



Towards an EU Water Resilience Agenda

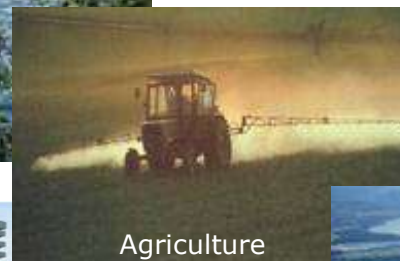
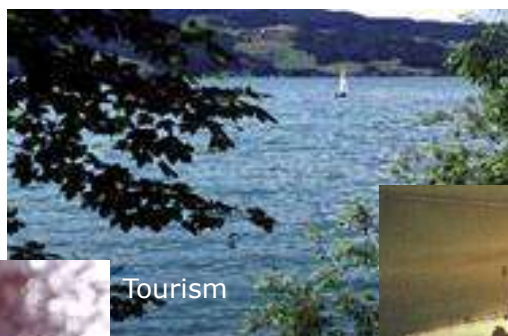
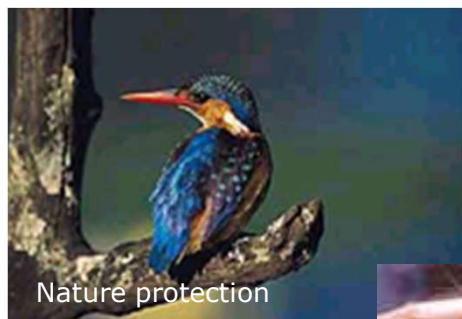
13 November 2023- CDG meeting



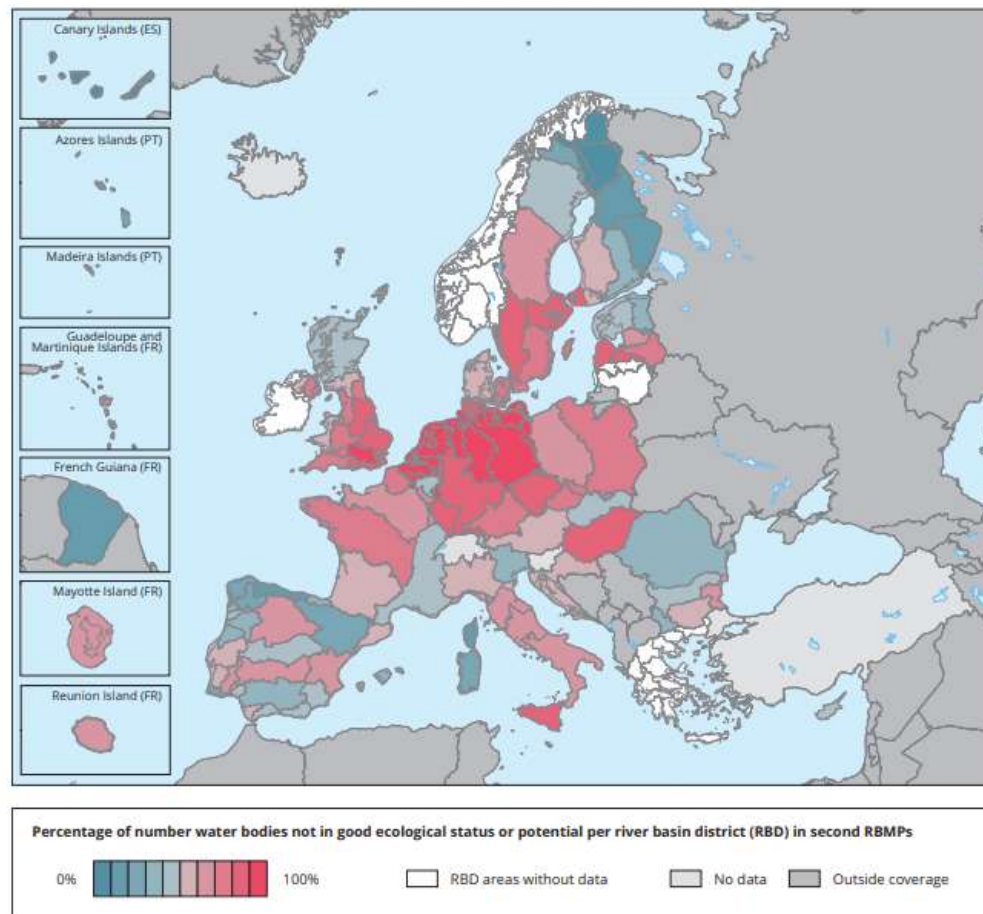
Unit ENV-C1 Sustainable Freshwater Management Unit

