Basic information

2022/0344(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Directive	Procedure completed
Protection of groundwater against pollution and environmental quality standards in the field of water policy Amending Directive 2000/60 1997/0067(COD) Amending Directive 2006/118 2003/0210(COD) Amending Directive 2008/105 2006/0129(COD) **Subject** 3.70.04 Water control and management, pollution of waterways, water pollution **Legislative priorities** Joint Declaration 2022 Joint Declaration 2023-24	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Climate and Food Safety	LÓPEZ Javi (S&D)	12/09/2024
	Shadow rapporteur BENTELE Hildegard (EPP) BUXADÉ VILLALBA Jorge (PfE) FIOCCHI Pietro (ECR) WIEZIK Michal (Renew) TEGETHOFF Kai (Greens /EFA) CLAUSEN Per (The Left)	

Former committee responsible	Former rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	BRGLEZ Milan (S&D)	11/01/2023

Former committee for opinion	Former rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	GÁLVEZ Lina (S&D)	25/04/2023
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	HÄUSLING Martin (Greens /EFA)	08/12/2022
	PECH Fisheries	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union	

European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner
	Environment	SINKEVIČIUS Virginijus

European Economic and Social Committee
European Committee of the Regions

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
26/10/2022	Legislative proposal published	COM(2022)0540	Summary
19/01/2023	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
27/06/2023	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
12/07/2023	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A9-0238/2023	Summary
11/09/2023	Debate in Parliament		
12/09/2023	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T9-0302/2023	Summary
12/09/2023	Results of vote in Parliament		
12/09/2023	Matter referred back to the committee responsible for interinstitutional negotiations		
24/04/2024	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T9-0358/2024	Summary
24/04/2024	Results of vote in Parliament		
13/11/2024	Resumption of business from the previous parliamentary term		
04/12/2024	Committee decision to open interinstitutional negotiations after 1st reading in Parliament		
16/12/2024	Committee decision to enter into interinstitutional negotiations announced in plenary (Rule 73)		
20/10/2025	Approval in committee of the text agreed at early 2nd reading interinstitutional negotiations	PE779.611 PE779.618	
05/03/2026	Council position published	14144/1/2025	
12/03/2026	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading		

17/03/2026	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		
18/03/2026	Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading	A10-0063/2026	
26/03/2026	Decision by Parliament, 2nd reading	T10-0093/2026	Summary
26/03/2026	Results of vote in Parliament		
30/03/2026	Final act signed		
20/04/2026	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2022/0344(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Directive
Amendments and repeals	Amending Directive 2000/60 1997/0067(COD) Amending Directive 2006/118 2003/0210(COD) Amending Directive 2008/105 2006/0129(COD)
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 192-p1
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Mandatory consultation of other institutions	European Economic and Social Committee European Committee of the Regions
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/9/10497

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE740.884	20/02/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE745.501	04/04/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE745.503	04/04/2023	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE745.250	24/05/2023	
Committee opinion	ITRE	PE746.960	13/06/2023	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A9-0238/2023	12/07/2023	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading /single reading		T9-0302/2023	12/09/2023	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T9-0358/2024	24/04/2024	Summary
Text agreed during interinstitutional negotiations		PE779.611	21/10/2025	
Committee letter confirming interinstitutional agreement		PE779.618	21/10/2025	
Committee draft report		PE785.254	09/03/2026	

Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading		A10-0063/2026	18/03/2026	
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading		T10-0093/2026	26/03/2026	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Council position	14144/1/2025	05/03/2026	
Draft final act	00018/2026/LEX	24/03/2026	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2022)0540	26/10/2022	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2022)0540	27/10/2022	
Document attached to the procedure	SWD(2022)0540	27/10/2022	
Document attached to the procedure	SWD(2022)0543	27/10/2022	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2024)394	08/08/2024	
Commission communication on Council's position	COM(2026)0039	18/02/2026	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	CZ_SENATE	COM(2022)0540	13/03/2023	
Contribution	ES_PARLIAMENT	COM(2022)0540	21/03/2023	
Contribution	DE_BUNDESRAT	COM(2022)0540	22/05/2023	
Contribution	IT_SENATE	COM(2022)0540	26/06/2023	
Contribution	PT_PARLIAMENT	COM(2022)0540	15/09/2023	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES5403/2022	22/02/2023	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Parliament	Briefing	20/12/2024
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Meetings with interest representatives published in line with the Rules of Procedure

