

EN
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Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(11.5.2026)

Article 13 of the Water Framework Directive (WFD)¹ requires Member States sharing an international river basin to ensure coordination of their management plans. Such coordination should cover measures to ensure appropriate quantity and dynamics of freshwater flow to allow the achievement of good ecological status. Moreover, as Parties to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Water Convention², EU Member States must ensure ‘exchange of information on existing and planned uses of water and related installations that are likely to cause transboundary impact’.

Under Article 12 of the WFD, where a Member State identifies an issue which has an impact on the management of its water, but it cannot resolve it on its own, it may report the issue to the Commission and any other Member State concerned and may make recommendations for the resolution of it. The recently amended provision³ strengthens this cooperation by making it mandatory. Neither Bulgaria nor Greece have made a notification to the Commission under Article 12.

The WFD does not specify which form the cooperation between Member States should take. Article 3(4) WFD allows Member States to use existing structures stemming from international agreements. Information on cross-border cooperation should be reported in the River Basin Management Plans. Prior to their adoption, the draft plans are made subject to public consultation.

Given their delay in reporting, the Commission is currently still assessing the Third River Basin Management Plans of both Bulgaria and Greece and will consider in this context the state of play in relation to transboundary cooperation.

¹ 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.

² Convention on the Protection and use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

³ Directive (EU) 2026/805 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 March 2026 amending Directive 2000/60/EC establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, Directive 2006/118/EC on the protection of groundwater against pollution and deterioration and Directive 2008/105/EC on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy, OJ L, 2026/805, 20.4.2026.