



EU environmental policies and latest developments relevant for waterways

14th 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

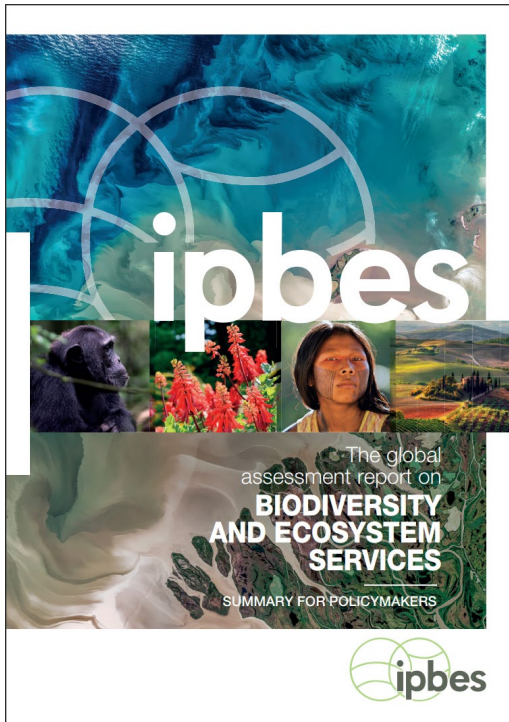
13 September 2023

Why protecting and restoring freshwater ecosystems?

“Nature is essential for human existence and good quality of life.”

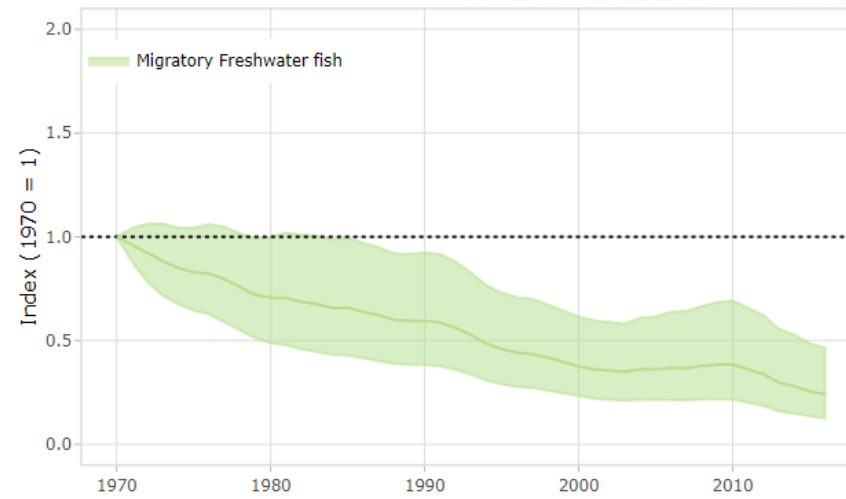
“Inland waters and freshwater ecosystems show among the highest rates of decline”

“Compared to 1970, freshwater vertebrate populations have declined by 84 %.”