Rapporteurs, Shadow Rapporteurs and Committee Chairs

Transparency				
Name	Role	Committee	Date	Interest representatives
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	11/03/2026	European Association of Mining Industries, Metal Ores & Industrial Minerals
CLAUSEN Per	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	23/09/2025	European Environmental Bureau Pesticide Action Network Europe
LÓPEZ Javi	Rapporteur	ENVI	01/07/2025	Permanent Representation of Denmark to the EU
CLAUSEN Per	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	11/06/2025	European Environmental Bureau pan europe
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	11/06/2025	Pharma Deutschland e.V
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	14/05/2025	European Environmental Bureau Resilience Action Network International (rani), a fiscally sponsored project of Panorama Global
CLAUSEN Per	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	29/04/2025	European Environmental Bureau Pan Europe
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	28/04/2025	Haleon
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	24/04/2025	Syensqo
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	23/04/2025	EUROMETAUX
CLAUSEN Per	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	07/04/2025	Danish Environmental Attache
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	24/03/2025	KEMIJOKI OY
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	21/03/2025	Verband Kommunaler Unternehmen e.V.
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	21/03/2025	European Association of Mining Industries, Metal Ores & Industrial Minerals
LÓPEZ Javi	Rapporteur	ENVI	04/03/2025	Endocrine Society European Society of Endocrinology
LÓPEZ Javi	Rapporteur	ENVI	12/02/2025	Permanent Representation of Latvia to the EU
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	06/02/2025	Verband der Chemischen Industrie e.V. Von Beust & Coll. Beratungsges. mbH & Co KG Olin
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	03/02/2025	EUROMETAUX The European Steel Association

WIEZIK Michal	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	27/01/2025	Former MEP
WIEZIK Michal	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	23/01/2025	Aedes vereniging van woningcorporaties Bouwend Nederland
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	21/01/2025	AnimalhealthEurope
WIEZIK Michal	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	16/01/2025	Euromines
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	17/12/2024	Pharma Deutschland e.V
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	12/12/2024	Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie e.V.
LÓPEZ Javi	Rapporteur	ENVI	09/12/2024	Permanent Representation of the Republic of Poland to the EU
CLAUSEN Per	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	04/12/2024	Natural Mineral Waters Europe aisbl
LÓPEZ Javi	Rapporteur	ENVI	02/12/2024	DG Environment
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	02/12/2024	ERM Coalition Internationale Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Wasserwerke im Rheineinzugsgebiet
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	28/11/2024	Boliden Group
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	26/11/2024	Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland e. V. Pesticide Action Network Europe
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	21/11/2024	Aqua Publica Europea
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	21/11/2024	FuelsEurope
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	19/11/2024	KEMIJOKI OY
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	13/11/2024	European Federation of National Associations of Water Services
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	11/11/2024	Covestro AG Plastics Europe
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	05/11/2024	European Association of Mining Industries, Metal Ores & Industrial Minerals
LÓPEZ Javi	Rapporteur	ENVI	29/10/2024	European Environmental Agency
CLAUSEN Per	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	22/10/2024	European Environmental Bureau
WIEZIK Michal	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	17/10/2024	European Environmental Bureau Pesticide Action Network Europe WWF
CLAUSEN Per	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	16/10/2024	European Environmental Bureau
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	16/10/2024	European Environmental Bureau Pesticide Action Network Europe
WIEZIK Michal	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	16/10/2024	EurEau
BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	16/10/2024	EUROMETAUX International Copper Association Europe Jernkontoret