Various uses, demands, pressures and impacts

Water is a cross-cutting issue



Map 2.1 Percentage of water bodies in Europe's RBDs that are not in good ecological status/potential: second RBMPs



Source: Results are based on WISE-SoW database including data from 24 Member States (EU-28 except Greece, Ireland, Lithuania and Slovenia). Water bodies failing to achieve good status, by RBD; see also [Surface water bodies: Ecological status or potential \(group\)](#) and [Surface water bodies failing to achieve good status by RBD](#).

Where we are...

Around 40% of surface waters (rivers, lakes and transitional and coastal waters) are in good ecological status or potential, and only 38 % are in good chemical status.

Good chemical status has been achieved for 74 % of the groundwater area, while 89 % of the area achieved good quantitative status.

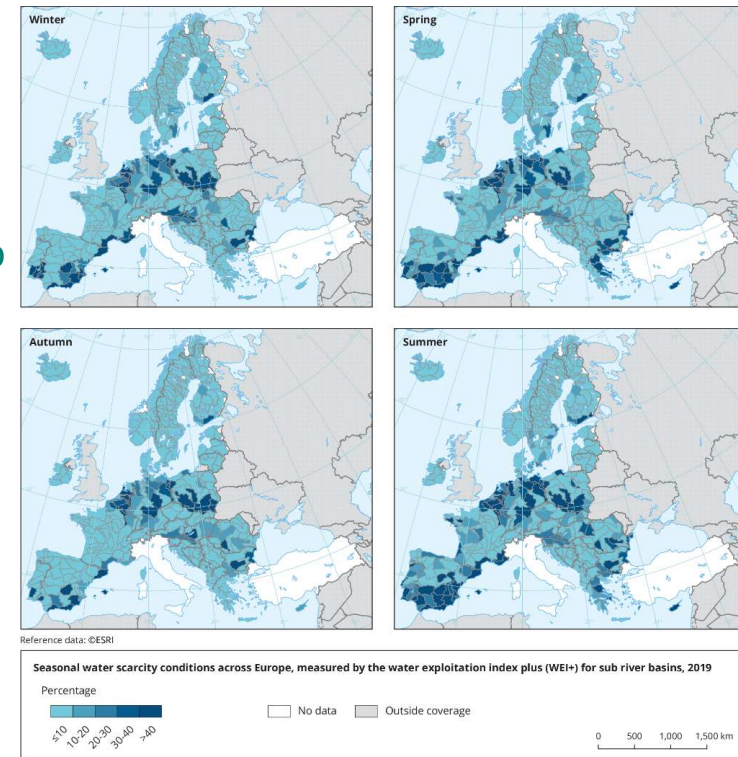
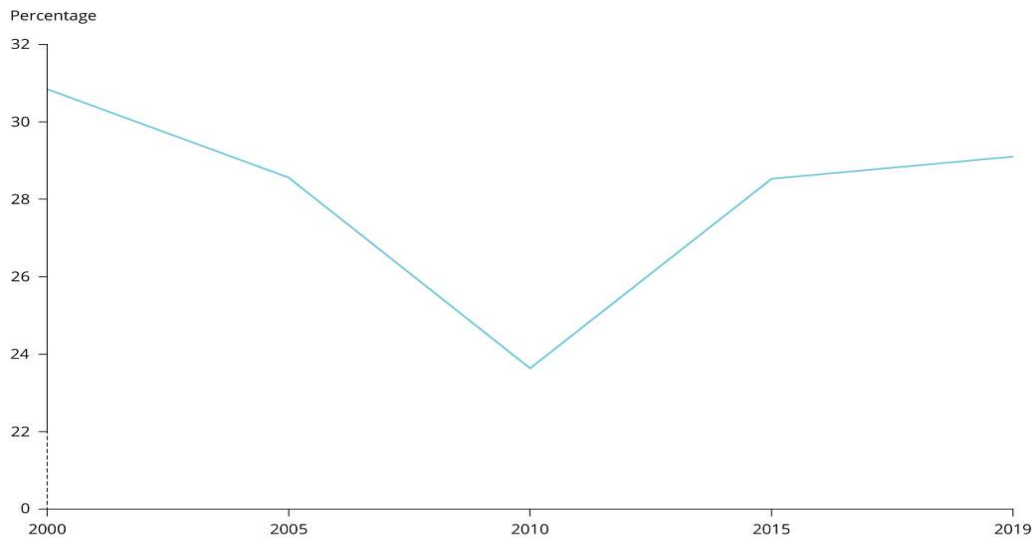
Source: EEA (2018) *European waters. Assessment of status and pressures 2018*

