



Agenda item 6.7(a)

**Council**

**CNL(00)51**

*Special Liaison Meeting to Review Measures to  
Minimise Impacts of Aquaculture on Wild Stocks*

*Presentation by the European Union*

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## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OSLO RESOLUTION

### MEASURES TAKEN BY THE EUROPEAN UNION TO MINIMISE THE IMPACTS OF AQUACULTURE ON THE WILD STOCKS

MIRAMICHI, CANADA

– 5 JUNE 2000

This presentation outlines the measures taken by the European Union to minimise the impacts of aquaculture on the wild stocks. At the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Westport, Ireland in 1999, Canada and Norway had a similar opportunity to show what they had done in those countries.

#### **I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

The European Union is an international organisation, which has its origins in the 1950s although some would say they went back earlier. The European community of nations now consists of more than 375 million people in 15 Member States stretching from the very edges of the Arctic Ocean right down to the Mediterranean Sea. The European Union countries range in size from Luxemburg with 350,000 people to Germany with more than 80 million. There is an ever-expanding list of countries wishing to join the European Union, but that is for the future.

With a production of over 8 million tonnes of fish both from fisheries and aquaculture, the European Union is the world's third largest fishing power after China and Peru. In 1995, a total of 1.6 million tonnes of fish were exported from the European Union, whilst imports totalled some 4.3 million tonnes. This resulted in an imbalance in the European Union of 6.5 billion euros.

The European Union fleet comprises more than 97,000 vessels of varying size and capacity, although there has been a decline over the last few years.

Jobs provided by fishing vary from region to region, but between the regions, some 260,000 fishermen are directly employed in actually catching fish, either in a full-time or part-time capacity.

Out of the total 8 million tonnes mentioned above, European Union aquaculture production is over 1 million tonnes. It provides some 35,000 full-time and 50,000 part-time jobs and has a value of nearly 2 billion euros. For the European Union, fisheries in general and aquaculture are both important economic activities.

This presentation gives a short overview of what the European Union (or the European Community) is all about. How does the Common Fisheries Policy fit in to the general framework of the European Union? What do we actually do at level of the European Union to minimise the potentially harmful effects on the wild salmon stocks?

The European Union has policies on aquaculture as well as on fish health. The remaining policies in the European Union are carried out at Member State level. This is because under the European Union Treaty, the Common Fisheries Policy covers the exploitation and processing activities of all maritime and freshwater fishery resources on the territory of a Member State, or in Community fishing waters or by Community vessels. At this stage, the Council of Ministers has not decided upon any specifying regulation to cover inland waters.

Presentations on the national measures taken in the United Kingdom (in particular Scotland), as well as in Ireland, to minimise the effects of aquaculture are given separately.

In 1999, estimates of total reported and unreported catches of wild salmon in the North Atlantic barely exceeded 3,200 tonnes. This comes out to about 650,000 fish!

If we compare that to the output of farmed salmon in the North Atlantic, where we are talking of 620,000 tonnes, this represents about one tonne of farmed salmon produced for every wild fish caught. It quickly becomes clear that we have a strong interest in all Contracting Parties of NASCO in being able to minimise potential negative effects of farmed salmon on the few remaining wild salmon. It goes without saying that in the European Union, as in other Contracting Parties to NASCO, a great number of jobs depend upon both the continuation of the wild salmon stocks as well as the success of the farmed salmon industry.

There now follows a brief introduction to the European Union's Common Fisheries Policy.

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (some might say at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century), we are increasingly aware of the dependence we have on our natural resources. Fishing and aquaculture are amongst the most important uses of our marine resources. It is easy to acknowledge that they provide a

healthy and enjoyable food source, at the same time they create jobs in the coastal areas, whilst promoting the social and economic well being of those areas.

The European Community's Common Fisheries Policy was set up for very specific reasons. It is the instrument used by the European Union for the management of both fisheries and aquaculture. It was created in order to manage a common resource and to meet the obligations set out in the original European Communities Treaties. These are the treaties, which initially established the European Community.

Fish are a natural and mobile resource and as such, are considered to be common property. Our Treaties obliged us to set up a common policy in this area and this has resulted in common rules for us all.

It was in 1983, that the Common Fisheries Policy finally came into full being. This had followed a long process within the European Community through the 1960s and 1970s with the establishment of various policies in respect of fisheries. The Common Fisheries Policy is a policy, which takes account of the biological, economic and social dimension of fishing.

