

EN

E-002416/2024

Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.3.2025)

1. The Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR)¹ entered into force only on 18 August 2024 and specifies the removal of primarily obsolete artificial barriers in order to restore the natural connectivity of rivers and natural functions of the related floodplains and to contribute to the EU's target of 25 000 km of free-flowing rivers. The NRR explicitly states that Member States shall primarily remove obsolete barriers that are no longer needed for renewable energy production, inland navigation, water supply or flood protection. There is thus no obligation to remove barriers for flood protection that are still in use. Once implemented, the NRR can be expected to have a positive impact on flood prevention: restoring rivers, wetlands, peatlands, forests and floodplains play an important role in preventing or reducing the impacts of extreme weather events such as droughts and floods. Hence, the Commission is not planning to propose the total or partial repeal of the NRR.

2. The EU has a supporting competence in the area of civil protection. Spain activated the EU Civil Protection Mechanism², requesting support in its response to the floods. The Commission cannot take a stance on the Honourable Members' views of specific national parties.

3. The Floods Directive³ established a framework for the management of flood risks, aiming at the reduction of the adverse consequences from flooding. The objectives for risk reduction are determined at national level by the Member States themselves, based on local and regional circumstances. The same applies to the selection and prioritisation of measures aiming to reduce the risk from flooding, provided such measures do not infringe on other legal acts.

¹ Under Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869, OJ L, 2024/1991, 29.7.2024, Member States have 2 years to draw up their National Restoration Plan, including an inventory of river barriers.

² https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en

³ 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.