and benefits (including ecosystem services) is necessary. Otherwise, it will be possible neither to ensure the implementation of effective pricing policies nor to avoid disproportionate and inadequate measures.

Funding of measures: decisions on funding have to match the priorities set in the RBMPs. Most of the RBMPs **do not contain precise information on how much it will cost** to implement the measures and how they are going to be financed. Financing mechanisms and availability of funds are to be identified when selecting the measures. Otherwise, the feasibility of implementation is uncertain.

In conclusion, the assessment undertaken by the Commission shows that **a more determined effort is needed to ensure achievement of WFD objectives in 2015, 2021 and 2027 cycles**.

Implementation of RBMPs should ensure that water management is based on a better understanding of the main risks and pressures in a river basin founded on proper monitoring. This will result in cost effective interventions to ensure the long-term sustainable supply of water for people, business and nature.

The Commission:

- will continue to seek and promote a **fruitful informal cooperation with Member States and stakeholders** in the context of the CIS;

- will also **follow-up bilaterally with the Member States** on the implementation of the recommendations that it is putting forward in this implementation report and in accompanying documents, while keeping on enforcing WFD obligations as necessary.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 18/05/2016 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents a staff working document on the application of the [Water Framework Directive](#) (WFD) and the [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#) (MSFD) in relation to aquaculture. It recalls that it issued a communication in 2013 on strategic guidelines for the sustainable development of EU aquaculture, with the aim of helping Member States and stakeholders overcome the challenges facing the sector. In that communication, the Commission announced that it would prepare a guidance document addressing the requirements of the WFD and the MSFD in relation to aquaculture. This document is intended to **assist Member States and industry in the implementation of these EU laws** and facilitate the development of sustainable aquaculture.

It should be noted that the WFD and the MSFD do not contain explicit obligations for aquaculture. The aquaculture industry has to comply with the requirements of the national legislation that implements those Directives in each Member State.

The WSD and aquaculture: to recall, the WFD aims to improve and protect the chemical and ecological status of surface waters and the chemical and quantitative status of groundwater bodies throughout a river basin catchment. The river basin management plans (RBMPs) are the key tools for the implementation of the WFD. During the first cycle of RBMPs (2009-2015) aquaculture was identified as exerting the following pressures on water bodies: use of water resources; point source of pollution; localised reductions in benthic biodiversity; significant dredging of water bodies and physical modification of land; changes in flow regimes; introduction of alien species.

On the other hand, sustainable aquaculture relies on sufficient quantities of clean water. In order to protect waters used for aquaculture, additional objectives beyond good ecological and chemical status should be established for aquaculture protected areas that require specific microbiological standards. Consequently, specific measures should also be defined in the Programmes of Measures accompanying the RBMPs to achieve those additional objectives.

The Commission also assesses the principle of cost recovery in water-pricing policies under the WMD.

The document offers **practical guidance to facilitate the implementation of the Water Framework Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive** in the context of the development of sustainable aquaculture. More specifically, it provides:

- suggestions and guidelines on good regulatory practice to national authorities about the requirements of the Directives in relation to aquaculture;
- good practice guidelines and suggestions to industry and aquaculture producers on what is expected of them and what they can expect from the implementation of the Directives;
- information about the sustainability of EU aquaculture production and its compliance with relevant EU environmental legislation.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 09/03/2015 - Follow-up document

This Commission staff working document concerns the progress in implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) Programmes of Measures (PoMs).

The Water Framework Directive establishes a framework for sustainable water management through the development of River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) and Programmes of Measures (PoMs), with the objective of preventing deterioration of the aquatic environment and of achieving good status of all water bodies by 2015.

The WFD PoMs are made of basic and supplementary measures. Basic measures are the minimum requirements to be included in the PoMs and supplementary measures may be of a very diverse nature which Member States may tailor to the situation in their River Basin Districts (RBDs) as long as the objectives are met.

The main findings of the report may be summarised as follows:

Progress so far: Member States were asked to report on the main achievements made in delivering the Programmes of Measures:

- For the majority of Member States (19), some but not all measures have been started and some but not all measures have been completed. No Member State reported having completed all measures and only one Member State (AT) reports that the status of water bodies is improving.

- The majority of Member States (17) reported that new legislation or regulations have been adopted as a requirement to fulfilling certain measures.
- 23% of WFD-specific basic measures were reported as completed, 66% on-going and 11% not started. The figures reported for supplementary measures were 29% completed, 54% on-going and 17% not started.
- Two thirds of the RBDs reported that the basic measures (Nitrates Directive plus the WFD basic measures) are not sufficient to tackle diffuse pollution from agriculture, indicating a need to take supplementary measures.
- The type of basic measures more often reported as significantly delayed are those related to **water abstraction**.
- The majority (75% or more) of supplementary measures have been completed only in 2 Member States. 11 Member States have significant percentages (more than 20%) of supplementary measures not started.

Funding/financial obstacles is the most common reason indicated for delays in implementing supplementary measures, affecting 7% of the supplementary measures at EU level.