Water scarcity on the rise in Europe

Water stress affects approximately 20 % of the European territory and 30 % of the European population on average every year.

Southern Europe, European metropolises, intensive irrigated areas and popular touristic destinations are becoming vulnerable more and more to the water scarcity.

Area affected during at least for one quarter of the year by water scarcity conditions in the EU, measured by the water exploitation index plus




[Seasonal water scarcity conditions across Europe, measured by the water exploitation index plus \(WEI+\) for sub river basins, 2019 — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.eu/seasonal-water-scarcity-conditions-across-europe-measured-by-the-water-exploitation-index-plus-weip-for-sub-river-basins-2019)

[Water scarcity conditions in Europe \(Water exploitation index plus\) \(europa.eu\)](https://europea.eu/seasonal-water-scarcity-conditions-across-europe-measured-by-the-water-exploitation-index-plus-weip-for-sub-river-basins-2019)

Water scarcity on the rise in Europe

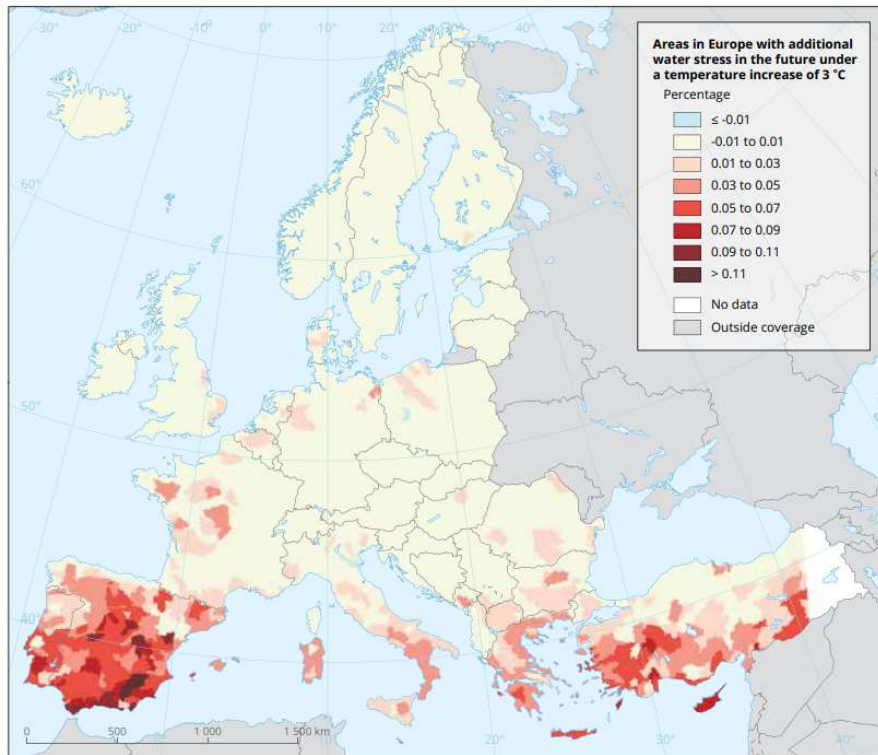
Estimated water availability per capita (m³/capita – 2000-2017)

Country	2000	2010	2017
Austria	 11 298	 9 477	 8 444
Switzerland	 7 728	 6 113	 4 902
Romania	 4 500	 8 159	 4 956
Spain	 4 146	 2 308	 2 042
France	 3 933	 3 286	 2 430
Germany	 2 438	 2 323	 1 629
Italy	 2 120	 3 060	 1 320

Sources: EEA (2019l, 2021d); Eurostat (2020f).