BENTELE Hildegard	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	14/10/2024	CEFIC - European Chemical Industry Council Verband der Chemischen Industrie e.V.
WIEZIK Michal	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	01/10/2024	International Association of Waterworks in the Rhine Basin (IAWR)
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	15/04/2024	European Environmental Bureau
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	28/02/2024	Fleishman-Hillard
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	15/02/2024	European Anglers Alliance
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	15/02/2024	European Environmental Bureau
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	18/12/2023	Comite National Conchyliculture
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	17/11/2023	Solvay SA
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	16/11/2023	Društvo Proteus
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	27/09/2023	Covestro AG
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	06/06/2023	European Environmental Bureau
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	23/05/2023	European Environmental Agency
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	02/05/2023	A.I.S.E.
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	26/04/2023	MEDICINES FOR EUROPE Teva Pharmaceuticals Europe BV
CONTE Rosanna	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	19/04/2023	Medicines for Europe
MESURE Marina	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	14/04/2023	Association L'Étang Nouveau
MESURE Marina	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	24/03/2023	Bureau environnemental européen
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	23/03/2023	EurEau
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	21/03/2023	International Copper Association Europe
MOTREANU Dan-Ştefan	Shadow rapporteur	AGRI	21/03/2023	EUROMETAUX International Copper Association Europe International Zinc Association
NIINISTÖ Ville	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	20/03/2023	The European Federation of National Associations of Water Services
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	20/03/2023	EUROMETAUX
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	20/03/2023	European Precious Metals Federation
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	20/03/2023	International Zinc Association
NIINISTÖ Ville	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	15/03/2023	European Environmental Bureau
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	15/03/2023	Covestro AG
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	09/03/2023	European Environmental Bureau
NIINISTÖ Ville	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	06/03/2023	Haleon

BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	28/02/2023	Nickel Institute EU MAP Consulting Ltd
CONTE Rosanna	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	28/02/2023	REGIONE VENETO
HAZEKAMP Anja	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	15/02/2023	Bureau Brussel Vewin - Unie van Waterschappen
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	31/01/2023	EPPA SA
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	31/01/2023	Covestro AG
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	23/01/2023	Agencija Republike Slovenije za okolje
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	23/01/2023	European Environmental Bureau
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	16/01/2023	ClientEarth AISBL
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	13/01/2023	Pravno-informacijski center nevladnih organizacij - PIC
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	13/01/2023	Zavod REVIVO
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	13/01/2023	Global Water Partnership Slovenia
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	13/01/2023	Slovensko društvo za zaščito voda
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	13/01/2023	Geološki zavod
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	13/01/2023	Društvo vodarjev Slovenije
BRGLEZ Milan	Rapporteur	ENVI	13/01/2023	Slovenski komite mednarodnega združenja hidrologov Slovenije

Other Members

Transparency

Name	Date	Interest representatives
WÖLKEN Tiemo	19/08/2026	Roess Nature Group
SALINI Massimiliano	25/09/2025	Moet Hennessy
KIRCHER Sophia	03/10/2024	Novartis International AG
LIESE Peter	09/02/2024	EurEau
DE LANGE Esther	21/03/2023	Nickel Institute

Final act

Directive 2026/0805
OJ OJ L 20.04.2026 — Summary

Protection of groundwater against pollution and environmental quality standards in the field of water policy

2022/0344(COD) - 26/10/2022 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to update lists of water pollutants to be more strictly controlled in surface waters and groundwater.

PROPOSED ACT: Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: EU water legislation shares an overarching objective of protecting human health and the environment from the combined effects of toxic and/or persistent pollutants.

This proposal covers amendments to three Directives:

- Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy,

- Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration,

- Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards (EQS) in the field of water policy.

The Commission conducted a review of the list of priority substances in the Annexes of the Directives and concluded, in the light of new scientific knowledge, that it is appropriate to amend those lists.

PURPOSE: with this proposal, the Commission aims to protect European citizens and natural ecosystems from risks posed by pollutants and their mixtures. The ultimate aim of the initiative is to set **new standards** for a series of chemical substances of concern to address chemical pollution in water, to facilitate enforcement based on a simplified and **more coherent legal framework**, to ensure dynamic and **up-to-date information on water status** , facilitated by the European Environment Agency (EEA), and create a more flexible framework for addressing pollutants of emerging concern. This would be based on wide stakeholder involvement as well as sound scientific support from the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) to ensure maximum synergies and coherence across EU laws on chemicals.

More specifically, the proposal will:

- reduce concentrations of acutely toxic and/or persistent chemicals in surface and groundwater. Benefits will include reduced impacts on the environment, human health, pollinators and agriculture;

- improve the quality of oceans, lakes, rivers, streams, estuaries, and wetlands and of the services they deliver such as clean water, rich soils and a high biodiversity;

- limit or avoid future costs of water treatment by reducing pollution at the source;

make chemical monitoring data more easily available, accessible and re-usable which will be useful for a better safety assessment of chemicals altogether;

- require that Member State authorities warn immediately downstream Member States in the same river basin, as well as the Commission, in case of exceptional circumstances of natural origin or force majeure, in particular extreme floods, prolonged droughts, or significant pollution incidents. This will provide faster and better response to events such as the Oder river pollution from summer 2022;

- work on tools to monitor and develop a policy response to problematic substances, such as microplastics and antimicrobial genes;

- support the ‘one substance, one assessment approach' where the same chemical is evaluated in the same way regarding the risk it poses by different EU laws and policies to limit regulatory burden;

- ensure more dynamic and up-to-date information on water status facilitated by the European Environment Agency.

