



EC initiative on water reuse

**Breakfast meeting by
the EP Intergroup CCBSD
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Pavel MISIGA
DG ENV, Head of the Water Unit



The case for water reuse in the EU

Worrying mismatch between water demand and resources

- ❑ Water stress all year in 1/3 of the EU territory
- ❑ More pronounced in South but increasing in Northern & Eastern MS
- ❑ Growing competition between uses
- ❑ Increasing environmental and economic damages over 30 years
- ❑ Exacerbated by climate change

→ In 2030: water scarcity in half of EU river basins

→ Failure to achieve good status in EU waters

→ Threat to the economy

An untapped potential

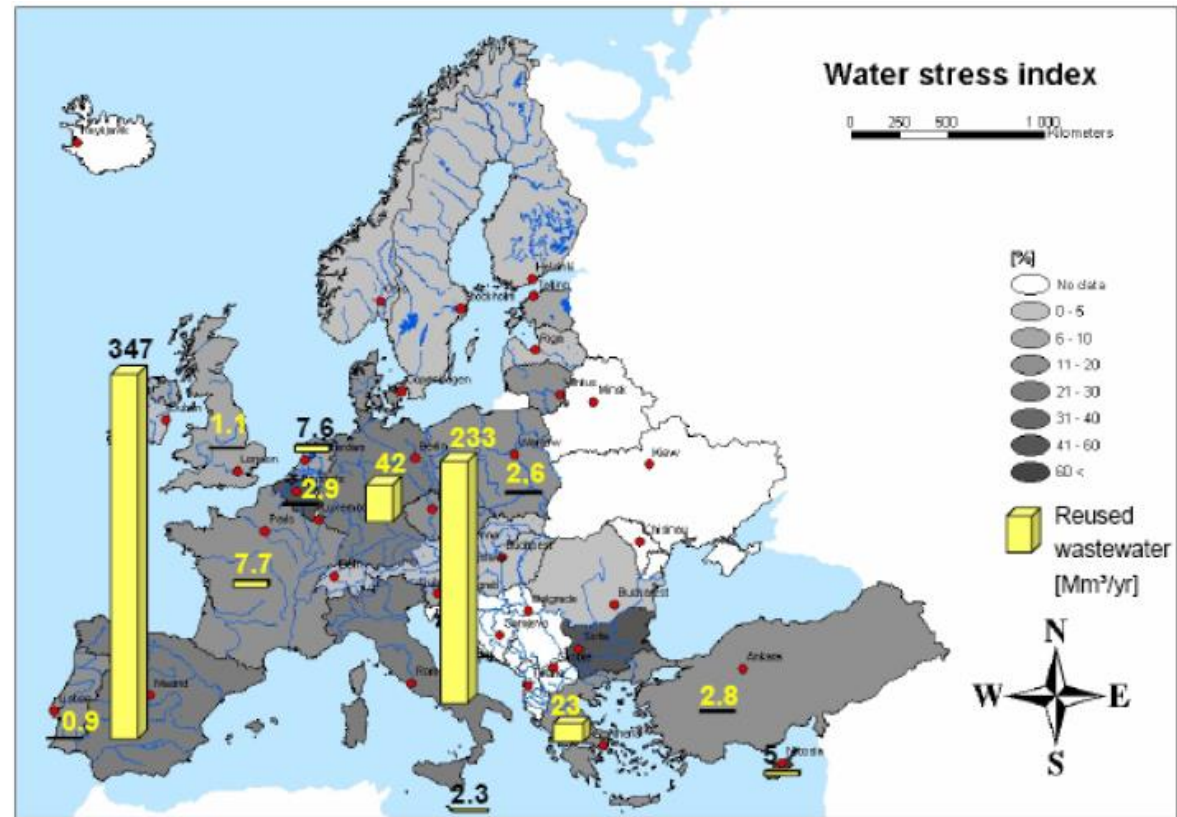
An **accepted but limited practice:**

964 Mm³/year in 2006 =

- 2.4% of the total volume of treated effluents produced (5 to 12% of treated in Greece, Italy and Spain)
- ~ 0.4% of annual EU freshwater withdrawals

➤ **Achievable potential**
6,000 Mm³/y by 2025

→ still far below the levels encountered in non-EU countries such as Australia or Singapore (15-35 % of water demand met by reclaimed water)