Future projections (scenarios) of water stress in Europe

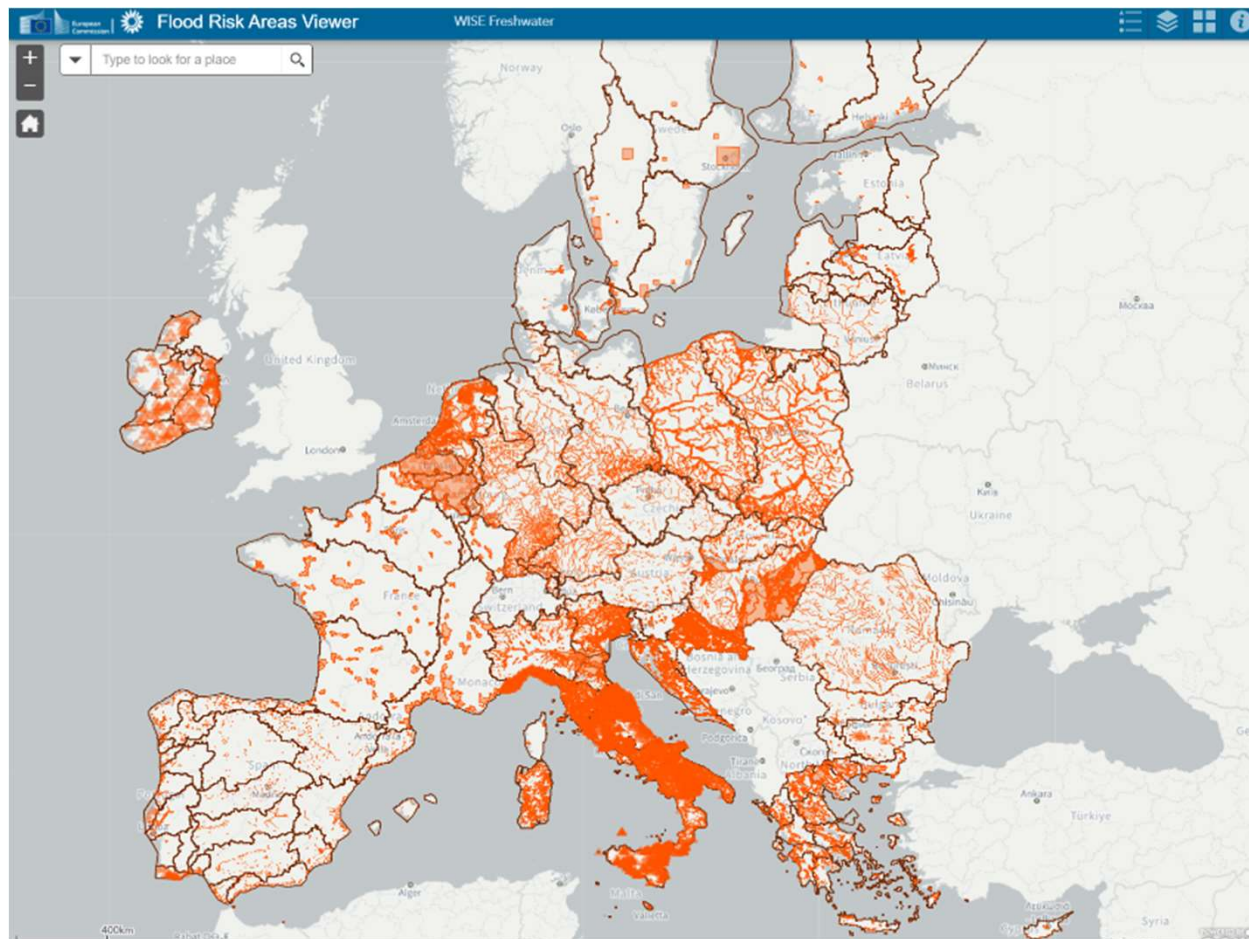


Reference data: ©ESRI

Source: Peseta IV project (Bisselink et al., 2020).