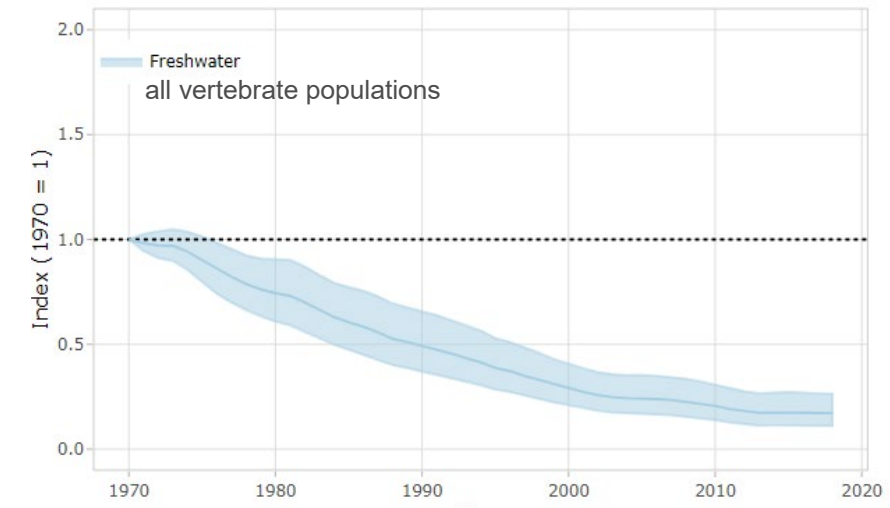


<https://www.ipbes.net/global-assessment>

Living Planet Index 2022

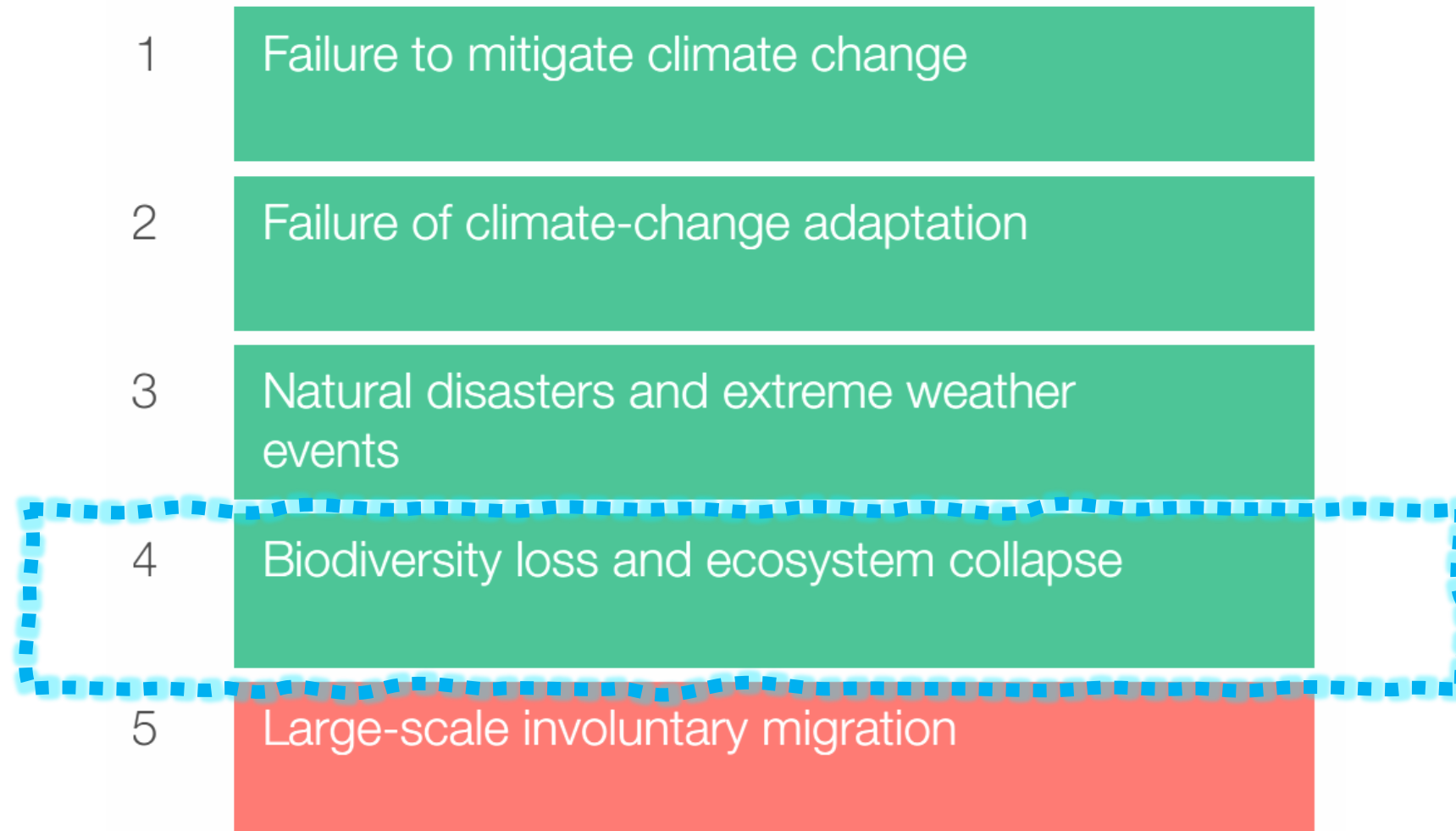


https://www.livingplanetindex.org/latest_results



Global Risks Report 2023 (World Economic Forum)

