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Nitrates Directive, key tool in protecting water ecosystems against agricultural pressures

Aurelia Caldararu (1), Gabriel Murariu (2), Lucian P. Georgescu (3), and Catalina Iticescu (4)

(1) „Dunarea de Jos University", European Center of Excellence for the Environment Faculty of Sciences, Domneasca Street No.111, 800201, Galati Romania (costela.aura@yahoo.com), (2) „Dunarea de Jos University" , Faculty of Sciences, Physics Department, Domneasca Street No.111, 800201, Galati Romania, (3) „Dunarea de Jos University", European Center of Excellence for the Environment Faculty of Sciences, Domneasca Street No.111, 800201, Galati Romania, (4) „Dunarea de Jos University" of Galati, European Center of Excellence for the Environment Faculty of Sciences, Domneasca Street No.111, 800201, Galati Romania

To travel to the future, we need to start from a understanding of the present, and how we got here. The accumulated experience of several countries that have tried to identify and quantify the major sources of pollution of the aquatic ecosystem, reveal an alarming reality - agriculture is a major source of diffuse pollution.
Modern agricultural practices due to increased demand for products, often requires a high level of fertilizers and manure that tend to an alarming increase of nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) surpluses that come into the body of water.
Also, the products used for plant protection contaminate the surface waters and groundwater. The problem is that the monitoring of pesticides is a difficult task because a the large number of chemicals used to produce pesticides, are available limited information, especially about synergistic effect and their impact over time. Missing also the reliable data about the impact of pesticides on the aquatic ecosystem, although pesticide pollution has been reported in many national reports.
Nitrates Directive is an integral part of the Water Framework Directive and is one of the key tools in protecting water against agricultural pressures. The main purpose is to protect water quality by preventing pollution of surface and groundwater by nitrates from agricultural sources and promoting use of good agricultural practices.
We will summarize in this presentation, a study whose purpose is to assess the impact of agriculture inputs on aquatic ecosystem health, using various ecological indices.