Water stress in Europe is expected to worsen in the future due to;

- ☐ Potential impacts of climate change on water availability in future
- ☐ Urbanisation is expected to concentrate increasing demand for water
- ☐ Intensive tourism
- ☐ Land use land cover changes will affect groundwater recharge conditions





UN WATER CONFERENCE 2023

The EU vision for 2050 Water Resilience endorsed by the College

“In 2050, global society will be water resilient, offering water security for all.

*This entails the **protection and restoration of aquatic ecosystems**, and a fair **balance between water supply and water demand** responding to current needs, including the realization of the **human right to safe drinking water and sanitation**, without compromising the rights of **future generations**.”*

European policy context



European Council - March 2023

It acknowledged “[...] **the need for enhanced EU and global action on water and the importance of a strategic EU approach to water security**”



The European Parliament – Highlights

- Resolution on droughts in 2022
- 2 plenary discussions on water crisis in 2023



European Economic and Social Committee

The call for a EU Blue Deal by the EESC

- ☐ Umbrella Opinion "A call for an **EU Blue Deal**" (plenary on 26 October)
- ☐ Access to water: tackling **water poverty** and its implications for social policy
- ☐ Sustainable and resilient **water infrastructures** and distribution networks
- ☐ Water-intensive **industries** and **water-efficient technologies**
- ☐ **Water scarcity** and climate emergency: circular and other solutions for **the EU agri- food system** in a future "Blue Deal"
- ☐ The **economics** of an "EU Blue deal"
- ☐ Water Politics: Between Desertification and Securitization - Time for a **Blue Diplomacy**
- ☐ Water efficient consumption and **consumer awareness** about their **water footprint**

