



A review of European Water policy. An introduction

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European Water Policy: an evolving issue

1957 Rome Treaty

- no reference to environmental issues, but article 100 on approaching Member State's regulations

1972 Launch of an European Environmental Policy

- (Paris Summit -> 1st European Environment Action Programme / UN Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment)

1986 Single European Act

- new Title on "Environment" in Treaties

NB *quantitative management of water resources or affecting, directly or indirectly, the availability of those resources, requires unanimity*

A sectorial approach to water policy

Council Directive 75/440/EEC of 16 June 1975 concerning the quality required of surface water intended for the abstraction of **drinking water** in the Member States

1976 Council Directive 76/464/EEC of 4 May 1976 on pollution caused by certain **dangerous substances** discharged into the aquatic environment of the Community

Council Directive 76/160/EEC of 8 December 1975 concerning the quality of **bathing water**

Council Directive 78/659/EEC of 18 July 1978 on the quality of fresh waters needing protection or improvement in order to support **fish life**

Council Directive 79/923/EEC of 30 October 1979 on the quality required of **shellfish waters**

90s Considering emission's source

Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning **urban waste-water treatment**

Council Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by **nitrates** from agricultural sources

From Ecological quality to a Framework Directive

1993 Proposal for a Council Directive on the
ecological quality of water

1997 Commission Proposal

2000 Approval and enforcement of the
Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC
(FWD)

Parallel processes

Water

- Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of **flood risks**
- Directive 2008/105/EC on **Environmental Quality Standards** (EQS) in the field of water policy

General Frame

- Directive 2003/35/EC providing for **public participation** in respect of the drawing up of certain plans and programmes relating to the environment

Water management planning under the WFD

Participation

Identification of water bodies (WB), basins and districts

WB's status analysis and pressures identification

Establishment of good status goals

Determine the gap between present status and goals

Identification of significant water management issues

Programme of measures (PoM)

River basin management plan (draft & approval)

Plan development

Plan review and starting of a new cycle

Review of the first RBMP's generation (2012)

A big effort has been done, **but**

- Ecological and chemical **status unknown** in a high percentage (> 50% WB)
- **Governance problems** (coordination, participation)
- Lack of integration of **quantitative and qualitative** aspects
- **Insufficient compliance** of Pre-WFD legislation (Nitrates, Waste water, IPPC)
- **Inadequate cost recovery** (lacking environmental costs and PPP application) & funding measures
- **Integration with other policies**

What is under way?

A Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources

The status of EU waters is not doing well enough!

- Weakness of implementation
- Conflicts between water policy and other European policies' objectives

Strengthening the implementation of EU water policy through the second RBMPs

- Improving implementation
- Fostering integration
- Completing the current framework (Quantity, efficiency, CC)

What is under way?

Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) WP 2013-2015

Status

- Hydromorphology (and quantitative aspects)
- Ecological flow regimes

Management

- New measures (Natural Water Retention Systems,...)
- Integration (CAP)
- Best practices (Addressing hydromorphological pressures, Metering, PoMs...)

Knowledge integration and dissemination

- Water Accounts & Ecosystem Services Approach
- Knowledge management (Reporting, Data sharing...)

Final questions

How to build (hard?) policies on a liquid scientific ground? Is more scientific research a priority or should we focus on how to promote a better use of existing knowledge?

How to identify and pursue the general interest in presence of powerful private interests?

How to increase legislation compliance and effectiveness in safeguarding European waters?



Thank you!