Status of German waters under the WFD 2021 and the way forward in water management

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Multiple pressures on surface waters in Germany

- Flow regulation and morphological changes: 86%
- Substance inputs from diffuse sources: 98%
- Water abstraction: 9%
- Substance inputs from point sources: 32%

Technical data: WasserBLick/BfG & responsible agencies of the federal states, 29.03.2022
Editing: Umweltbundesamt, Bund/Länder-Arbeitsgemeinschaft Wasser (LAWA)
Results ecological status 2021

- More than 90% of the water bodies fail to meet the WFD targets;
- 9.2% achieve very good or good ecological status;
- 2015: 8.1% - slight improvement
New challenges

Three main crisis

1. Climate change
   - Increasing temperature and droughts
   - More frequently heavy rainfalls
   - Decreasing groundwater level

2. Biodiversity loss

3. Pollution of groundwater, surface- and marine waters
   - Nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorous)
   - Chemicals

National Water Strategy - Cabinet decision of 15 March 2023 (bmuv.de)
National Water Strategy – transformation in water management

Current and future challenges of water management require consistent and integrated action

- Focus on precautionary measures:
  - as public service
  - for ecosystem health
  - for future generations

Time horizon 2050 – Programme of water measures to 2030
⇒ first steps as of now!

Not only water management addressed – All water users and society as a whole are called upon!

The importance of intact and resilient ecosystems is underlined!
National Water Strategy – 10 strategic issues

- Mitigate risks caused by pollution
- Further develop water infrastructure adapted to the climate – protect against extreme events and ensure supply
- Work together to protect global water resources for the long term
- Further develop sustainable management of water bodies – achieve and preserve good status
- Realise water compatible and climate adapted land use
- Link water, energy and substance cycles
- Protect a semi-natural water regime – prevent water scarcity and conflicting goals
- Strengthen efficient administrations, improve data flows, optimise legal frameworks and secure financing
- Raise awareness of water as a resource
- Protection of marine areas (North and Baltic Seas) from pollutants from land
Programme of water measures

No focus on water management alone - integrated approach!

Other thematic areas are addressed: Soil, agriculture, planning, etc.

Actions need to be addressed in combination

Timing of actions: short term (within the next 5 years), medium term (5-10 years) or long term (> 10 years)

The process of implementation already started
Thank you!

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https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/en/topics/water