



EU environmental policies and latest developments relevant for waterways

13th Meeting on the Follow-up of the Joint Statement on Guiding Principles on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin

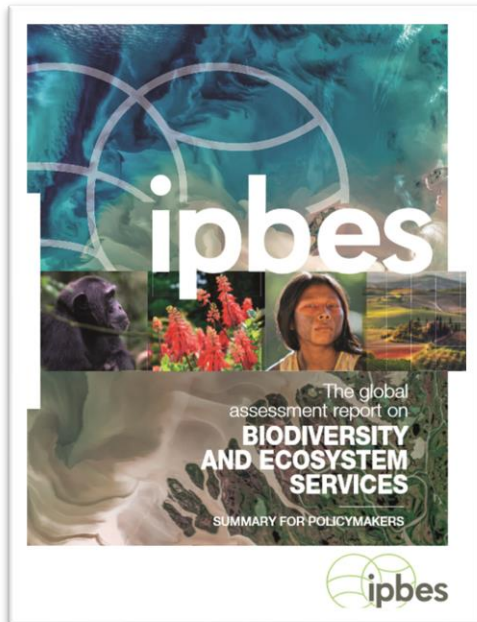
14 September 2022

Jeanne Boughaba (DG ENV)

Why protecting and restoring freshwater ecosystems – including floodplains ?

“Inland waters and freshwater ecosystems show among the highest rates of decline”

“Freshwater species populations suffered an 81% decline”



Cause: multiple pressure including :

- Hydromorphological alterations
- pollution

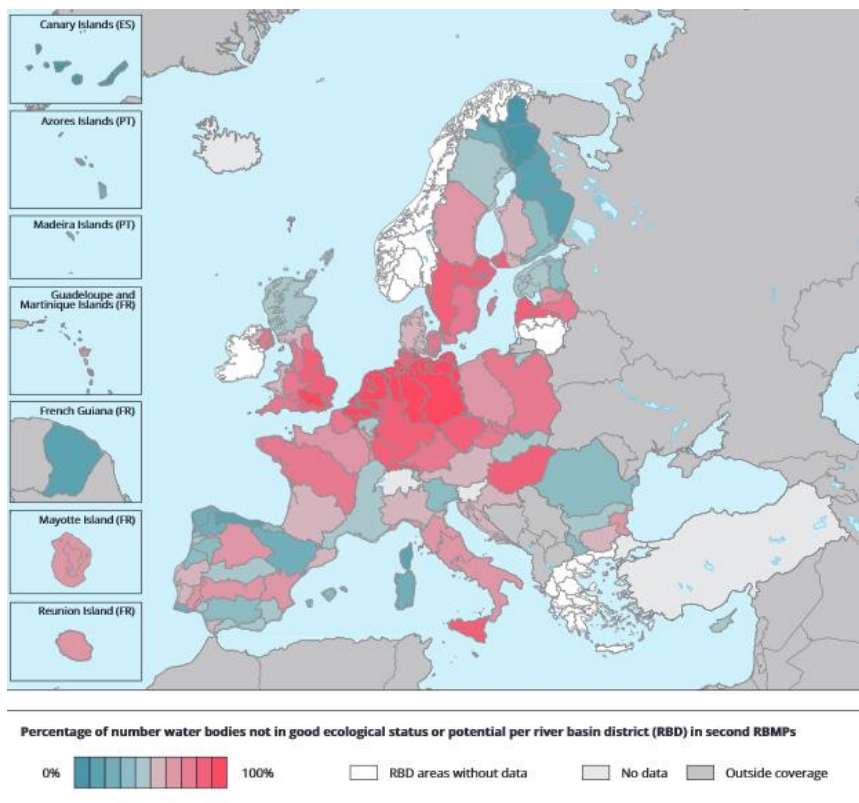
Impacts on ecosystem services

- Resilience to climate change
- Water supply
- Flood protection
- Food supply
- Recreational activities
- Protection of coastal zones
- Nature protection
- ...