The new rules recognise the **cumulative or combined effects** of mixtures shifting away from the current focus on individual substances solely. Furthermore, the proposal takes account of **seasonal variations** in the amount of pollution, such as in the case of pesticides used by farmers during planting seasons.

The current proposal is also consistent with the recently revised Drinking Water Directive, which enters into force in 2023. By aiming to reduce pollution of surface and groundwaters, it will protect vital drinking water sources and reduce the cost of treatment. The Drinking Water Directive and this proposal address a wide range of pollutants, in particular pesticides, pharmaceuticals and the group of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

Budgetary implications

The proposal will have budgetary implications for the Commission (EUR 500 000), the European Environment Agency (EEA) (EUR 7 million) and the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) (EUR 8.9 million) in terms of human and administrative resources required.

Protection of groundwater against pollution and environmental quality standards in the field of water policy

2022/0344(COD) - 24/04/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 452 votes to 43, with 83 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, Directive 2006

/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration and Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy.

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amends the proposal as follows:

Common good and a heritage

Parliament stressed that water is not a commercial product like any other but, rather, a common good and a heritage, which needs to be protected, and treated as such, in order to ensure that ecosystems are preserved and that there is universal access to clean water.

Progressive reduction of priority hazardous substances

According to Members, Member States should implement the necessary measures to progressively reduce pollution discharges, emissions and losses from priority substances , and to cease or phase out emissions, discharges and losses of priority hazardous substances within an appropriate timeline and, in any case, **not later than 20 years** after a given priority substance is listed as hazardous in Part A of Annex I to Directive 2008/105/EC.

Administrative coordination within river basin districts

Member States should notify other Member States that could be adversely affected by the relevant pollution incident. To further improve cooperation and information exchange in the international river basin districts, for all international river basin districts arrangements for emergency communication and response should be put in place.

Emerging and new substances

The number of substances or groups of substances to be monitored and analysed under the watch lists for surface water and groundwater should **not be limited**.

Members proposed that the **watch list** - which lists substances or groups of substances for which there are indications that they present a significant risk to human health and the environment - should contain **a minimum of five substances or groups of substances of emerging concern** selected from amongst those substances for which the information available, also in accordance with sub-paragraph four below, indicates that they may pose a significant risk at Union level to, or via, the aquatic environment, and for which the monitoring data are insufficient. This list should be updated regularly to take account of new scientific evidence.

In addition to the minimum number of substances or groups of substances, the watch list could also contain **pollution indicators**.

Members propose that a number of substances be added to the list as soon as appropriate monitoring methods have been identified. These include micro-plastics, antimicrobial resistant micro-organisms and certain antimicrobial resistance genes, as well as possibly sulphates, xanthates and non-relevant metabolites of pesticides.

Groundwater pollution

Members considered that a **precautionary approach** should be applied when setting groundwater threshold values to protect human health, groundwater ecosystems and groundwater-dependent ecosystems. The threshold values applicable to groundwater should normally be **10 times lower than the corresponding threshold values for surface waters**. However, where the actual risk posed to the groundwater eco-systems can be established, it could be appropriate to set threshold values for groundwater at a different level.

Each Member State should select at least two monitoring stations, plus the number of stations equal to its total area in km2 of groundwater bodies divided by 30 000.

Members also wanted a subset of specific PFAS (perfluoroalkylated and polyfluoroalkylated substances) and 'PFAS Total' (a parameter that includes all PFAS with a maximum concentration) to be added to the list of groundwater pollutants. They also want stricter standards for glyphosate, bisphenol (bisphenols total), atrazine, pharmaceuticals and non-relevant metabolites of pesticides.

Based on the precautionary principle, a common and unified AA-EQS for inland surface waters and, separately, for other surface waters, should be adopted in relation to **glyphosate**.

