

Question for oral answer O-0000/2020

to the Commission

Rule 136

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on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Subject: Implementation of the EU water legislation

The Parliament welcomes the conclusion of the Commission that the Water Framework Directive (WFD) is fit for purpose, yet considers that its implementation needs to be improved and speeded up. Even though the WFD has been successful in setting up a governance framework for integrated water management for hundreds of thousands of water bodies in the EU, in slowing down the deterioration of water status and in reducing chemical pollution, less than half of EU's water bodies are in good status despite the 2015 deadline, only one out of the four freshwater indicators has shown progress over the last 10-15 years and there are a number of issues related to the implementation of the water legislation, largely due to insufficient funding and insufficient integration of environmental objectives in sectoral policies. In this context, we would welcome answers from the Commission to the following questions:

1. What concrete actions will the Commission take in order to improve and enforce the implementation of the water legislation, ensuring that its objectives are achieved as soon as possible and at the latest by 2027?
2. The evaluation indicated considerable variations in implementation between Member States, for instance with regard to monitored pollutants and established thresholds in the Groundwater Directive. How will the Commission seek a more harmonious implementation?
3. How will the Commission improve integration of the directives' objectives, particularly in agricultural, energy and transport sectors, and ensure a policy coherence between the WFD, Biodiversity Strategy, Circular Economy, the future Zero-Pollution Action Plan and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the latter notably with regard to the need for increased measures for protection of water in the agriculture sector?
4. How will the Commission address problems in the field of chemicals, such as the need to monitor a wider range of substances and take into account the combined effects of mixtures? What action will the Commission take on pollutants of emerging concern, particularly pharmaceuticals and microplastics? How will these substances be legislated?
5. Does the Commission consider that there is sufficient funding in the latest MFF proposal for the WFD? What measures will the Commission take regarding the allocation of economic resources to freshwater conservation, to ensure the full implementation of cost recovery (art.9 WFD), and to fully apply the user pays and polluter pays principles?
6. How is the Commission planning to reduce the use of exemptions to the WFD in the third cycle of RBMPs?

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