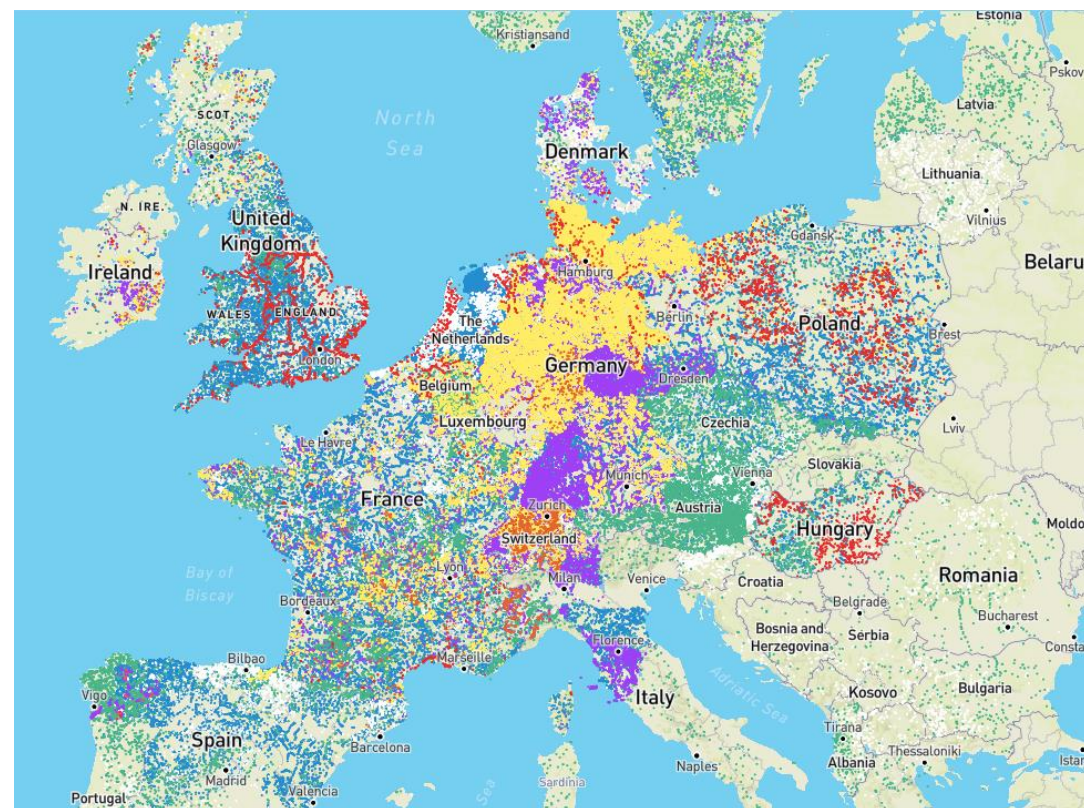
State of water in the EU

Reporting of the Water Framework Directive (2016)



- ✓ 40% Water Bodies achieve Good Ecological Status
- ✓ Hydromorphological pressures : 34% water bodies

River fragmentation



- ✓ More than 1 million barrier - Almost one every 2 km
- ✓ 70-90% of floodplains are degraded due to hydromorphological changes (EEA)

EU policies – freshwater biodiversity

Habitats Directive (1992)

- **Maintain and restore habitats** in favourable status
- Improve ecological coherence of N2000 network



Eel regulation (2007)

Protect and restore Eel population

Pan-European action plan for sturgeon (2018)

Framework to conserve the last sturgeon populations



Water Framework Directive (2000)

- Reach **good ecological status by 2027** the latest in all rivers, lakes, transitional and coastal waters
- **Non deterioration of status** – exemption under strict and exceptional conditions
- Implement **river restoration and mitigation measures**



EU Green Deal

- **Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (2020)**
- **EU Action Plan 'Towards Zero Pollution Action Plan for Air, Water and Soil' (2021)**

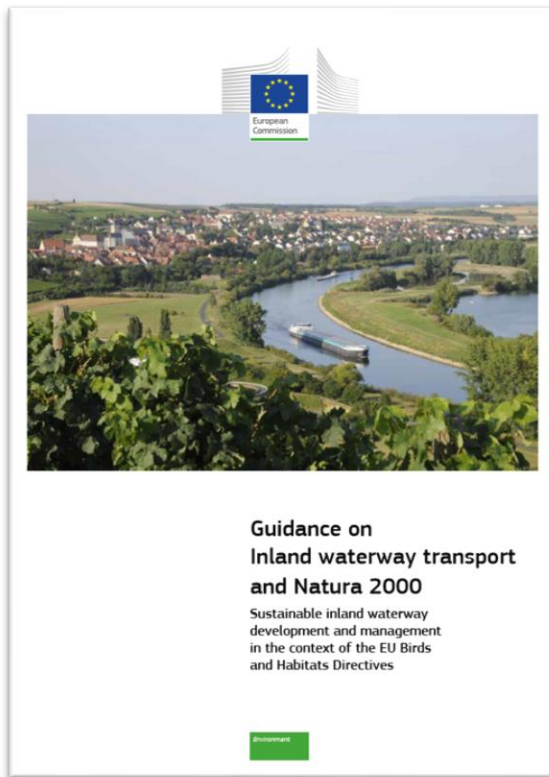


Water Framework Directive – latest development

- **Adoption of 3rd River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs)**
 - ✓ Cover period 2022-27 → key cycle as last one before 2027
 - ✓ Member states should have adopted their RBMPs beginning of this year, reporting was expected by March 2022
 - ✓ Only 10 Member States have their RBMPs adopted
- **Next step :**
 - ✓ Member States to implement their RBMPs and associated measures
 - ✓ Commission will soon start assessing MS's RBMPs

