



The 7th World Water Forum

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Regional Process

Recommendations for water management in Europe

Wednesday 15 April, 14h40-18h00

GYEONGJU - Hotel Hyundai, GHH_B103, B1F Convention A

Reporting of session the session on:

the implementation of European Union Water Directives

(R.EU.Directives)

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Reporting of session R.EU2. on The European Union Water Directives

KEY CHALLENGES

- The European Union benefits from a well designed set of water laws and policies (WFD, EQS, MSFD, FD, UWWTD, etc.) which has allowed for significant progress in water management and protection in the past 20 years.
- However, progress has been steady but slow. Implementation is an issue. The WFD is a case in point: its good ecological status objective is expected to be achieved in 53% of water bodies by 2015, which marks a 10% increase as compared to 2009 but is still far from the initial target of reaching the good status in all EU waters.
- Many important water problems need far more vigorous efforts. Issues include :
 - General lack of knowledge and significant gaps in the water monitoring network (status of 40% of EU water bodies unknown),
 - Pollution from the agricultural sector (fertilizers and pesticides) and urban wastewater,
 - Degradation of natural hydromorphology,
 - Overabstraction,
 - Negative impacts of climate changes: extension of areas affected by water scarcity, increased frequency of droughts and floods.

Blueprint policy Recommendations

- **Impressive improvement in the knowledge of water status**
- **Increased transparency in setting objectives and managing water**
- **The ecological perspective is generally now firmly integrated into the assessment of the status of surface waters and has become an integral part of water management**
- **However, still areas where additional guidance may be needed (monitoring, chemical status, costs and benefits analysis, hydro-morphology, setting of exemptions, water reuse, coherence of policies, etc)**
- **The assessment shows the need of a determined effort to ensure achievement of WFD objectives in the 2015 and 2021 cycles.**

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KEY MESSAGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS / PROJECTS CONTRIBUTING TO IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP(S)

- Strengthen water monitoring networks and develop the existing Water Information System for Europe (WISE),
- Redouble efforts and ambitions, during 2nd and 3rd cycles of the WFD, in implementing the EU set of water laws and policies, giving special attention to the integrated implementation of relevant directives (WFD, Floods directive, UWWT and Nitrate Directive),
- Ensure better consistency of agriculture, energy, chemicals, transport and land-use policy with water policy, and align policy reporting deadlines in order to ease the burden of administrations and focus resources on the essential: implementation,
- Produce analysis and recommendations on the EU set of water laws and policies in view of the 2019 review of the WFD,
- Clarify eligibility rules and simplify procedures to facilitate access of Member States EU funds,
- Tap support available at EU level to finance specific set of measures (Life, Inter-reg, regional and rural development programmes) or develop techniques, research and innovation (Horizon 2020, European Innovation Partnership on Water),
- Apply the cost-recovery and the polluter/consumer pays principles and strengthened the use of economic tools (cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis) to make the most of scarce financial resources,
- Develop a sustainable quantitative management of water resources, guaranteeing ecological flow (see: EC guidance), and playing on both demand (abstraction permit, incentive water pricing, promotion of water efficiency in building and equipments) and offer (water reuse),
- Invest in green infrastructures, such as Natural Water Retention Measures, to reap its multiple benefits (reduce of the impacts of flood and droughts, fix diffuse agricultural pollution through buffer zones, support biodiversity and landscape),
- Develop exchange of experiences at the relevant level, between river basin organizations and local authorities (see: Project of Peer Review Mechanism for the Improvement of the Water Framework Directive Implementation).