Improving protection of groundwater ecosystems

The Commission should, not later than four years after the date of entry into force of this Directive, publish an assessment of the impacts of physico-chemical elements, like **pH, oxygenation**, and temperature, on health of groundwater ecosystems, accompanied, where appropriate, by a legislative proposal to revise this Directive accordingly, in order to set the corresponding parameters, provide for harmonized monitoring methods, and define what would constitute a "good ecological status" for groundwater. It should publish an assessment of the chemical status of areas characterised by high ecological value, vulnerability or pollution.

Extended producer responsibility

Members considered that, in accordance with the polluter pays principle, producers placing on the Union market products that contain substances which have a proven or potential negative impact on human health and the aquatic environment **take financial responsibility** for the measures required to control substances generated in the context of their commercial activities and found in surface water and groundwater. The Commission is called on to examine the creation of an extended producer responsibility mechanism.

European monitoring facility

Monitoring of an increased number of substances or group of substances involves increased costs but also the need for strengthened administrative capacity in the Member States, especially those with scarcer resources. In light of the above, the Commission should set up a joint European monitoring facility for managing the monitoring requirements when so requested by the Member States, thus easing their financial and administrative burdens. The use of such facility should be voluntary.

Access to justice

Member States should ensure that members of the public, in accordance with national law, that have a sufficient interest or that allege the impairment of a right, have access to a review procedure before a court of law, or another independent and impartial body established by law, to challenge the substantive or procedural legality of all decisions, acts or omissions under this Directive.

Protection of groundwater against pollution and environmental quality standards in the field of water policy

2022/0344(COD) - 12/07/2023 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Milan BRGLEZ (S&D, SI) on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration and Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy.

This new legislative proposal presented by the European Commission brings forward a revision of the Water Framework Directive together with its two ‘daughter’ Directives, the Groundwater Directive and the Environmental Quality Standard Directive with the purpose to improve the EU water legislation towards achieving its overarching objective of protecting human health and natural ecosystems from toxic pollutants.

The committee responsible recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the proposal as follows:

Progressive reduction of priority hazardous substances

According to Members, the Commission should adopt the necessary legislation and Member States shall implement the necessary measures to progressively reduce pollution discharges, emissions and losses from priority substances , and to cease or phase out emissions, discharges and losses of priority hazardous substances within an appropriate timeline and, in any case, not later than **20 years after** a given priority substance is listed as hazardous in Part A of Annex I to Directive 2008/105/EC.

That timeline should apply without prejudice to the application of stricter timelines in any other applicable Union legislation.

Emerging and new substances

Members proposed that the watch list - which lists substances or groups of substances for which there are indications that they present a significant risk to human health and the environment - should not be limited to a maximum number as proposed by the Commission. The watch list should contain at least **five substances or groups of substances** and specify, for each substance, the applicable monitoring matrices and any analysis methods. This list should be updated regularly to take account of new scientific evidence.

The substances or groups of substances to be placed on the watch list should be selected from among those substances which, on the basis of available information, could pose a significant risk at Union level to or via the aquatic environment, and for which monitoring data are insufficient. In addition to the minimum number of substances or groups of substances, the watch list could also contain pollution indicators.

Members propose that a number of substances be added to the list as soon as appropriate monitoring methods have been identified. These include micro-plastics, antimicrobial resistant micro-organisms and certain antimicrobial resistance genes, as well as possibly sulphates, xanthates and non-relevant metabolites of pesticides.

Groundwater pollution

Members considered that a precautionary approach should be applied when setting groundwater threshold values to protect human health, groundwater ecosystems and groundwater-dependent ecosystems. The threshold values applicable to groundwater should normally be **10 times lower than the corresponding threshold values for surface waters**. However, where the actual risk posed to the groundwater eco-systems can be established, it could be appropriate to set threshold values for groundwater at a different level.

Each Member State should select at least two monitoring stations, plus the number of stations equal to its total area in km2 of groundwater bodies divided by 30 000.

The Commission should, not later than four years after the date of entry into force of this Directive, publish an assessment of the impacts of physico-chemical elements, like pH, oxygenation, and temperature, on health of groundwater ecosystems, accompanied, where appropriate, by a legislative proposal to revise this Directive accordingly, in order to set the corresponding parameters, provide for harmonised monitoring methods, and define what would constitute a good ecological status for groundwater.