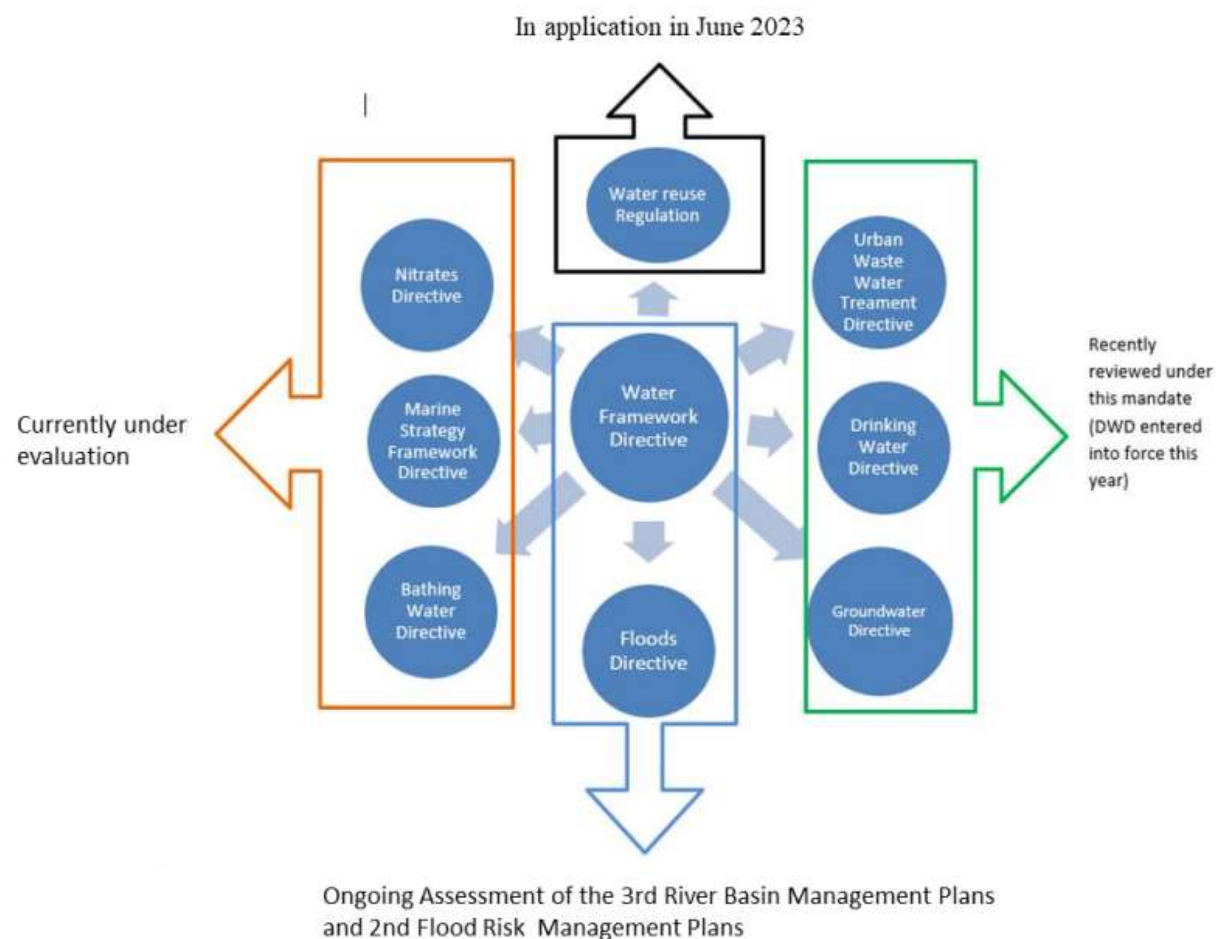


SOTEU 2023

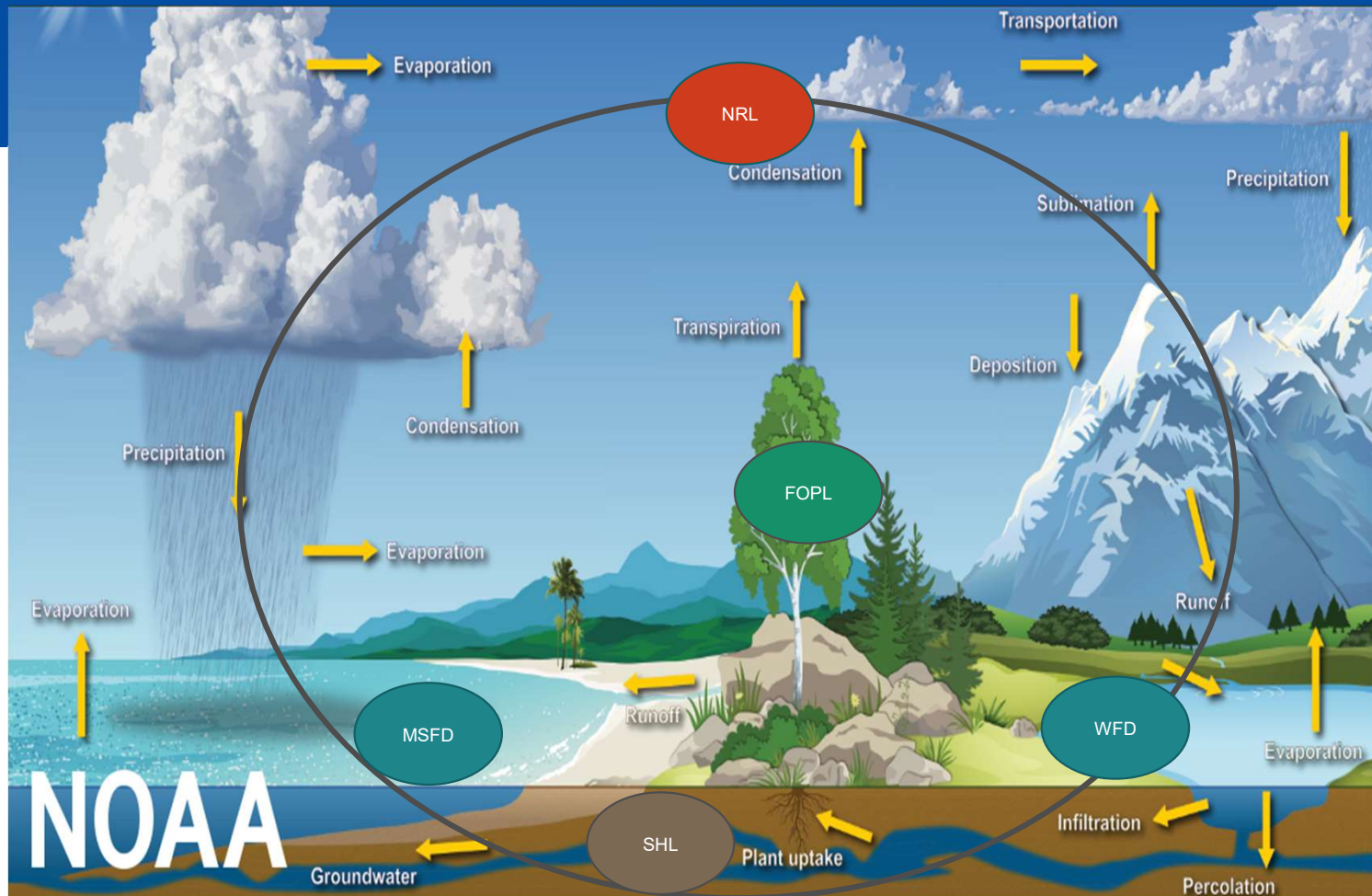
Initiative on water resilience

- As part of the three flagship initiatives under the Green Deal for 2024
- Announcement in the Letter of Intent

What the Commission is doing: a water acquis in evolution



The water cycle – linked to a much larger acquis



The need to treat water quality and water quantity as the two sides of the same coin