There are four main areas into which the Common Fisheries Policy can be divided. These are dealt with briefly in turn. They are the conservation of fish stocks, structures (such as vessels, port facilities and fish processing plants), the common organisation of the market and an external fisheries policy, including non-Community member agreements and international organisations.

The conservation of fish stocks allows for fish to renew their stocks and reproduce. The Common Fisheries Policy sets maximum quantities of fish that can be safely caught each year. It involves the execution of a number of scientific studies on the main stocks (including salmon). With the help of the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, which represents the 15 Member States, decides on how much fish can be caught by the European Union fishermen. These catch quotas are then divided amongst the Member States. In conjunction with this, in order to protect smaller fish, a number of technical rules are established. There is no allocation of salmon between the Member States. Salmon fisheries are restricted to taking place within 6 miles from the base lines and in inland waters. The scheme in the European Union is therefore more restrictive than the provisions set out in the NASCO Convention.

The European Union has also established a structural policy. This structural policy is designed to help the fishing sector adapt to today's needs. It covers vessels, port facilities and fish-processing plants. Fleet restructuring is planned for each Member State within Multi-Annual Guidance Programmes setting out objectives and the means to achieve them.

As part of the first set of common measures, the Community established the common organisation of the market. The objective of the common organisation of the market was to create a common market inside the Community and to match production to demand. Furthermore, it has helped to ensure stability, not only for the consumer, but also for the fishermen.

Finally, at bilateral and multi-lateral levels, it became necessary for the Community to have an external fisheries policy. This external fisheries policy establishes fisheries agreements with non-Community countries since, with the advent of extended fisheries zones, distant-water fishing vessels had lost access to their traditional fishing grounds. The Community also became involved in negotiations with international organisations and regional fisheries organisations, such as NASCO, in order to ensure rational fishing.

To recap, there are four main areas in the Common Fisheries Policy:

- Conservation of fish stocks,
- Structures;
- Common organisation of the market; and
- External fisheries policy.

In 1992, the Common Fisheries Policy was reviewed. From 2002, a further review will take place not only internally, but also at an international level.

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The next part of the presentation deals with the European Union's structural policy as well as aquaculture and the environment.

## **II. STRUCTURES**

According to the most recently available figures, in 1997 the European Union's aquaculture production amounted to some 1.1 million tonnes in volume and to 1.9 billion euros in value, and provided approximately 60,000 jobs in terms of full time equivalent, including upstream and downstream activities.

The major species groups concerned were fin-fish (446,000 tonnes) and molluscs (662,000 tonnes), with only a very limited production of aquatic plants and crustaceans. Fin-fish are the most valuable group.

The European aquaculture industry as a whole has slowly but steadily increased its production over recent years. Apart from short-term imbalances, the market as a whole has nevertheless been able to absorb its output. Fin-fish production has increased by 100% every ten years in the last three decades.

European Union aquaculture is essentially focused on high value species, such as salmon, sea bass, sea bream, trout, mussels and oysters. For many of the species farmed within the European Union, the European Union is a world leader. However, on a global level, it represents only 3% of world-wide aquaculture production.

This does not really show the importance of the aquaculture industry for certain coastal regions of the European Union, where aquaculture businesses and associated activities make up a considerable part of the local economy and where alternative employment opportunities are limited.

Aquaculture is the only segment of the fisheries industry that has seen a slow but steady increase of employment over the last years. Moreover, plausible scenarios for the medium-term future suggest that the number of jobs in the European aquaculture industry could increase even further.

The European Commission considers that aquaculture can contribute further towards helping improve the supply of fish in the European Union and reduce the current substantial deficit. Furthermore, it can create employment in areas where alternatives to fish-based enterprises are rare.

It is possible for the aquaculture sector to further develop in the European Union, provided that there is recognition of the many obstacles that must be addressed and overcome. The key issues facing aquaculture development in the European Union are:

- Risk of over-production and saturation of markets within Europe with a consequent decrease in fish prices and profitability;
- Coping with increasing regulatory requirements and administration in general, particularly for small producers;
- Technical problems and risks and the need for technical innovation. There are particular requirements to stimulate species diversification, to reduce production cost and to reduce the current total dependence of intensive farming systems upon capture fisheries for feed;
- Need for quality market information and organisation in order to generate further market opportunities and diversification from high value niche markets;

- Health and disease issues arising from natural phenomena and intensive culture; and
- Increasing competition with other users for available resources, including water and sites coupled with growing public concern about environmental issues and increasing pressure for “clean and green” aquatic food products.

