

EN

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Answer given by Mr Sinkevičius  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(4.3.2024)

1. Since the 2007 Communication ‘Addressing the challenge of water scarcity and droughts in the EU’<sup>1</sup>, the Commission has been supporting Member States to reduce water scarcity risks through adaptation and foresight and is stepping up these endeavours, e.g., by monitoring droughts<sup>2</sup>, assessing drought impacts<sup>3</sup> and modelling future drought risks<sup>4</sup>. More recently, the Commission has published an assessment<sup>5</sup> of national policies for drought management. The water use for energy and food production are analysed scientifically. This will result in an updated Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus report, end 2024. By funding water research & innovation<sup>6</sup> and specifically for vegetable growing<sup>7</sup> the Commission enhances resilience to water stress, improves water use efficiency and supports water reuse. It also acts as a leader at the international level, in particular by contributing to the United Nations (UN) Convention to Combat Desertification and to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

2. The Commission is monitoring and enforcing the implementation<sup>8</sup> by EU Member States of the EU water acquis. This obliges to respect minimal ecological flows and to safeguard groundwater bodies against over abstraction. The Commission is currently assessing the River Basin Management Plans of Member States submitted every six years according to the Water Framework Directive<sup>9</sup>. This assessment will be reported to European Parliament and Council and will include a set of country-specific recommendations. The Commission recently revised rules of the EU water acquis, which will better protect the quality of drinking water<sup>10</sup> and improve wastewater treatment<sup>11</sup> in Europe, whilst promoting circular management of water in agriculture<sup>12</sup> and industry<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2007:0414:FIN:en:PDF>

<sup>2</sup> European Drought Observatory: <https://edo.jrc.ec.europa.eu/edov2/php/index.php?id=1000>

<sup>3</sup> <http://edid-test.eu/#/home>

<sup>4</sup> Drought Risk Atlas: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/21a1984a-7478-11ee-99ba-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ecologic.eu/sites/default/files/publication/2024/50081-stock-taking-analysis-and-outlook-of-drought-policies-KH0623034ENN.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> [https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/research-area/environment/water\\_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/research-area/environment/water_en)

<sup>7</sup> [https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/document/download/d2c1f2c6-3a58-460c-8e42-dbf455acae59\\_en?filename=factsheet-agriresearch-water-manament\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/document/download/d2c1f2c6-3a58-460c-8e42-dbf455acae59_en?filename=factsheet-agriresearch-water-manament_en_0.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0970>

<sup>9</sup> Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1–73, as amended by Commission Directive 2014/101/EU of 30 October 2014, OJ L 311, 31.10.2014, p. 32–35.

<sup>10</sup> Directive (EU) 2020/2184 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on the quality of water intended for human consumption (recast), OJ L 435, 23.12.2020, p. 1–62.

<sup>11</sup> [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-revised-urban-wastewater-treatment-directive\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-revised-urban-wastewater-treatment-directive_en)

<sup>12</sup> Regulation (EU) 2020/741 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 May 2020 on minimum requirements for water reuse, OJ L 177, 5.6.2020, p. 32–55.

<sup>13</sup> [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-revision-industrial-emissions-directive\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-revision-industrial-emissions-directive_en)