



Government of the Netherlands

This plan is attached as an annex to
the Draft National Water Programme
2022-2027

Policy Summary River Basin Management Plans

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Based on the Water Framework Directive (WFD), every 6 years river basin management plans are drawn up. The first plans were adopted in 2009 for the period 2010 - 2015, the second in 2015 for 2016 - 2021. This document is about the period 2022 - 2027 and covers the Dutch part of the 4 river basin districts Rhine, Meuse, Scheldt and Ems. It is an actualisation of the previous document.

The requirements from the Directive are leading for the content of the river basin management plans. This sometimes makes the content rather technical. The document contains a general description of the area, the goals including a justification of the use of exemptions, the status of 745 surface and 23 groundwater bodies, loads, an economic analysis and the required measures. Some of the information can be found via references elsewhere, such as the regional programmes, 'factsheets' with the information per water body and substance data sheets with information per chemical substance.

Each surface water body is assessed for around 130 chemical substances. In each water body, some substances were found that do not fulfil the Environmental Quality Standard. However, this only concerned a few and less than 10% of the substances. For most of these substances, the concentration has declined in recent years. There is a more complete picture of the substances per water body that exceed the standard than in the previous period, due to improved analytical methods, among others. At the same time, the 130 assessed substances are only a limited number of all the substances present and emerging contaminants also affect biology and the preparation of drinking water.

The biological status is improving steadily, and biodiversity is increasing again. Biological parameters like water plants and fish fulfil the goal in a third to half of the surface water bodies. The biological parameters are insufficient or poor in only 10-20% of the water bodies. Rising concentrations of nitrate after 2015 in the water leaching from agricultural land are a reason for concern.

Except for 1 water body, the general water balance of groundwater bodies is good. There are regional challenges, particularly around natural areas. There are also challenges with respect to the quality of groundwater, partly concerning the preparation of drinking water.

There is still a major challenge here, and this varies per region. In the coming planning period, supplementary measures will be taken. There will be a focus on source-based policy for chemical substances and discharge permits will be updated. Regionally, loading with nutrients must be reduced. The most important sources are agriculture, wastewater treatment and transboundary pollution via several streams. The manure policy will be tightened, wastewater treatment will be modernised, and the transboundary pollution will be placed on the agenda. Efforts will be continued to restore natural conditions of water systems and to balance groundwater levels. Water quality objectives will be considered in relationship with other challenges, such as the availability of sufficient freshwater. The aim is to have implemented the measures by the end of the planning period and achieve a good status in surface and groundwater bodies as fast as possible.

Colofon

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Disclaimer:

This English translation is suitable for international consultation. However slight differences in the contents between the original Dutch text and this translation might occur, apart from grammatical imperfections. Therefore the only valid document is the Dutch version of the Ontwerp Stroomgebiedbeheerplannen Rijn, Maas, Schelde en Eems 2022-2027.

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