In recent years, the aquaculture industry has been required to make significant investments. These investments are still continuing. They are mainly due to the increasing constraints from environmental concerns and from competition for space and aquatic resources; and on the other side the rapidly changing conditions (threats as well as opportunities) of the market.

Public financial assistance to the aquaculture industry has to be seen in this context. It is a legitimate instrument in the European Union’s regional cohesion policy, as aquaculture businesses are in fact mainly present in areas whose economies are structurally lagging behind.

The Community supports aquaculture enterprises basically in two ways:

- Firstly, support is given by funding **research and development** through the Community Research and Technological Development (RTD) Framework programmes.

This started in 1989 with the Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Programme (FAR) which ran for five years and provided some 13.3 million euros for aquaculture research. It was followed by the AIR programme (Agriculture and the Agro-industry, including Fisheries, 1991 - 1994) which funded 34 aquaculture projects with grants totalling 18.5 million euros, and by the Agriculture and Fisheries Programme (FAIR) 1994 - 1998. The Fifth Framework Programme (1998 - 2002) will continue to give support in strategic areas. However, the bulk of the investment in aquaculture research is provided by European Union Member States’ own national research programmes as well as by the industry itself.

- Secondly, support comes in the framework of Structural Funds, as **capital grant contributions** to the investment of production projects.

In this case, a financial participation from the private investor is always requested. This can differ according to area. The European Union has supported aquaculture enterprises through a variety of programmes. From 1983 to 1993, a total of 1,822 projects for the construction, modernisation or extension of fish farming units were funded with a total European Union subsidy of 304 million euros. Support continues today through the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) programmes. In the programming period from 1994 to 1999, aquaculture has been given support of almost 300 million euros. Under

the FIGG, the private investor's financial participation to the project can vary between 30% and more than 60% of the total investment.

In December 1999, the European Union adopted Regulation 2792/99, which renewed FIGG aid to aquaculture. In this framework we are currently negotiating with the Member States structural development programmes for fisheries (including aquaculture) which will last from 2000 to 2006.

In general, FIGG continues to finance private projects, although the European Union grant rate is lower than it has been in the past.

The emphasis for grant aid in the future will be to avoid adverse effects, such as a build up of excess capacity, and concentrate on investments, which aim to improve the environment as well as collective actions involving professional fish farmers.

The influence of aquaculture on the environment is of paramount importance. This is reflected in the new regulation, which requires all grant-aided aquaculture projects using intensive technology to conform to the provisions of Directive 85/337/EEC. In this context the costs relating to environmental impact studies will be eligible for aid.

In order to encourage clean operations, aquaculture investments using technology, which will substantially reduce the negative effects on the environment, may benefit from an additional financial aid of up to 10%.

Another innovation, which is linked to environmental protection, is the possibility of financing the incorporation of data collection into an integrated coastal zone management plan, or the creation of models for environmental management. These initiatives are granted only if they involve the participation of professional fish farmers, who should be encouraged to participate in the management of the coastal zone where they work.

Equally important for the European Union is the development of so-called "collective actions". A collective action is one where the action exceeds the size of a normal private project. For example, the improvements of infrastructures in a shellfish culture area, involving the financial participation of a group of producers together with public aid. The purchase of equipment and machinery used collectively is also eligible for aid.

Disease eradication will continue to be eligible, as it was under the previous FIGG regulation. However, there is now a specific implementation regulation, which we hope will contribute towards making this measure more effectively utilised by the national authorities.

Pilot projects are still eligible and the level of public aid has been increased. These projects aim at establishing and distributing technical and economic knowledge. Scientific monitoring and a scientific report to the management authority are now requested.

In the framework of the **European Union Structural Funds**, there is also another fund, the **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**, which can indirectly contribute to the protection of wild salmon. This fund can finance investment in both the environmental and tourism sectors. In this context, during the period 1994 to 1999, it has supported the restoration and the improvement of rivers with the objective of increasing the wild fish resource. Important investment has been provided by the ERDF for this purpose, mainly in Ireland in the framework of the Interreg PEACE programme.