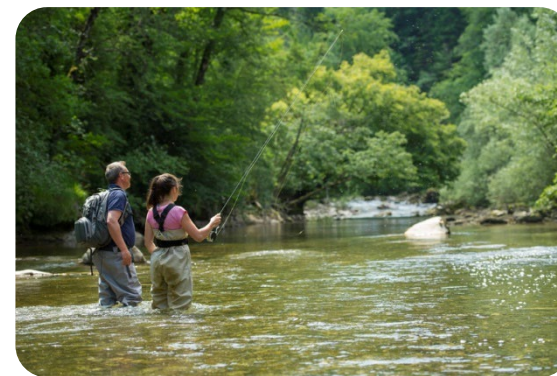
10 years



Pressures on waters

Multiple pressures including:

- Hydrological alteration
- Physical alterations
- Interference of river continuity
- Pollution



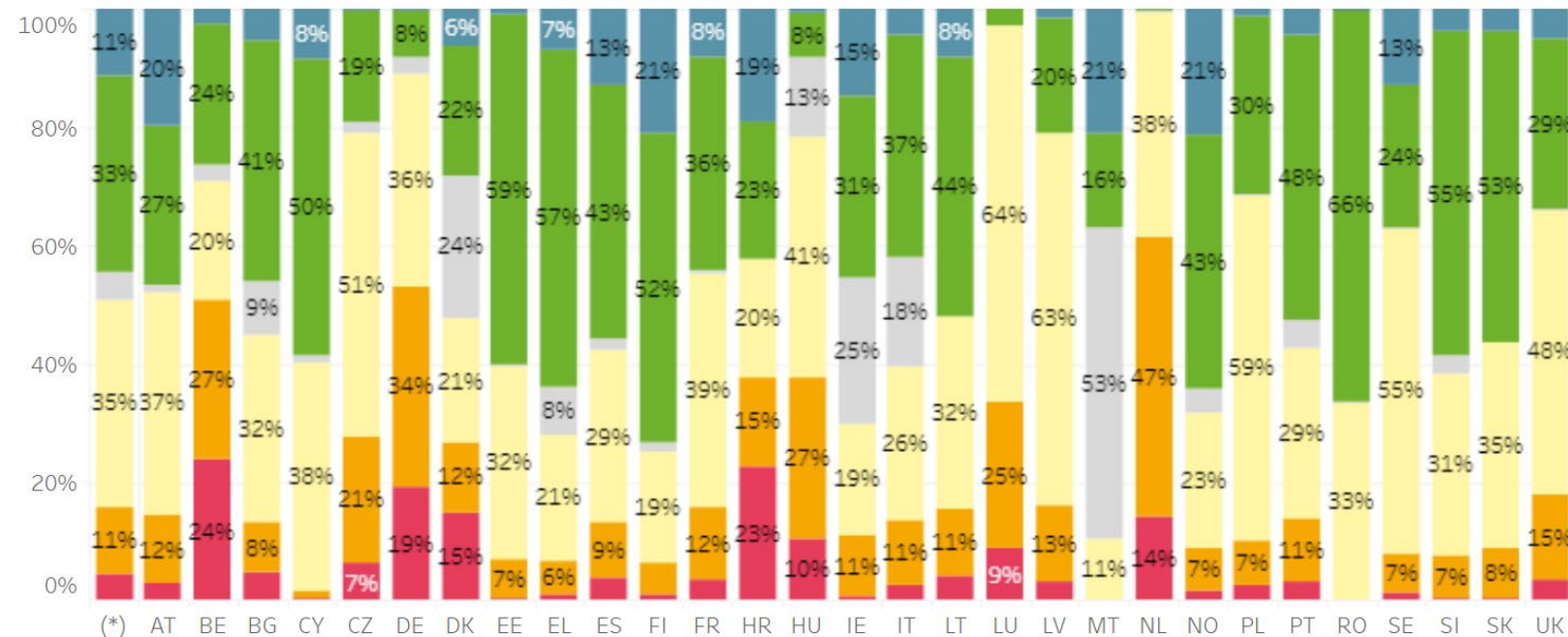
Water services affected:

- Water and food supply
- Diluter
- Waterborne transport
- Energy production
- Cooling
- Recreational activities
- Protection against waterborne threats (floods, erosion, ...)

