



Implementation of the EU-policy framework WFD and GWD in Europe – Activities of CIS Working Group Groundwater

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At the European level, the basic elements for groundwater management and protection are laid down in the Water Framework Directive (WFD) (2000/60/EC) and the Groundwater Daughter Directive (2006/118/EC). EU Member States, Norway and the European Commission (EC) have jointly developed a common strategy for supporting the implementation of the WFD. The main aim of this Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) is to ensure the coherent and harmonious implementation of the directives through the clarification of a number of methodological questions enabling a common understanding to be reached on the technical and scientific implications of the WFD (European Communities, 2008).

Groundwater specific issues are dealt with in Working Group C Groundwater. Members of the working group are experts nominated by Member states, Norway, Switzerland and Accession Countries (from administrative bodies, research institutes, . . .) and representatives from relevant stakeholders and NGOs.

Working Group C Groundwater has produced numerous guidance documents and technical reports that have been endorsed by EU Water Directors to support and enable Member States to implement the directives. All the documents are published by the EC. Access is available via the following link: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/groundwater/activities.htm>

Having addressed implementations issues during the 1st river basin planning cycle, WG C Groundwater is currently focussing on the following issues: groundwater dependent ecosystems, and climate change and groundwater. In the future, the outcome and recommendations of the "Blueprint" – to safeguard Europe's water resources - which was recently published by the EC will be of utmost importance in setting the agenda for the group. Most likely this will include water pricing, water demand management and water abstraction.

Complementary to the particular working groups, a Science Policy Interface (SPI) activity has been established. Its purpose is to improve dialogue and linkages between the scientific and policy-making communities to enhance the accessibility of scientific knowledge to policy makers, to deliver more policy-relevant research outcomes and enable future research priorities to be identified.

References:

European Communities (2008): Groundwater Protection in Europe, The new Groundwater Directive – Consolidating the EU Regulatory Framework