

**Question for written answer E-014174/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Water management in the EU - pricing policies

In November 2013, the groups Ecologistas en Acción, Aigua és Vida, Som lo que Sembrem, Grup de Defensa del Ter, Plataforma de Defensa del Ebro, Marea Azul del Sur, Red Agua Pública and Ingenieros sin Fronteras presented the document entitled 'Proposals for improved water management in the EU'.

With regard to pricing policies, the Blueprint to safeguard Europe's water resources cites Article 9 of the directive establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy, referring to the recovery of the costs of water services, and proposes that more should be done to apply and enforce it.

The exceptions provided for in the aforementioned directive in relation to cost recovery make the article practically devoid of force.

Member States may change the data relating to the recovery of costs, distributing them between various 'environmental and social' uses, thus reducing the percentage corresponding to production to what is actually required for the construction of specific infrastructure.

Does the Commission believe that EU legislation should include provisions requiring that:

1. the current exceptions in relation to the recovery of the costs of water services be reduced as much as possible, so that Article 9 of the above-mentioned directive is amended, and specifically paragraphs 1 and 4 thereof?
2. in accordance with the human right to drinking water and sanitation, every person be guaranteed the minimum amount of water required, which covers the availability factor; no person be deprived of this minimum amount in the event of them being unable to pay the costs of water supply and water services and installations?
3. in order to reduce the effects of possible manipulations on recovery of the costs of water services, Member States establish a minimum economic cost for water used for consumption purposes, and another cost for non-consumption purposes?
4. the resources recovered through charging be usable only for the operation, maintenance, improvement or expansion of water supply and sanitation services, and for the improvement of the environmental conditions of water resources and river ecosystems, and additional complementary EU funding be available for achieving these objectives?