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Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.12.2024)

The State of water report[1] is based mainly on data reported by European Environment Agency (EEA) member countries under the Water Framework Directive (WFD)[2]. The Commission will shortly publish a Report[3] assessing the EU Member States' River Basin and Flood Risk Management Plans under the WFD and the Floods Directive[4] respectively; this will also include recommendations and the findings[5] of both reports will feed into the Water Resilience Strategy.

The Commission proposal[6] updating the lists of pollutants in EU waters under the WFD includes standards for additional pesticides in surface waters, and for additional pesticide metabolites in groundwater. The Commission will continue supporting implementation of the Nitrates[7] and Sustainable Use of Pesticides[8] Directives[9], including practices that reduce the need for chemical pesticides or use non-chemical alternatives. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)[10], through Eco-Schemes and Agri-Environmental and Climate Commitments, supports the reduction of chemical dependencies on 26.6% of the EU's agricultural area[11]. As per the Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU Agriculture, the Commission will develop a Vision for Agriculture and Food to ensure the sustainability of the sector.

Nature-based solutions (NbS), such as peatlands, are indispensable for water resilience, helping to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Commission supports the use of NbS to reduce flood risk by funding projects and disseminating their results. The proposed Soil Monitoring Law[12] should improve characterisation of the capacity of soils to increase

[1] https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/analysis/publications/europes-state-of-water-2024#:~:text=This%20report%20presents%20the%20state%20of%20Europe%27s%20water.,adapting%20to%20water%20scarcity%2C%20drought%20and%20flood%20risks
[2] 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.
[3] https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/water/water-framework-directive/implementation-reports_en (7th Implementation report soon to be published).
[4] Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood, OJ L 288, 6.11.2007, p. 27–34.
[5] The findings will also be considered by the various Working Groups under the Common Implementation Strategy for the WFD and Floods Directive to enhance cooperation, share knowledge and best practice and thus improve the implementation of the Directives.
[6] https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-amending-water-directives_en
[7] Directive 91/676/EEC of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources, OJ L 375, 31.12.1991, p. 1–8.
[8] Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for Community action to achieve the sustainable use of pesticides, OJ L 309, 24.11.2009, p. 71–86
[9] Both are included in Common Agricultural Policy enhanced conditionality.
[10] Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013, OJ L 435, 6.12.2021, p. 1–186.
[11] https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/approved-28-cap-strategic-plans-2023-27.pdf
[12] https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/proposal-directive-soil-monitoring-and-resilience_en

resilience to extreme weather events. The recast Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive[13] will require integrated management plans, which should favour NbS.

[13] https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/PE-85-2024-INIT/en/pdf