

Water Scarcity and Drought

Last updated in April 2011

Latest Developments

Overall assessment of water developments and impact on golf in Q1 2011:

In the run up to 2012: "the Year of Water", there will be more and more conferences and dialogues on water sustainability. These will be opportunities for the EGA GCC to get engaged and share their efforts on golf course management and implementing measures for the sustainable use of water. The European Parliament and Commission have already started working in this area and are currently preparing the "Blue print for safeguarding Europe's water" and the review of the Water Framework Directive. Once these documents will become available, we will assess how the EGA GCC can get involved and share its ongoing work in this area.

On 30 March, the European Parliament's Intergroup on Water held a meeting. The meeting was chaired by MEP Richard Seeber (EPP, Austria). Mr. Seeber stated that he is unhappy that the Commission review of the Water Framework Directive proposal will only come out in June. He stated that the Commission should do more in this field especially in the run up to 2012: the year of water. He also stated that he does not believe that the Commission will come up with anything new in its "Blue print for safeguarding Europe's water" which is also expected in 2012.

Mr. Seeber acknowledged how important it is to monitor hazardous waste, pesticides and chemicals and their impact on water. In the meeting, participants also agreed that the "old" Member States should help the "new" member states, such as Poland, Czech Republic, etc. to implement better practices to monitor the impact chemical and pesticide emissions have on water. They also agreed that there needs to be harsher sanctions on companies to encourage them to promote better practices. Mr. Seeber confirmed that waste from chemicals is transported mainly by water and that this is an international problem as water has no boundaries. He called for Member States to effectively monitor waste that ends up in water and asked for Companies to be responsible in this area. He highlighted that is will be part of the discussions with the upcoming Water Framework Directive.

On 25 March, European Commissioner for Environment, Janez Potočnik, spoke at an informal meeting of EU environment ministers in Hungary on the 2012 Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water, which aims at ensuring a sufficient amount of good quality water for all legitimate uses. The paper will be based on the Commission's assessment of the River Basin Management Plans, a review of the Water Scarcity and Drought Policy and an assessment of the vulnerability of water resources to climate change and other pressures. Member States agreed on the need for an integrated approach on the future of water resources and the Hungarian Presidency aims at adopting a Council conclusion on the sustainable use of water in June.

[Speech by Janez Potočnik](#) and [Article from the Hungarian Presidency](#)



On 22 March, the European Environment Agency (EEA) introduced a new version of the Water Information System for Europe (WISE), which will provide information on water statistics online, complementing existing water policy webpages from the European Commission and the EEA. The first version of WISE was launched in 2007 and compiles information on surface and ground water.

[Europe's water information at your fingertips](#)

On 22 March, the head of the European Commission's unit on water, Peter Gammeltoft, explained at an event organized by the Committee of the Regions that the EU water blueprint will contribute to the set up of water efficiency targets as well as fair pricing approaches. The efficiency targets will take into account local circumstances and will be set at national, sectoral and river basin level.

[Article on "EU water blueprint to pave way for savings targets"](#)

On 21 March, the European Commission published its final report on Member States' water management measures against scarcity and droughts in advance of the EU water policy review in 2012. The report found that a majority of Member States have not acted upon the non-binding policy recommendation and that water scarcity and droughts are an increasing problem in Europe.

[2010 Follow-up Report](#)

Impact for golf management

- Irrigation
- Water management – opportunity for EGA GCC members to engage in dialogue during establishment of River Basin Management Plans

Background

Last Update in January 2011:

On 28 October, the Commission issued a series of infringement actions against member states implementing river basin management plans. More specifically, France is being taken to court for failing to notify measures implementing the 2007 Floods Directive while Malta, Greece, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Slovenia and Portugal are being sent a final warning before court action over river basin management plans.

Commission press release requesting [Member States to submit their river basin management plans](#) and comply with [EU environmental legislation in the area of flood prevention](#)

In October, it was confirmed that the European Commission will consider new measures to decrease water consumption in buildings, agriculture and other areas. A major review of the



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current EU water legislation will be completed by 2012 which will be reflected in the Commission's "Blueprint for Safeguarding Europe's Water".

This document will be based on the EU's current strategy on water scarcity and droughts, a review of the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive and a review of the vulnerability of water resources to climate change and other man-made pressures.

The Commission is considering tabling a new EU directive on water efficiency in buildings similar to the one adopted on the energy performance of buildings. The same applies for efficiency standards for water using products, along the lines of EU legislation on eco-design requirements for energy-using products. The Commission has also identified agriculture as a priority sector in which measures to combat water scarcity need to be considered.

[Article on EU "Blueprint for Safeguarding Europe's Water"](#)

The increasing focus of the Commission on water usage was also illustrated by the publication of the Energy Trends 2030 report which argues that the increasing demand for electricity is putting a strain on water resources. This is all the more worrying as the introduction of electric cars and renewable energy policies will lead to an increased electrification of the energy supply in Europe.

[Article on European Commission's Energy trends to 2030 report](#)

Last Update in October 2010:

In October, the Danish Society for Nature Conservation submitted a complaint to the Commission regarding the river basin management plans of Denmark. The NGO claimed that the plans were "diluted to such a degree that the goals can not possibly be reached". The Danish government had been reacting to increasing pressure by its agricultural sector, according to the NGO.

The Danish water management targets include cuts of 19,000 tonnes in coastal discharges of nitrogen and 210 tonnes of phosphorus in lakes by 2015. Denmark is also consulting on a wildlife plan, which among other things, specifies landscaping in 130,000 hectares to prevent overgrowth and improved water conditions in 16,000 hectares subject to drainage and drying.

[Danish NGO press release \(in Danish\)](#)

In September, the 2010 World Water Week organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) took place. One issue of particular concern was the increasing disposal of waste in water sources and the attendant increase of chemical pollutants such as nanoparticles, in water. SIWI noted that water pollution is increasing globally with an estimated two million tonnes of waste disposed daily in watercourses and with 70% of industrial wastes in developing countries dumped untreated into waters. The main issue of concern during the conference were the pollutants found in water which subsequently enter the sewage systems; these include nanoparticles, chemicals and pharmaceutical residues.

[Article on World Water Week](#)

On 7 September, WWF published the report commissioned by the World Bank entitled "Flowing Forward". The report argues that effective water management will be central to adapting to



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climate change and also offers a set of tools to achieve “climate-sustainable water management”. Most importantly, according to the report, the tools needed to render water management more sustainably are already at hand such as methods for river basin and water resource management.

[WWF Report “Flowing Forward”](#)

Links

Link to European Commission press release on *Environment: Commission urges seven Member States to submit river basin plans*:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1413&format=HTML>

Link to European Commission press release on *Environment: France taken to Court and Luxembourg given warning over failure to notify flooding legislation*:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/10/1423&format=HTML>

Link to UNEP Bioenergy and Water Issue Paper:

http://www.unep.fr/energy/bioenergy/issues/pdf/Issue%20Paper%20No.2_FINAL.pdf

Link to EU Energy Trends 2030 Report:

[http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/trends_2030/doc/trends to 2030 update 2009.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/trends_2030/doc/trends_to_2030_update_2009.pdf)