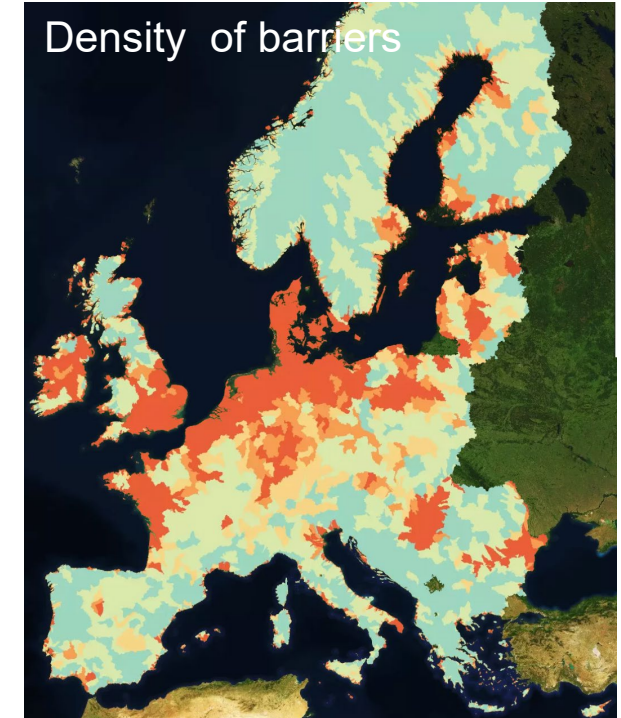
State of waters in the EU

- ✓ More than 1 million barriers - Almost one every 2 km (<https://amber.international/>)

Surface water bodies: Ecological status or potential, by country (2nd RBMP)



- ✓ 44% Water Bodies achieve Good Ecological Status
- ✓ Hydromorphological pressures: 34% water bodies



- ✓ 70-90% of floodplains are degraded due to hydromorphological changes (<https://water.europa.eu/freshwater/europe-freshwater/freshwater-themes/floodplains>)

EU Water policy

Environmental Impact Assessment Directive

Common Agriculture Policy

Environmental Crime Directive

Common Aquaculture Policy

Climate Law

Soil Monitoring Law

Drinking Water Directive

Floods Directive

Nitrates Directive

Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

Habitats Directive

Marine Strategy Framework Directive

Water Framework Directive

Environmental Quality Standards Directive

Industrial Emissions Directive

Eel regulation

Nature Restoration Law

Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive

Bathing Water Directive

Ground Water Directive

Water Reuse Regulation

Pharmaceutical Strategy

Key directives to promote freshwater ecosystems

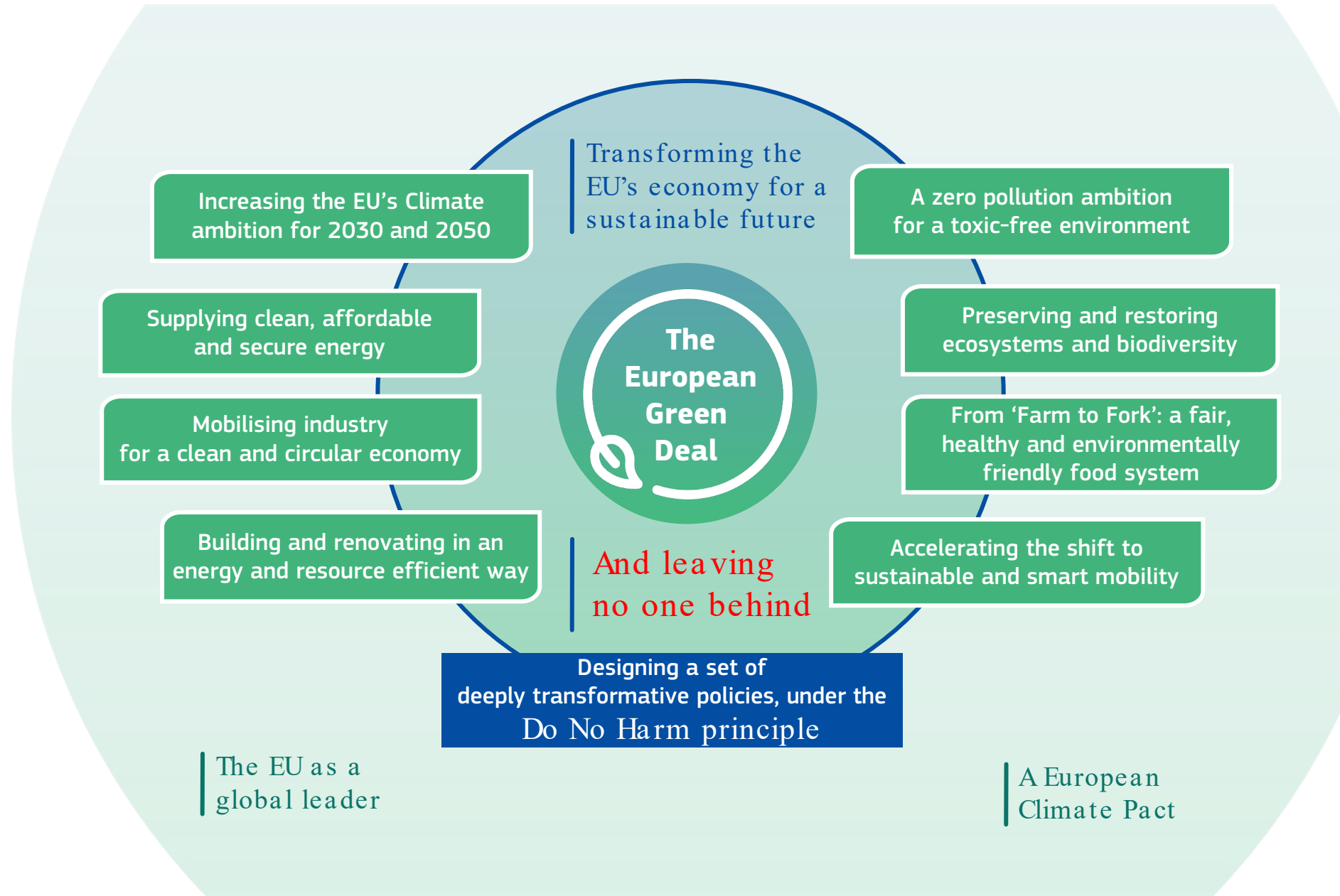
Habitats Directive (1992)

