Water governance across Europe in light of the review of the WFD

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Overview

~ Who we are
~ Water governance
~ Water services governance
~ Cost recovery and polluter-pays principles
~ Improving water governance
1. Who is EurEau?

**EurEau**
the voice of Europe’s Water sector since 1975

**Our members** are the national water services associations from 29 European countries

**We represent** public and private drinking and waste water services

**Employing** 542,000 people, the sector makes a significant contribution to the European economy
1. What do we do?

~ We provide a network for our members to share knowledge and ideas, exchange best practices, analyse common problems and develop effective solutions.

~ We highlight the fundamental role that water services play in society. We develop positions of the water sector at EU level and we engage with EU policy makers to respond to the challenges shared by our members.
Water Policy - timeline

- UWWTD 1991
- DWD 1998
- WFD 2000
- BWD 2006
- Blueprint 2012

Better Regulation

- DWD evaluation 2015
- Water Reuse 2017

- UWWTD evaluation 2017-2018
- WFD Review 2019

- DWD revision 2017
2. Water governance

~ Water governance describes the legislation, policies, regulation and institutional frameworks and best practice related to the management of water resources.

~ Water governance encompasses three essential inter-related elements:
  ~ transparency,
  ~ accountability
  ~ stakeholder engagement.

~ A wide range of effective water governance rules are already in place at the EU and at Member State level.
2. Water governance

~ Water governance in the EU is enshrined in the WFD that introduced the management of water resources at the level of water basins leading to transboundary cooperation between national authorities.

~ At national level the governance of water resources is the competence of water basin management authorities (national/regional/local authorities).

~ Water services represent only one of the players that interact with, and are regulated by, the competent authorities to deliver good governance of water resources.
3. Water Services Governance

~ Drinking water and waste water services are carried out by water operators.

~ Water operators are fully committed to delivering strong water governance and, through EurEau, they are signatories to the OECD Principles on Water Governance.

~ Water services are services of general interest and the way they are managed is subject to subsidiarity (Protocol 26 annexed to the EU Treaties).
3. Water Services Governance

~ Whether the services are carried out by public or private utilities is a choice of Member States

~ Whatever the management system, regulation by the competent authority ensures that water services comply with EU water policy obligations

~ The WFD objective is to achieve good status of water bodies in Europe

~ Sustainable drinking water services rely on non-deterioration of water quality and the achievement of good status

~ But water services play also an important role in reaching this very objective by treating waste water
4. Cost recovery and polluter pays principle

Art.9 WFD:

~ «MS shall take into account the principle of recovery of costs of water services, including environmental and resource costs, having regard to the economic analysis [...] and in accordance in particular with the polluter pays principle» [...]

~ MS shall ensure «an adequate contribution of the different water uses, disaggregated into at least industry, households and agriculture to the recovery of the cost of water services based on the economic analysis [...] and in accordance in particular with the polluter pays principle» [...]

4. Cost recovery and polluter pays principle

~ Today water services in nearly all Member States recover the operational and investment costs through the water tariffs

~ EurEau and the OECD support the 3Ts (tariffs, taxes and transfers) approach that brings clarity to the cost recovery principle

~ Again water services are only one of the players in water governance and we need all other stakeholders to take responsibility for their impact on the aquatic environment and bear the relative costs
Water governance in the review of the WFD

~ Improving water governance in the EU would mean:
  ~ Full implementation of the cost recovery principle
  ~ Implementation of the «source control» approach and the «polluter pays principle»
  ~ More transparency of roles and responsibilities of each actor involved in the water governance
  ~ Better stakeholders’ engagement
  ~ Better synergies across all EU policies (CAP, Pesticides, Nitrates, WFD, Priority substances)
  ~ Better coherence between WFD and the «water industry» Directives (DWD, UWWTD, BWD)
Thank you for your attention

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