

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001540/24  
to the Commission  
Yvan Verougstraete (Renew)  
(21 August 2024)**

*Subject:* Review of the Bathing Water Directive

As part of the European Green Deal — and more specifically the Zero Pollution Action Plan for air, water and soil — the Commission has been reviewing the directive concerning the management of bathing water quality to determine whether it is still fit for purpose in terms of protecting public health and improving water quality, or whether the existing rules need to be updated.

The outcome of this process was to be announced during the first quarter of 2023, but nothing has been presented to date.

In view of this:

1. Why has the Commission not yet presented its evaluation of the Bathing Water Directive, and when will it do so?
2. To date, the scope of the directive has been limited to analysing microbiological pollutants that can pose a risk to human health. Does the Commission intend to include an evaluation of the impact of chemical pollutants on water quality?

Submitted: 21.8.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission  
(11 October 2024)**

1. The Bathing Water Directive (BWD) <sup>(1)</sup> is part of the EU *acquis* to protect and manage Europe's waters. Its evaluation is a comprehensive exercise, which is taking into account the ongoing evaluation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive <sup>(2)</sup>, the recent revisions of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive <sup>(3)</sup>, currently finalised by the co-legislators through the corrigendum procedure, and of the Industrial Emissions Directive <sup>(4)</sup>, the Commission proposal <sup>(5)</sup> on the lists of pollutants regulated under the Water Framework Directive <sup>(6)</sup> via the Environment Quality Standards Directive <sup>(7)</sup>, and the Groundwater Directive <sup>(8)</sup>. The timeline announced during the preparation of the evaluation was indicative. The Commission is in the process of finalising the evaluation.

2. As per the BWD review roadmap <sup>(9)</sup> the ongoing evaluation of the BWD is assessing the achieved level of health protection and whether additional pollution parameters (including chemicals) may help provide a better picture of the actual state of the water in bathing areas. The findings of this analysis will be as appropriate presented in the Commission evaluation report.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Directive 2006/7/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 February 2006 concerning the management of bathing water quality and repealing Directive 76/160/EEC, OJ L 64, 4.3.2006, p. 37-51.

<sup>(2)</sup> Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy, OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19-40: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12898-Protecting-the-marine-environment-review-of-EU-rules\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12898-Protecting-the-marine-environment-review-of-EU-rules_en)

<sup>(3)</sup> [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-revised-urban-wastewater-treatment-directive\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-revised-urban-wastewater-treatment-directive_en)

<sup>(4)</sup> Directive (EU) 2024/1785 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 amending Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) and Council Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste, OJ L, 2024/1785, 15.7.2024.

<sup>(5)</sup> [https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-amending-water-directives\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-amending-water-directives_en)

<sup>(6)</sup> Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1-73, as amended by Commission Directive 2014/101/EU of 30 October 2014, OJ L 311, 31.10.2014, p. 32-35.

<sup>(7)</sup> Directive 2013/39/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 August 2013 amending Directives 2000/60/EC and 2008/105/EC as regards priority substances in the field of water policy, OJ L 226, 24.8.2013, p. 1-17.

<sup>(8)</sup> Directive 2006/118/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration, OJ L 372, 27.12.2006, p. 19-31.

<sup>(9)</sup> Combined evaluation roadmap/Inception impact assessment: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12658-Bathing-water-quality-review-of-EU-rules\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12658-Bathing-water-quality-review-of-EU-rules_en)