- Maintain and restore species and habitats present to a good condition in the Natura 2000 Network
- Action Plan 2017 to rapidly improve implementation of Habitats and Birds Directives

Water Framework Directive (2000)

- Good Ecological Status and non-deterioration of status by restoring waters and mitigating pressures
- 3rd River Basin Management Plans (reported 19/27)

The European Green Deal



The zero pollution vision for 2050



“ Air, water and soil pollution is reduced to **levels no longer considered harmful to health and natural ecosystems** and that **respect the boundaries our planet can cope with**, thus creating a toxic-free environment.”



© Simon Migaj - Unsplash



Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

- Restore freshwater ecosystem, at least 25,000 km free flowing rivers, and restore and preserve ecological flows
- 30% of EU land and sea protected, 1/3 of which under 'strict protection'
- The proposal for **Nature Restoration Law** makes restoration mandatory for Member States until 2050

EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

(in the context of waterways)

COM (2021) 82 final, 24.2.2021



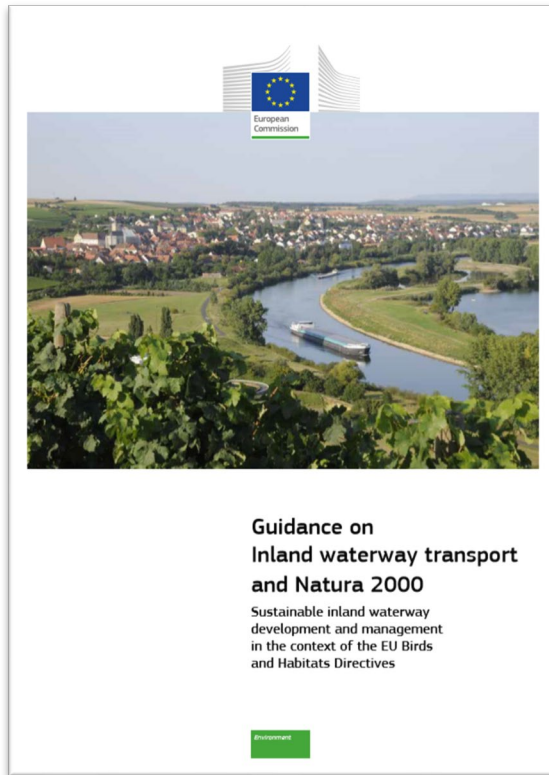
Albufeira Barragem de Salgueiro
© Creative Commons – Victor Oliveira