### **III. ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION**

The protection of the environment is pivotal in the objectives of the European Union. There is a particular commitment to integrating environmental concerns into all policy areas covered by the European Union Treaty. Having said that, environmental provisions contained in and adopted within the framework of the European Union Treaty do not make up a complete environmental code. A wide range of national laws supplements these provisions.

However, certain provisions of European Union environmental law are intended to prevent possible negative environmental impacts from aquaculture. I will attempt to go into more detail on these issues.

#### **1. Nature conservation requirements**

Nature conservation requirements in the European Union are principally found in two directives. The first one is from 1979 (Directive 79/409/EEC) on the conservation of wild birds<sup>1</sup>, which came into effect in 1981, the other from 1992 (Directive 92/43/EEC) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora<sup>2</sup>, which came into effect in mid-1994.

These directives establish a European network of protected habitats for vulnerable species of flora and fauna (known as Natura 2000). Any activity, which is capable of affecting such habitats, is subject to various controls. A considerable number of areas have already been recognised.

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<sup>1</sup> Official Journal L 103 of 25 April 1979, p. 1

<sup>2</sup> Official Journal L 206 of 22 July 1992, p. 7

## 2. Water quality standards

In the 1970s, a number of directives were adopted with a view to ensuring that, for various water bodies, water quality standards would be sufficient to guarantee certain beneficial uses of water. These instruments fix a number of standards:

- For popular bathing waters (Directive 76/160/EEC concerning the quality of bathing water<sup>3</sup>);
- For freshwater used for the abstraction of drinking water (Directive 75/440/EEC, concerning the quality required of surface water intended for the abstraction of drinking water in the Member States<sup>4</sup>);
- For freshwater designed for the support of fish life (Directive 78/659/EEC on the quality of fresh waters needing protection or improvement in order to support fish life<sup>5</sup>); and
- For marine waters designated for shellfish cultivation (Directive 79/923/EEC on the quality required of shellfish waters<sup>6</sup>).

These directives may be relevant for the protection of wild fish. European Union Member States must establish programmes in order to reduce pollution and ensure that waters are brought into conformity with the binding quality values fixed by these directives.

Other than what has just been mentioned, the possible significance of certain international wildlife conventions should also be considered. For example, the European Union is a Party to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats<sup>7</sup> and the Convention of Biological Diversity<sup>8</sup>. These conventions commit parties to avoiding or minimising damage to wildlife sites, to protecting flora and fauna, to safeguarding bio-diversity and to integrating the principle of sustainable use into development policies.

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<sup>3</sup> Official Journal L 31 of 5 February 1976, p. 1

<sup>4</sup> Official Journal L 194 of 25 July 1975, p. 26

<sup>5</sup> Official Journal L 222 of 14 August 1978, p. 1

<sup>6</sup> Official Journal L 20 of 26 January 1980, p. 43

<sup>7</sup> Official Journal L 38 of 10 February 1982, p. 1

<sup>8</sup> Official Journal L 309 of 13 December 1993, p. 1

### 3. Procedural Formalities and Authorisation Requirements

The relevance of European Union environmental legislation goes beyond setting standards and fixing requirements for the ambient environment. In some cases, it also fixes procedural formalities, which apply, for instance, when aquaculture activities are first established.

One directive (85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment<sup>9</sup>, as amended by Directive 97/11/EC) embodies the "preventive approach" to environmental protection. It requires that, before any development consent is given, certain projects likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of their nature, size or location are subjected to an assessment of possible environmental impacts. Projects covered by this directive include "intensive fish farming". An impact assessment must be carried out for a project falling in this class where a Member State considers that the project's characteristics so require. In this regard, practice varies between the Member States as to when an assessment is deemed necessary. The impact assessment involves a number of stages: the developer must submit certain information, and the public concerned is then given an opportunity to express an opinion; all the information thus obtained must be taken into consideration in the development consent procedure.

This directive is supplemented by a provision under another directive (92/43/EEC), whereby plans or projects likely to have a significant effect on sites protected under that directive (and Directive 79/409/EEC) are the subject of an assessment as to their implications for the sites concerned. This provision is at once broader and narrower than the provisions of Directive 85/337/EEC: plans and projects other than those covered by this latter directive are within the scope of the provision. However, the objective of the assessment is more limited.