The more water is polluted, the less is fit for use and thus available for humans or the economy

The more water is available, the bigger is the dilution of pollutants

During this mandate

Towards an EU water resilience agenda

Track 1

Raising awareness and stepping up implementation and funding

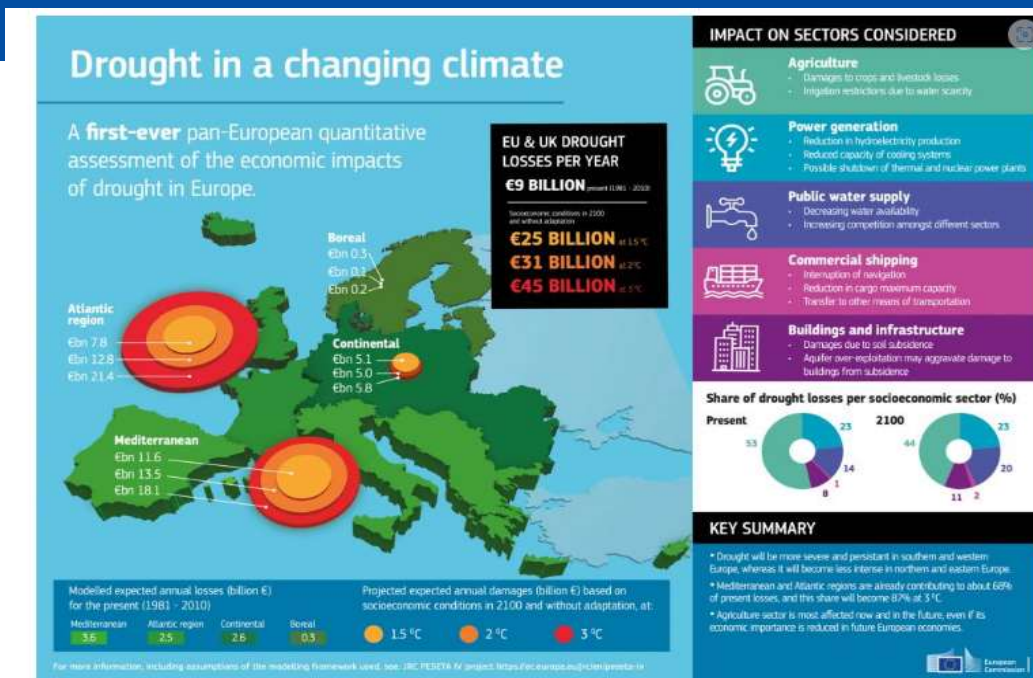
Track 2

Strengthening the knowledge base and gap analysis in preparation for the next mandate for EU measures