Hydropower is the most commonly cited driver responsible for interruption of river continuity, followed by water supply and flood protection. Progress in implementation is slow, with 80% of the measures either not started or still on-going in 8 Member States.

Measures related to **waste water treatment** beyond the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive have progressed significantly, with 7 Member States showing more than 75% of the measures either completed or under construction, although situation is very diverse. 5 Member States indicated more than 75% of the measures have not started or are on-going.

Reporting of **drinking water** protection measures shows good progress with 9 Member States above 60% completion.

Shortcomings and proposed changes: a variety of obstacles to delivery of the Programmes of Measures has been reported by the Member States, the most common of which is a **lack of finance and monitoring**. Many Member States reported unexpected **planning delays** and some reported **governance issues** that cause delays or problems in implementing the PoM.

It is reported by Member States that there are planned changes and improvements in the second cycle.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 31/01/2012 - Follow-up document

In accordance with Article 16(4) of Directive 2000/60/EC (the Water Framework Directive or WFD) the Commission presents a report on the outcome of the review of Annex X which contains the list of priority substances in the field of water policy, identified among those posing a significant risk to or via the aquatic environment.

The existing list of 33 priority substances was established by Decision No 2455/2001/EC

and amended by Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy (EQSD). The latter also established environmental quality standards (EQS) for all the 33 priority substances and for 8 other pollutants that were already regulated at EU level under existing legislation.

The EQSD requires the Commission to consider, within the framework of the review of WFD Annex X, the substances set out in Annex III to that Directive for possible identification as priority substances or priority hazardous substances, and present proposals to identify new substances and to set corresponding EQS for surface water, sediment or biota, as appropriate.

This report is accompanied by a Commission proposal for a Directive amending Directives 2000/60/EC and 2008/105/EC as regards priority substances in the field of water policy.

Review of existing priority substances: taking into account newly available information, the following changes are proposed to existing EQS:

(i) The water EQS of the following existing priority substances are proposed for update:

- Anthracene, Fluoranthene, Naphthalene, Polyaromatic hydrocarbons, Polybrominated diphenyl ethers, Lead and Nickel;
- biota EQS have been developed and are proposed for Fluoranthene, Polyaromatic hydrocarbons and Polybrominated diphenyl ethers, because due to their properties these substances are more easily and reliably measurable in this matrix;
- existing biota EQS for Hexachlorobenzene, Hexachlorobutadiene and Mercury are maintained, but the water EQS and footnote 9 in Part A of Annex I to Directive 2008/105/EC are deleted because those EQS do not afford adequate protection.

The updated EQS represent, according to the latest scientific knowledge, an adequate level of protection of the aquatic environment and of human health via the aquatic environment.

(ii) As regards the status of existing substances, and according to the latest information, the substances Di-(2-ethylhexyl)-phthalate (DEHP) and Trifluralin are proposed to be classified as priority hazardous substances.

Identification of new priority substances: it is proposed to identify the following substances

- **as priority substances:** Aclonifen, Bifenox, Cybutryne, Cypermethrin, Dichlorvos, Terbutryn, 17alpha-ethinylestradiol, 17beta-estradiol and Diclofenac;
- **as priority hazardous substances:** Dicofol, Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid and its derivatives (PFOS), Quinoxifen, Dioxins and dioxin-like compounds, Hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD) and Heptachlor/heptachlor epoxide.

Water EQS are being proposed for all the new substances except for Dioxins and dioxin-like compounds. Biota EQS are proposed for Dicofol, PFOS, Dioxins and dioxin-like compounds, HBCDD and Heptachlor/heptachlor epoxide.

Review of substances in Annex III to Directive 2008/105/EC: four substances/groups of substances listed in Annex III to Directive 2008/105/EC are being proposed for inclusion in the priority substances list: Dicofol, Dioxins and dioxin-like compounds, PFOS and Quinoxifen. The inclusion of a fifth, the Dioxin-like PCBs, is covered by the inclusion of Dioxins and dioxin-like compounds. The toxicity data for non-dioxin-like PCBs are not sufficient to derive a reliable EQS and therefore these PCBs are not proposed for inclusion.

For the other substances in Annex III to Directive 2008/105/EC, the review concluded that there was not enough evidence of significant risk to or via the aquatic environment at EU level to include them at this stage in the list of priority substances.

Identification of control measures at EU level: since 2006, the legislation to control the authorisation and placing on the market of chemicals has been substantially improved, in particular with the adoption of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 (REACH) and of Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market

This and other existing EU legislation (e.g. biocides and veterinary medicines legislation) contains mechanisms suited to controlling the uses and emissions of most of the priority substances at EU level and should in principle be sufficient to achieve the objectives of the WFD.

The report sets out other outcomes of the review and notes particularly:

- the update of the Technical Guidance for deriving Environmental Quality Standards, which contains expanded and updated sections on sediment and biota standards. This has allowed the derivation of standards for biota for those substances that, due to their intrinsic properties and their fate in the aquatic environment, are best regulated in that matrix. This will significantly improve the protection offered by the EQSD;
- the identification of problematic substances that, due to their persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic behaviour, will continue to cause exceedances of the EQS for a long time, even though very stringent measures to limit emissions have already been taken. Because of their characteristics, they merit separate treatment in terms of their monitoring and the presentation of their impact on chemical status;
- the need for a mechanism to improve the collection of targeted and high-quality monitoring data from across the EU to support future prioritisation exercises.