Barriers to a greater development

- ❑ Reuse **more complicated and/or costly** than conventional resources:
 - **Insufficient controls and pricing** on abstractions
 - **Unclear/ complex legal framework** for reuse
 - **Too stringent standards** considering the intended use

- ❑ Reuse **perceived** as more risky than beneficial

- ❑ Possible **trade barriers** for agricultural goods produced with reused water

- ❑ Reuse **not sufficiently integrated** in water management



Developments in the EU policy

Building blocks

- *2012 Blueprint Communication*
 - interesting option to address water scarcity and achieve good status of EU waters
 - untapped potential in many situations
 - lack of consideration in water management, lack of harmonized standards

→ *opportunity for an EU action to promote water reuse*
- *Study to develop and assess policy options*
- *Public consultation in Summer-Autumn 2014*

→ *confirmation of the interest*
- *Publication of the Roadmap (September 2015)*
- *Inclusion in the Action Plan on Circular Economy (Dec.2015)*

Water reuse in the CE action plan

Dedicated paragraph in the Communication "Closing the loop – An EU action plan for the circular economy" (COM(2015)614)

"4- From waste to resources: boosting the market for secondary raw materials and water reuse:

[...]

Water scarcity has worsened in some parts of the EU in recent decades, with damaging effects on our environment and economy. In addition to water-efficiency measures, the reuse of treated wastewater in safe and cost-effective conditions is a valuable but under-used means of increasing water supply and alleviating pressure on over-exploited water resources in the EU. Water reuse in agriculture also contributes to nutrients recycling by substitution of solid fertilisers. The Commission will take a series of actions to promote the reuse of treated wastewater, including legislation on minimum requirements for reused water."

[...]

- The Commission will take a series of actions to facilitate water reuse; this will include a legislative proposal on minimum requirements for reused water, e.g. for irrigation and groundwater recharge."

Water reuse in the CE action plan

In the annex of the Communication

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Proposed legislation setting minimum requirements for reused water for irrigation and groundwater recharge | 2017 |
| Promotion of safe and cost-effective water reuse, including guidance on the integration of water reuse in water planning and management, inclusion of best practices in relevant BREFs , and support to innovation (through the European Innovation Partnership and Horizon 2020) and investments | 2016-2017 |

1- Reuse in integrated water planning and management

Development of a guidance document

- Better integration in implementation of WFD
- Common understanding of EU water legislation (WFD, UWWTD, ND...)
- Based on experience in MS and third countries

→ To be issued by mid 2016

→ Developed within the WFD Common Implementation Strategy (MS and stakeholders, endorsed by MS water directors)

2- Minimum quality requirements for water reuse in irrigation and aquifer recharge

- Addressing one of the main barriers = lack of a coherent and comprehensive legislative framework within the EU
- Focussing on the 2 uses with greatest potential and EU added value (re. single market on food and existing EU water law on GW& DW)
- Proposal for and EU legislation by mid 2017, provided IA is positive
- JRC mandated by ENV to develop a technical proposal by end 2016, incl. consultation with the independent Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER)

3- Water reuse in industrial activities

- In the framework of the Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EU) implementation: Best Available Techniques Reference Documents (BREFs) for relevant industrial sectors

- On-going discussion on options:
 - Development of a cross-cutting approach on resource efficiency (incl. Water reuse)or
 - Further integration in sectorial BREFs

- Most relevant sectors:
 - Food, Drink and Milk
 - Textiles
 - Industrial cooling systems

4- Support to research and innovation

- Active field for research and innovation; competition in a world market
- Support to numerous related action group within the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on Water
- Increasing visibility of funding opportunities
 - in Horizon 2020 calls – specific calls on circular economy incl. water reuse
 - in ERDF (smart specialisation)
 - in LIFE (Programme for the Environment and Climate Action)
- Identification of regulatory barriers to RDI
- Dedicated event in the next EIP conference (Feb 2016)

5- EU funds for investments in water reuse

EU funding already available under

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
 - Cohesion Fund (CF)
 - European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EARDF)
-
- Increasing visibility of funding opportunities
 - Check opportunities in the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and specific developments under the Circular economy

Thank you for your attention !

Information and documents available at
the dedicated EC Internet page:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/reuse.htm>