The Water Framework Directive\(^1\) (WFD) aims to ensure the sustainable availability of good quality water for all users and the environment in a given river basin. Member States are to prevent deterioration and ensure good status of all water bodies by latest 2027, unless properly justified. Member States have to prepare River Basin Management Plans\(^2\) (RBMPs) every six years, and where relevant drought management plans to manage drought risks. Furthermore, relevant measures\(^3\) like controls on water abstraction and water efficiency measures shall be put in place in order to achieve WFD objectives and socio-economic needs. In case of prolonged drought, Member States could resort to the Article 4(6) exemption if all conditions are fulfilled.

The new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Regulation\(^4\) states that CAP Strategic Plans (CSP)\(^5\) have to contribute and be coherent with the objectives of the WFD. This principle applies to the different interventions, including in irrigation. It is up to Member States to design appropriate investments contributing to both CAP and WFD objectives. The Italian CSP is currently under negotiation following the observation letters sent to Member States in March 2022. For Italy, the Commission proposed addressing water savings and precision use of resources amongst others.

Potential support from EU funds includes support under the CAP and the EU’s Solidarity Fund\(^6\). CAP support for targeted measures under the Rural Development Fund\(^7\) is available\(^8\), and Member States can apply for help from the Solidarity Fund in case of natural disasters.

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\(^2\) [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/participation/map_mc/map.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/participation/map_mc/map.htm)
\(^3\) In accordance with Article 13 of WFD.
\(^7\) [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-agricultural-fund-rural-development-eafrd_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/find-funding/eu-funding-programmes/european-agricultural-fund-rural-development-eafrd_en)
\(^8\) For instance for preventive and restoration investments related to adverse climatic effects such as drought.