The Commission should publish an assessment of the chemical status of areas characterised by high ecological value, vulnerability or pollution, such as caves and karst areas, former industrial sites and other areas with known historical contamination, accompanied, where appropriate, by a legislative proposal to revise this Directive.

Members also wanted a subset of specific PFAS (perfluoroalkylated and polyfluoroalkylated substances) and '**PFAS Total**' (a parameter that includes all PFAS with a maximum concentration) to be added to the list of groundwater pollutants. They also want stricter standards for glyphosate, bisphenol (bisphenols total), atrazine, pharmaceuticals and non-relevant metabolites of pesticides.

In particular, the report proposed the adoption of the following EQS for **glyphosate**, based on the precautionary principle: a common, unified environmental quality standard expressed as an annual mean value (AA-EQS) of 0.1 µg/L for inland surface waters; a common, unified environmental quality standard expressed as an annual mean value (AA-EQS) of 0.01 µg/L for other surface waters.

Extended producer responsibility

According to Members, introducing the provision on extended producer responsibility would ensure the respective legislation lives up to the polluter pays principle particularly when it comes to financing of monitoring programmes. The Commission is called on to examine the creation of an extended producer responsibility **mechanism**.

Access to justice

The report proposes to enhance the provision on access to justice in environmental matters by concretely defining this right within the relevant legislation and thereby ensuring national courts across the Union abide by this provision making possible for the applicants to be able to rely on national laws when challenging decisions by public authorities that are in breach of the water framework directive.

Protection of groundwater against pollution and environmental quality standards in the field of water policy

2022/0344(COD) - 12/09/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 495 votes to 12, with 124 abstentions, **amendments** to the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration and Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy.

The matter was referred back to the committee responsible for inter-institutional negotiations.

Common good and a heritage

Parliament underlined that water is a public good for the benefit of all which, as an essential natural resource that is irreplaceable and indispensable to life, needs to be carefully considered in the light of its social, economic and environmental dimensions. Climate change, including the increased frequency of natural disasters and extreme weather events, and the degradation of biodiversity, both negatively affect water quality and quantity, leading to pressure on sectors dependent on the availability of water, particularly agriculture.

Progressive reduction of priority hazardous substances

According to Members, Member States should implement the necessary measures to progressively reduce pollution discharges, emissions and losses from priority substances , and to cease or phase out emissions, discharges and losses of priority hazardous substances within an appropriate timeline and, in any case, **not later than 20 years** after a given priority substance is listed as hazardous in Part A of Annex I to Directive 2008/105/EC.

Emerging and new substances

The number of substances or groups of substances to be monitored and analysed under the watch lists for surface water and groundwater should **not be limited**.

Members proposed that the **watch list** - which lists substances or groups of substances for which there are indications that they present a significant risk to human health and the environment - should contain **a minimum of five substances or groups of substances of emerging concern** selected from amongst those substances for which the information available, also in accordance with sub-paragraph four below, indicates that they may pose a significant risk at Union level to, or via, the aquatic environment, and for which the monitoring data are insufficient. This list should be updated regularly to take account of new scientific evidence.

In addition to the minimum number of substances or groups of substances, the watch list could also contain **pollution indicators**.

Members propose that a number of substances be added to the list as soon as appropriate monitoring methods have been identified. These include micro-plastics, antimicrobial resistant micro-organisms and certain antimicrobial resistance genes, as well as possibly sulphates, xanthates and non-relevant metabolites of pesticides.

Groundwater pollution

Members considered that a **precautionary approach** should be applied when setting groundwater threshold values to protect human health, groundwater ecosystems and groundwater-dependent ecosystems. The threshold values applicable to groundwater should normally be **10 times lower than the corresponding threshold values for surface waters**. However, where the actual risk posed to the groundwater eco-systems can be established, it could be appropriate to set threshold values for groundwater at a different level.

Each Member State should select at least two monitoring stations, plus the number of stations equal to its total area in km2 of groundwater bodies divided by 30 000.

Members also wanted a subset of specific PFAS (perfluoroalkylated and polyfluoroalkylated substances) and 'PFAS Total' (a parameter that includes all PFAS with a maximum concentration) to be added to the list of groundwater pollutants. They also want stricter standards for glyphosate, bisphenol (bisphenols total), atrazine, pharmaceuticals and non-relevant metabolites of pesticides.

