



Water Quality and Agriculture - a water industry perspective

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Chair EurEau Committee on Drinking Water
FAIRWAY-Waterprotect meeting on 6 December



Who is EurEau?

EurEau
the voice of
Europe's
water sector
since 1975

Our
members
are from
29 European
countries

We
represent
public/private
drinking/waste
water services

Employing
542,000
People

Our vision

- ~ *Keep treatment as simple as possible and end-of-pipe treatment should remain the last option*
- ~ *Therefore, water suppliers must have access to adequate and (long term) reliable resources*
- ~ *Once, released into the environment chemical substances may occur sooner or later in the water resources*
- ~ *Therefore, groundwater and surface water must be well protected*



Water and Agriculture

The intensive use of substances such as nutrients and pesticides requires increasingly extensive treatment of water resources to comply with the standards set by the Drinking Water Directive.

- ~ In groundwater; pollution can remain for decades after entering a groundwater body.
- ~ In surface water; discharge of chemicals can cause large peaks in water pollution.



Water and Agriculture: EU legislation



- ~ Art. 7 (3) Water Framework Directive
 - ~ “[..] avoiding deterioration in their quality to reduce the level of purification treatment [..]”
- ~ Nitrates directive aims to protect water resources by preventing nitrates from agricultural sources polluting ground and surface waters and by promoting the use of good farming practices.
- ~ Art. 4.3 Regulation 1107/2009 Plant Protection Products
 - ~ “A plant protection product [..] shall have no immediate or delayed harmful effect on human health [..] directly or through drinking water”

Better implementation of existing EU legislation needed

- ~ Despite of progress there is still a high impact of substances on drinking water resources like nitrate, pesticides & biocides, emerging pollutants
- ~ There is a lack of measures taken to efficiently protect drinking water resources.
- ~ Evaluation of relevant EU legislation: WFD, PPP, Groundwater directive, REACH is window of opportunity.
- ~ FAIRWAY and WaterProtect are therefore very relevant

Cooperation water utilities and farmers is key



- ~ All over the EU very promising cooperation initiatives between utilities, farmers and other stakeholders are emerging; all aiming to foster sustainable agriculture and protecting drinking water resources.
- ~ However:
 - ~ Cooperation is part of the solution, it's not the only solution.
 - ~ Utilities should not have to bear the total costs for these cooperation initiatives.
 - ~ Cooperation on voluntary basis is not enough.
 - ~ More financial (EU) support is needed for upscaling these cooperation initiatives to increase the impact.

EurEau's proposal on "blueing measures" for the future CAP

1. Plant nutrition and fertilization
 - a) Limitation of the annual net balance surplus to a maximum for an agricultural area
 - b) Cultivate crops specifically suited to prevent leaching of nitrates
2. Land utilisation and cultivation
 - a) Cultivation of crops; to minimise water demand, pesticide requirements and soil erosion
 - b) Establishing of wetlands to treat runoff to minimise the contribution to diffuse pollution
3. Plant protection (pest management)
 - a) Provision of specialised training and advice on pesticide, especially for; preparation/application/maintenance
 - b) Reduction of use of substances of particular concern (indicator: level of residues in drinking water resources)
4. Water management
 - a) Demonstrate the sustainable use of water, improved irrigation practices
 - b) Establishing of metering
5. Organisation and management
 - a) Develop water resources management plans at farm level
 - b) Demonstrate voluntary cooperation between farmers and water utilities

Thank you for your attention

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