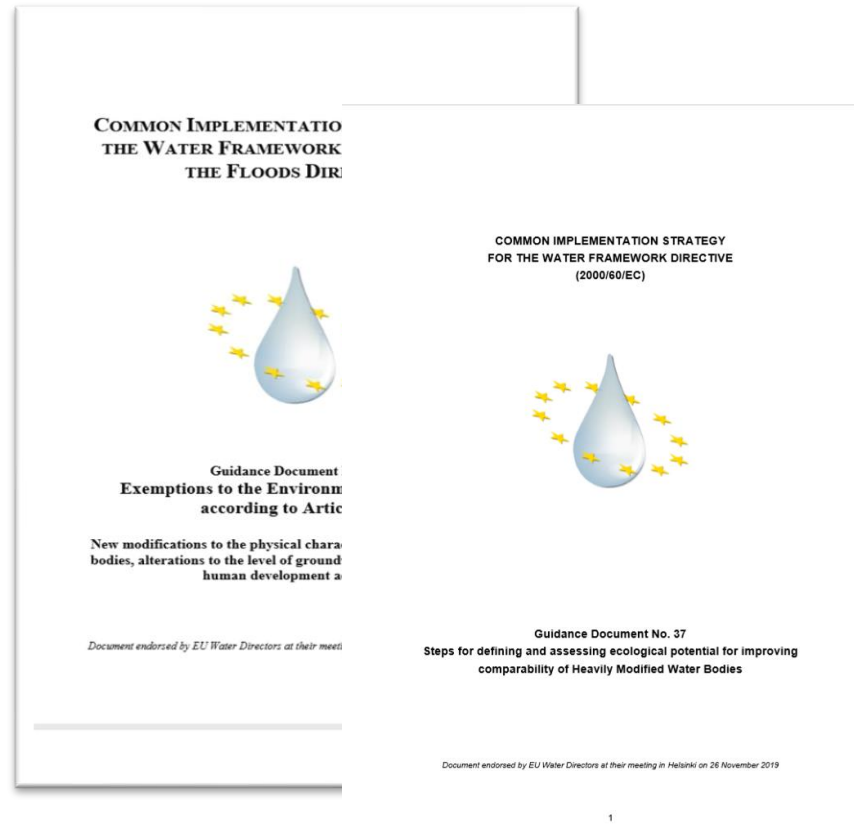
Resources available

Inland waterways and the Habitats Directive



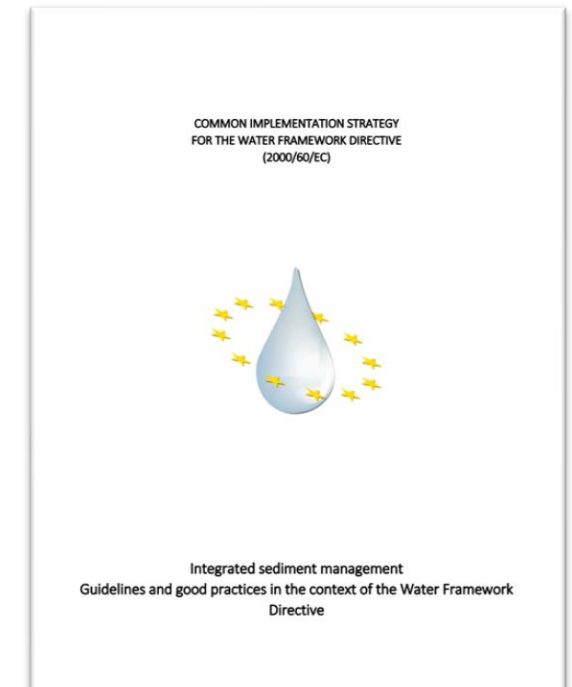
https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/iwt_en.pdf

Guidance document on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive



https://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/facts_figures/guidance_docs_en.htm

Integrated sediment management - Guidelines and good practices in the context of the Water Framework Directive



https://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/facts_figures/guidance_docs_en.htm



Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

Bringing nature
back into our lives

COM(2020) 380 final

BDS - Key targets related to water

- 30% of EU land and sea protected, 1/3 of which under 'strict protection'
- Restoration of freshwater ecosystems:
 - Increased efforts to **restore freshwater ecosystems and the natural functions of rivers** – WFD objectives to be met by 2027
 - **Restore at least 25,000km free flowing rivers**
 - **Restore and preserve ecological flows**



Nature restoration law

- **Publication of the proposal from the Commission – June 2022**
- Proposal includes :
 - Overarching objectives to restore terrestrial & marine **protected habitat types and species**
 - **On freshwater : Identify and remove barriers** that prevent the connectivity of surface waters in order to contribute to meet the targets for riverine habitats & ecosystems restoration and of restoring at least 25 000 km of free-flowing rivers in the EU by 2030
- Discussions in Council and Parliament have started

Thank you