Towards a climate-resilient water management

- Improve coordination of **thematic plans** and other mechanisms (incl. water resource allocation and water-permits) across sectors and borders
- **Drought risk management** to be improved
- **Nature-based solutions** to achieve the goals of the **Water Framework Directive** and the Floods Directive

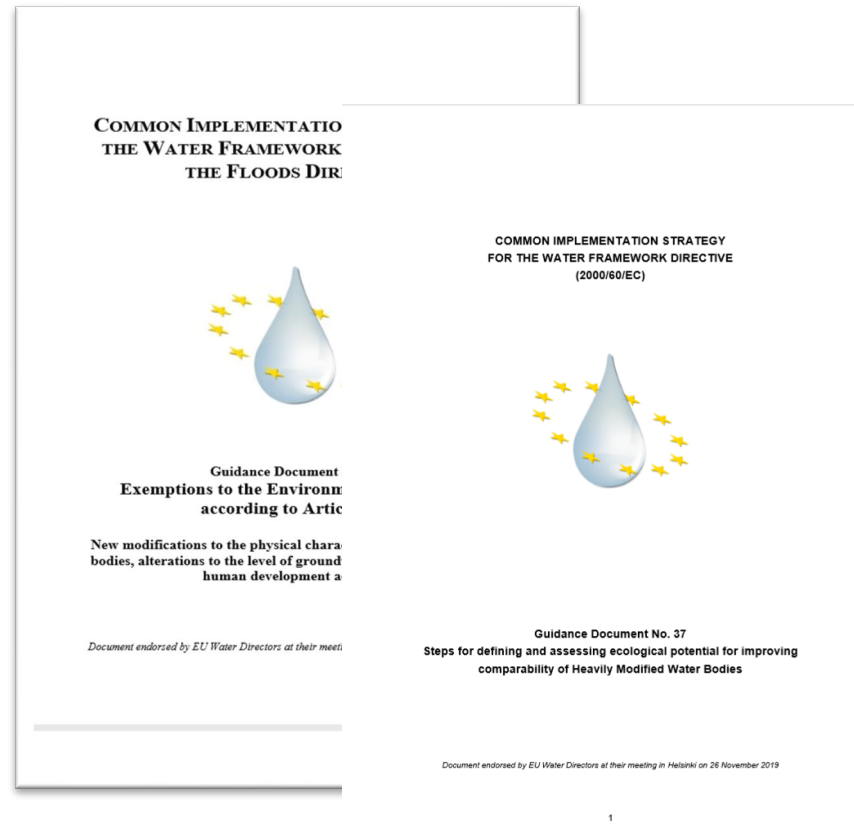
Guidance available

Inland waterways and the Habitats Directive



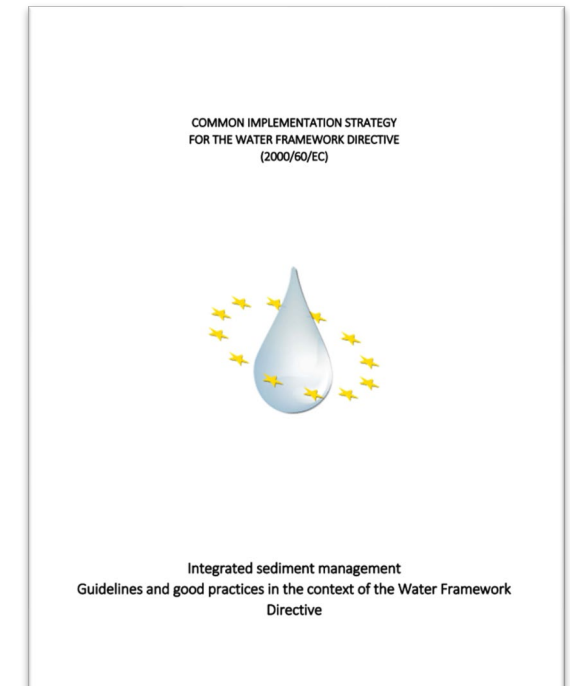
https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/iwt_en.pdf

Guidance documents on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive



<https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/9ab5926d-bed4-4322-9aa7-9964bbe8312d/library/b44c5c7a-508f-4800-91a4-9acc99c4eec4>

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



<https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/9ab5926d-bed4-4322-9aa7-9964bbe8312d/library/81bd1d15-90de-4fea-bde9-ce23c76b8a2d/details>



Resources available“

The report published in July 2022:
<https://op.europa.eu/s/yhD0>

Thank you - Kiitos



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