Reuse of waste waters in Flanders

Implementation of the “Reuse Regulation” Framework for the reuse of non urban waste waters
Flanders faces extremely high water stress

Belgium top 20 countries extreme water stress

= use 80% of their renewable water supply for irrigating crops, livestock, industry and household needs every year.
Impacts visible today

agriculture  nature  industry  water supply

Call circular water use

Blue Deal

structural and proactive actions to reduce risk of water scarcity

better balance of supply and demand

increase sponge effect
more water available in dry periods

smart water use
protecting valuable water resources
CIW platform Circular Water

**Scope**
Circular water: means of expanding sustainable water use and robust water system

**Process**
Open platform activities: co-creation

**Output**
Draft rolling programme of activities
Implementation of the Reuse Regulation in Flanders: In General

**Not** incorporated in existing permitting schemes

Environmental and construction permits in Flanders are "**perpetual**" – formal review every 20 years – too little flexibility

Regulation: “regular reconsideration and update”

Isolated permit for production, distribution **AND** use of reclaimed water

Risk assessment and management of the entire chain of reuse

Risk mitigation measures during use = part of the permit
Scope of Reuse of waste waters in Flanders

**Waste waters in scope**
- Urban waste water from UWWTP
- Industrial waste water from private companies (intended for “off-site” use by third party)

**Regulated uses (as in “need a permit”)**
- Agricultural/horticultural irrigation
- Irrigation other than agricultural use (urban green spaces, sports irrigation,...) when
  - Contact of reclaimed water with soil
  - Possible direct or indirect exposure of people
- Other uses by public services when
  - Contact of reclaimed water with soil
  - Possible direct or indirect exposure of people
Standardised permitting scheme: Operation under “normal” conditions (no drought)

- Permit application, including RA
- Admissibility evaluation
- Application evaluation (90 days)
- Permit (10 year validity period – when no changes in the system)
- Advisory parties

Insufficient information to evaluate
Incomplete application
In case of severe drought – “derogation” procedure

1. Formal request by “Drought commission”
2. Minister for Environment
3. Ministerial decree (can specify uses, period of application, regions)
4. Competent authority as advisory body
5. Notification
6. “Confirmation” (conditions)
7. Start of reuse scheme
8. Responsible parties
9. Competent authority
Reuse of waste waters in Flanders in practice

Instead of draining purified waste-water off into a ditch, the vegetable-growing company Ardo offers its effluent as irrigation water for the agricultural co-operative INERO CVBA, whose membership includes 47 farmers.

...is a collaboration between Aquafin, Ekopak, EPiCo², and water-link that aims to repurpose the treated wastewater form Antwerp households into cooling water for companies in the Port of Antwerp by 2025.
More information

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