Based on the precautionary principle, a common and unified AA-EQS for inland surface waters and, separately, for other surface waters, should be adopted in relation to **glyphosate**.

Extended producer responsibility

Members considered that, in accordance with the polluter pays principle, producers placing on the Union market products that contain substances which have a proven or potential negative impact on human health and the aquatic environment take **financial responsibility** for the measures required to control substances generated in the context of their commercial activities and found in surface water and groundwater. The Commission is called on to examine the creation of an extended producer responsibility mechanism.

European monitoring facility

Monitoring of an increased number of substances or group of substances involves increased costs but also the need for strengthened administrative capacity in the Member States, especially those with scarcer resources. In light of the above, the Commission should set up a joint European monitoring facility for managing the monitoring requirements when so requested by the Member States, thus easing their financial and administrative burdens. The use of such facility should be voluntary.

Access to justice

Member States should ensure that members of the public, in accordance with national law, that have a sufficient interest or that allege the impairment of a right, have access to a review procedure before a court of law, or another independent and impartial body established by law, to challenge the substantive or procedural legality of all decisions, acts or omissions under this Directive.

Protection of groundwater against pollution and environmental quality standards in the field of water policy

2022/0344(COD) - 20/04/2026 - Final act

PURPOSE: to ensure a high level of environmental protection and improve the environmental quality of European freshwaters.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Directive (EU) 2026/805 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration and Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy.

CONTENT: this directive amends the Water Framework Directive, the Groundwater Directive and the Environmental Quality Standards Directive, aligning European water policy with the latest scientific data.

The directive aims to **update the list of pollutants that threaten surface water and groundwater**. The revised rules also tighten environmental standards for several substances and strengthen monitoring across the EU.

Groundwater and surface water alert lists

The watch lists for both groundwater and surface water must be established by implementing act within **two years** and then revised every three years. The directive makes monitoring of substances on the watch lists **mandatory** in groundwater and streamlines the monitoring procedure for substances on the watch lists for surface water and groundwater.

The directive also adds **microplastics and antimicrobial resistance** to future watch lists as soon as appropriate methods have been developed, so that data on their concentration in water can be collected to facilitate the development of a risk assessment method.

Monitoring

Regarding the frequency of monitoring of substances behaving as **persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) substances**, Member States may carry out less intensive monitoring than that required for priority substances, but such monitoring must take place at least every three years. **Effects-based monitoring methods** will be mandatory for two years for estrogenic substances in surface waters, to allow the Commission to collect data.

List of substances

To improve water quality, the EU has already put in place rules to monitor and reduce discharges of identified hazardous substances and pollutants into surface water and groundwater. The list of these substances for the entire EU has been expanded and updated, and now includes:

- **pharmaceutical products** (such as painkillers): a uniform quality standard is set for the various pharmaceutical substances of national concern in groundwater;

- **pesticides**: with regard to **groundwater**, the directive retains the 'median value' of 1 µg/l and a total of 5 µg/l while allowing Member States to set a more or less strict individual standard if this is justified by available data on the toxicity of the substance; with regard to **surface water**, a quality standard for the sum of pesticides which are already on the list of priority substances to be monitored is set, with a value of 0.2 µg/l for fresh water;

- **per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS, a group of 'forever chemicals')**: with regard to surface waters, the directive sets a strict standard of 0.0044 µg/l for a sum of 24 PFAS and also adds TFA (trifluoroacetic acid) to this sum of 24 PFAS, to make it a sum of 25 PFAS;

- **bisphenol A**, now classified as a priority hazardous substance, while **atrazine** is declassified.

For the first time, the directive establishes rules for assessing the **cumulative risk** arising from the combination of substances.

Monitoring and reporting obligations

The updated directive strengthens monitoring and reporting obligations for EU countries, aiming to improve water quality and transparency across the EU. Furthermore, Member States will be able to use remote sensing and Earth observation technologies for their monitoring. They must report on the biological quality, chemical quality, and overall status of water bodies to ensure more reliable data across the EU.

Joint monitoring mechanism

The Commission will be responsible for assessing the feasibility of setting up a common surveillance mechanism to help Member States, on a voluntary basis, to manage surveillance requirements.

Extended producer responsibility

The Commission will prepare, within three years of the entry into force of the amending directive, a report assessing, in particular, the possibility of requiring producers who place on the EU market products containing priority substances and priority hazardous substances to contribute to the costs of monitoring programmes.