A directive from 1976 (76/464/EEC on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment of the Community<sup>10</sup>) creates a framework for controlling the introduction of certain dangerous substances into the aquatic environment. This includes biocides and organic substances associated with aquaculture activities. This framework requires Member States to adopt pollution reduction programmes involving water quality objectives and discharge authorisations with emission standards based on the quality objectives.

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<sup>9</sup> Official Journal L 175 of 5 July 1985, p.40

<sup>10</sup> Official Journal L 129 of 18 May 1976, p. 23

#### **4. Operational Controls**

Once an industrial activity, including aquaculture, has been established, European Union environmental rules remain relevant. For example, it will be necessary through monitoring, in some cases possibly through enforcement action, to ensure that enterprises respect the emission standards established under Directive 76/464/EEC and that they do not compromise the standards, which apply to the ambient environment under water quality and nature conservation instruments.

There may also be restrictions on the sorts of chemicals that can be employed in human activities. For example, under Directive 76/769/EEC (approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations<sup>11</sup>, as amended by Directive 89/677/EEC<sup>12</sup>), compounds such as Tributyltin (TBT) may not be used as substances and constituents of anti-fouling preparations for cages or other equipment used for fish or shellfish farming. This is an instance of the European Union acting to ensure that one form of aquaculture activity does not suffer from harmful interaction with another. Even if TBT has been used extensively in the past as an anti-foulant (mostly on the hulls of boats but also on salmon cages), its use is now banned or so severely restricted in many countries, that it has now been virtually eliminated.

Where solid wastes, for example sludge, require disposal, there are a number of potentially relevant Community instruments.

#### **5. Protecting the resource base**

The general scheme for pollution discharges established under Directive 76/464/EEC and subsidiary directives is an example of protecting the resource base. This Directive provides a basis for controlling discharges of dangerous substances from industrial installations and other sources, and to the extent that such substances may be harmful to aquatic life (e.g. heavy metals), the Directive contributes to securing safe conditions.

Another important instrument is the Directive concerning urban wastewater treatment (91/271/EEC)<sup>13</sup>. This directive establishes ambitious targets for sewage treatment in the Community, to be met over a staggered timetable extending through to 2005. By requiring improved treatment, the Directive should contribute to achieving better environmental conditions.

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<sup>11</sup> Official Journal L 262 of 27 September 1976, p. 201

<sup>12</sup> Official Journal L 398 of 30 December 1989, p. 19

<sup>13</sup> Official Journal L 135 of 30 May 1991, p. 40

As far as the resource base is concerned, Directive 78/659/EEC, on the quality of fresh water needing protection or improvement in order to support fish, has already been mentioned.

Finally, attention should be drawn to a provision of the European Union's "Habitat Directive" (Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) and in particular its Article 22, which states:

"Member States shall ... ensure that the deliberate introduction into the wild of any species, which is not native to their territory is regulated so as not to prejudice natural habitats within their natural range or the wild native fauna and flora and, if they consider it necessary, prohibit such introduction."

This means that national authorities are obliged to intervene in order to stop the stocking of non-indigenous fish, when it is demonstrated that these fish represent a threat to wildlife.

So to summarise the above, it can be said that the European Union legislation provides for a range of control measures over the aquaculture impact on the environment, including the following:

- The use of environmental impact assessment procedures for watershed management, cage/pond siting, design and operation;
- Limited access rights for water and seed, as well as limits upon the introduction of exotic species;
- Effluent control techniques involving feed control ratios, limited use of drugs, antibiotics and other chemicals;
- Development of user groups agreements, to avoid user conflicts and to allow for effective area management.

Additionally, the following practices are encouraged

- The implementation of land-use zoning techniques, buffer zones and authorisations involving the costing of land or wetland;
- Development of best management practices through codes of conduct and practice; and
- The use of trade-related techniques such as product certification schemes.

## DIRECTIVE ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK FOR EUROPEAN UNION ACTION RELATING TO WATER POLICY

In June 1995, the Council of Ministers and the Sub-Committee for the Environment of the European Parliament called for a detailed review of the European Union's water policy. In response to this, in February 1996, the European Commission adopted a communication on European Union water policy. The principal recommendation of this communication concerned the development of a framework directive in the field of water.