Outlook: future prioritisation exercises will take advantage of the wealth of information provided by the REACH registration process, whose first deadline was in November 2010. Furthermore, the expertise on risk assessment at EU level is being concentrated in the European Chemicals Agency and other agencies that deal with risk assessment of other chemicals, such as the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) for pesticides and the European Medicines Agency (EMA) for pharmaceuticals. For future reviews of the priority substances list, the Commission will **explore the possibilities of exploiting the expertise on risk assessment existing at EU level**. This should also ensure that there continues to be a high degree of coherence and consistency between the WFD and related policies such as chemicals, biocides, pesticides and pharmaceuticals.

Framework for Community action in the field of water policy. Water Framework Directive

1997/0067(COD) - 26/02/2019

The Commission presents its 5th report on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC) based on the Commission's assessment of the second River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) and first Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) prepared by Member States for the period 2015-2021.

The key objective of the Water Framework Directive is to achieve, by 2015, good status for over 111 000 surface waters (e.g. rivers, lakes, coastal waters) and over 13 000 groundwaters in EU territory. The Commission points out that, in its assessment, it considered, inter alia, comments made by the European Parliament on previous implementation reports. Parliament adopted a water-related [resolution in 2015](#) stressing the importance of water quality and quantity management, the need for full implementation of EU water law and for its increased integration into other EU policies. It called on the Member States to complete and implement their RBMPs and make relevant information available online. It highlighted also the synergies between the RBMPs and FRMPs.

Water Framework Directive – findings from the second RBMPs

The European Environment Agency's [State of Water report](#) of July 2018 provides detailed information on the status of Europe's water bodies, as reported by the Member States under the WFD. It shows that 74% of the EU groundwater bodies have by now achieved good chemical status and 89% of them have achieved good quantitative status.

The situation is less encouraging for surface waters: only 38% of them are in good chemical status and just 40% in good ecological status or potential. Some individual pollutants, the most common being mercury, have a large impact on status. The EEA report notes that **European waters remain under significant pressure** from both diffuse (e.g. agriculture, transport infrastructure) and point-source (e.g. industry or energy production) generated pollution, over-abstraction and hydro-morphological changes stemming from a range of human activities.

Overall, substantial efforts have been made to implement the WFD. Better implementation of other closely linked pieces of EU law also had a positive effect. This concerns in particular the [Urban Waste Water Treatment](#), the [Nitrates](#), and the [Industrial Emissions](#) Directives and EU law on chemicals. However, compared to the 2009-2015 cycle, only a limited number of water bodies have improved in status. This may be due to: (i) late identification of pressures, (ii) the longer time required to design effective policy measures, (iii) the slow introduction of measures, the response time of nature before measures take effect, (iv) heightened quality standards and improved monitoring and reporting that reveals water bodies previously qualified to be in 'unknown' status to actually be 'unsatisfactory'.

The WFD requires Member States to identify a **Programme of Measures** to achieve good status. As regards water bodies affected by water abstraction, the key measures have generally been defined, but their implementation is uneven across Europe and thus pressures are only slowly reduced. The fact that most Member States exempt small abstractions from controls or registration is potentially problematic. A lack of control and registration can be of concern particularly in Member States that already have water scarcity problems and in water bodies that face quantitative problems.

The report goes on to note that Member States have taken steps to define water services, calculating financial costs, metering, performing economic analysis and assessing both environmental and resource costs when calculating the **cost recovery amounts** for water services. However, significant gaps remain in translating these improved elements of economic analysis into concrete measures and achieving more harmonised approaches to estimate and integrate environmental and resource costs. Increased investments are essential to meet the objectives of the WFD. Further progress in the economic underpinning of the Programme of Measures would greatly facilitate water-related decisions and investments.

Recommendations

The report indicates that for the third RBMPs Member States should: (i) continue improving stakeholder involvement, with active participation in the planning process and the integration of their contributions in the RBMPs; (ii) clearly identify the gap to good status for individual pressures and water bodies and design, fund and implement targeted Programme of Measures to close it; (iii) reduce reliance on exemptions to ensure a timely achievement of the WFD objectives and improve transparency in relation to the justifications used; (iv) ensure the proper implementation of Article 9 on cost recovery, including the calculation and internalisation of environment and resource costs for all activities with a significant impact on water bodies and the economic analysis to underpin the Programme of Measures.

The report states that the path towards full compliance with the WFD's objectives by 2027, after which exemption possibilities are limited, seems at this stage very challenging. Reporting showed indeed that, although further measures will be taken until 2021, many others would be needed beyond 2021.

The Commission will follow-up as relevant with the Member States on the recommendations contained in this report and its accompanying documents, to secure a better implementation of the requirements under the Water Framework Directive. A stepped up enforcement of the legal obligations covering key pressures on the aquatic environment, such as those stemming from the Nitrates and Urban Waste Water Treatment Directives, will also be pursued.