Cross-border cooperation

The directive strengthens cross-border cooperation, ensuring that affected Member States and the Commission are immediately informed of exceptional circumstances related to extreme flooding, prolonged droughts or accidental transboundary pollution, and that adequate cooperation is put in place.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 10.5.2026.

TRANSPOSITION: no later than 21.12.2027. As regards, the compliance deadline for newly identified substances, the Directive foresees for both surface and groundwater compliance by the **end of 2039**, with a possibility to apply time-related exemptions for one more cycle, i.e. up to end 2045.

Protection of groundwater against pollution and environmental quality standards in the field of water policy

2022/0344(COD) - 26/03/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

The European Parliament adopted a legislative resolution **approving** the Council's position at first reading with a view to the adoption of the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration and Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy.

The proposal amending the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (EQSD) and the Groundwater Directive (GWD) aims to update the annexes to these directives, which contain the list of pollutants and quality standards, to improve monitoring of chemical mixtures, streamline future updates according to scientific findings, improve access to, transparency and re-use of data and set new standards for a series of substances of emerging concern.

The main elements of the Council's position are as follows:

Watchlists

The watchlists for both groundwater and surface water are to be established by implementing act within **two years**, and revised every three years, thereafter. Member States are to monitor each substance or group of substances in the watch list at selected representative monitoring stations over a **24-month period,** with minimum monitoring frequencies (at least once a year for groundwater and twice a year for surface water).

The watchlists are capped at a maximum of **five substances** or groups of substances for groundwater and of **ten substances** or groups of substances for surface water. **Microplastics and indicators of antimicrobial resistance** will only be included provided that reliable methods of sampling and analysis are available. The Commission is tasked with developing such methods within 18 months.

Monitoring

In relation to the monitoring frequency of substances behaving like **ubiquitous persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances** (**uPBTs**). Member States may monitor these substances less intensively than is required for priority substances, but such monitoring should take place **at least every three years**. Regarding seasonal variations in monitoring, Member States are to consider peaks of substance use when planning their monitoring. A voluntary encouragement for digitalisation of monitoring is also foreseen.

Effect-based monitoring is mandatory for **estrogenic substances** in surface water during a 2-year period, in order to allow the Commission to collect data. The Commission will set out the technical specifications for this monitoring by implementing act.

Joint Monitoring Facility

The Commission will assess the feasibility and then the possible establishment of the Joint Monitoring Facility. The use of the facility by Member States is voluntary.

Reporting

The Council's position includes the following: (i) reporting of water status will continue to take place within the six-yearly river basin management plans; (ii) monitoring data related to biological quality elements in surface waters must be reported **every 3 years**; (iii) monitoring data related to chemical quality elements in surface water and groundwater is to be reported every **two years**. The new reporting obligations should be fully aligned with existing electronic data delivery mechanisms.

Substances

Regarding PFAS, the sum of PFAS for groundwater is aligned with the Drinking Water Directive, which sets a quality standard (QS) for the sum of 20 PFAS. In addition, a **QS of 0.0044 µg/l** for the sum of 4 PFAS which are recognised as posing a significant risk to human health and the environment is included for groundwater. For surface water, **one substance (TFA) is added** to the list and the Commission will consider whether TFA should have its own separate quality standard.

On pesticides, for groundwater, a QS for non-relevant metabolites of pesticides is simplified. In addition, the Commission will establish by implementing act a list of known pesticide metabolites. For surface water, the total pesticides environmental quality standard (EQS) is set for the sum of the pesticides that are already included in the list of priority substances to be monitored (except the four pesticides to be monitored in biota or sediment and glyphosate) with a value of 0.2 µg/l for freshwater.

Bisphenol-A is designated as a priority hazardous substance, while **atrazine** is deselected.

New annexes introduce groups of substances (pesticides, pharmaceuticals, bisphenols) to be re-examined. In the future, the Commission will be able to set overall standards for these groups in surface and groundwater.

Extended producer responsibility

The Commission is to prepare a report, within 3 years of the entry into force of this amending Directive, to evaluate, in particular, the feasibility of imposing the obligation on producers that place products containing priority substances and priority hazardous substances on the EU market to contribute to the costs of monitoring programmes established in accordance with the WFD.