The consultations undertaken on the basis of this communication confirmed the importance of local measures aimed at evaluating and improving the situation. It is for the Member States and the relevant local authorities to set up the mechanisms and the measures intended to protect the local environment. Nonetheless, it is true that a European framework could allow them to achieve their objectives more effectively.

The Commission's proposal for a Directive is aimed at establishing the framework for the protection of the surface and of the subsoil waters in the European Union. The Council of Ministers reached a Common Position on October 22, 1999 with a view to adopting this Directive.

The purpose of the Directive is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface water, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater which:

- prevents further deterioration and protects and enhances the status of aquatic ecosystems;
- promotes sustainable water use based on a long-term protection of available water resources;
- contributes to mitigating the effects of floods and droughts and thereby contributes to:
  - The provision of the sufficient supply of good quality surface water and groundwater as needed for sustainable, balanced and equitable water use;
  - The protection of territorial and marine waters;
  - Achieving the objectives of relevant international agreements including those which aim to prevent and eliminate pollution of the marine environment; and
  - The progressive reduction of emissions of hazardous substances.

This framework will be based on the natural unit of the management of water, in other words the catchment area.

The directive is designed to prevent any additional deterioration, to protect the aquatic ecosystems at a level that is both qualitative and quantitative, as well as the land ecosystems with regard to their needs in water. By doing this, it also contributes to ensuring a sufficient water supply, both in quantity and in quality, to ensure sustainable development. With regard to the reduction of pollution, it confirms and formalises the principle of "the combined approach".

The directive comprises four principal elements: co-ordination, measures, the gathering of the data and transparency, each of shall be dealt with separately.

## **1. Co-ordination**

The directive is based on the hydrographic districts, and requires co-operation between regions and between Member States sharing the same water, as well as the development of common measure programmes registered in the basin management plans. Member States have to ensure that a river basin management plan is produced for each river basin district.

The framework directive does not involve all the legislative texts concerning water. However, it does guarantee their co-ordination by instituting a framework in which each text finds its place. In particular, it allows the co-ordination of both elements of "the combined approach" as regards reduction of pollution. The "combined approach" as regards water protection should be better specified.

The framework directive envisages various rules aiming to establish objectives and environmental quality standards on a uniform basis for the Community. It also aims to ensure the co-ordination of the standards and objectives with the various limit emission values applicable under the terms of other Community texts such as directive on integrated prevention and reduction of pollution (96/61/EC)<sup>14</sup>. These two types of measure will be strengthened reciprocally and, in each individual case, the most rigorous approach will prevail.

The principal tool of co-ordination is the measure programme, which constitutes a central element of the management plans of catchment area required by the directive. One of the core measures prescribed in the programme is the implementation of all the relevant Community legislative texts.

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<sup>14</sup> Council Directive 96/61/EC of 24 September 1996, concerning integrated pollution prevention and control - Official Journal L 19 of 24/01/1998 p. 83.

The directive will allow co-ordination between national and local legislation within the same "measure programme", which simplifies the application of the Community legislation in the field of water. It also institutes an information mechanism by which the local authorities can point out to the national and Community authorities the problems, which require a solution at the higher level or a trans-sectoral action.

## **2. Measures**

The draft directive lays down the co-ordination of the measures required under various legislative Community, national or local texts, and their grouping in the same "measure programme". The directive also fixes certain requirements, which are also co-ordinated within the measure programme. In particular, they cover the control of abstractions of surface and subsoil waters, as well as the pricing of all uses of water on a level, which will ensure the total recovery of the costs.

## **3. Gathering of the data**

The directive lays down the gathering of complete data concerning the state of the aquatic environment and the constraints, which hang over it. That will require the adoption of monitoring programmes. One will thus have the essential information upon which the authorities will be able to rely for establishing policies ensuring ecological viability.

## **4. Transparency – Public consultation and dissemination of information**

Finally, the framework directive lays down participation and consultation in all the stages of the development of water policies. Furthermore, it requires the publication of various information on the basin management plans, in order to allow for consultation with full knowledge of the facts.

Once approved, the framework directive will gradually over the next thirteen years repeal the provisions of many previous Directives. Amongst these directives are some of those quoted before, such as the directive on drinking water (75/440/EEC), the directive on the quality of freshwater needing protection or improvement in order to support fish life (78/659/EEC), the directive on the quality required of shellfish waters (79/923/EEC) and the directive on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances (76/464/EEC).