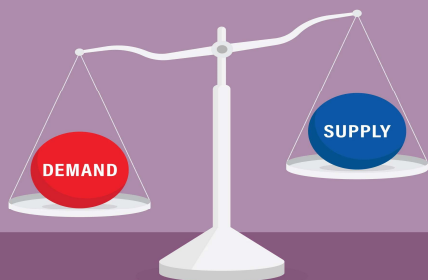
Track 3

International action

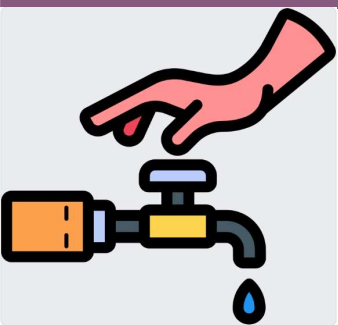
Nexus Water- food- energy –ecosystems-society



A lot of work being done on water scarcity and droughts with JRC (EDORA) and CLIMA
Also on floods with JRC and ECHO



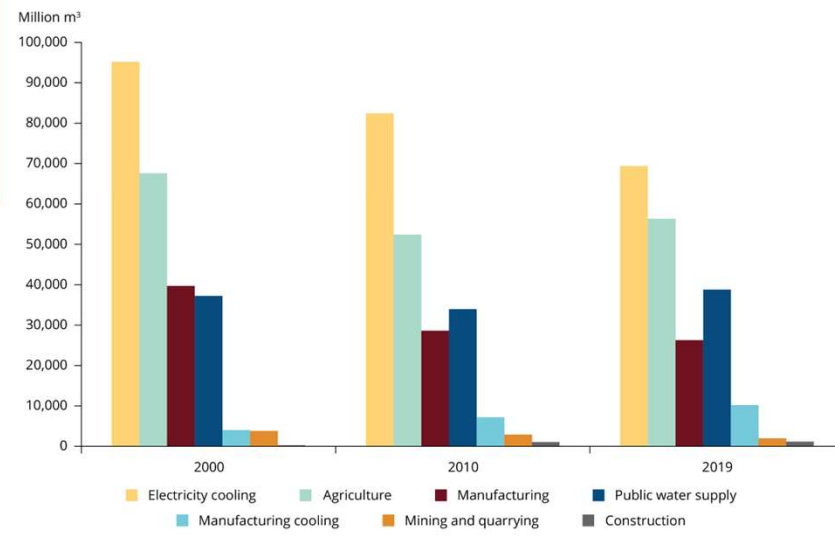
Balancing supply and demand



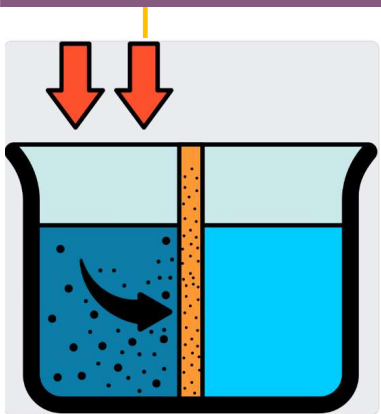
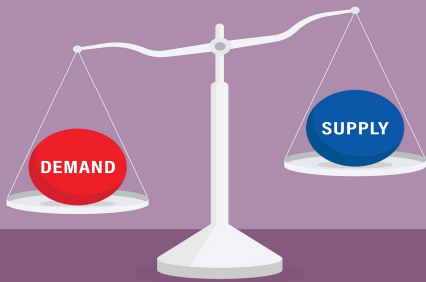
EU policy regarding water efficiency

- 2012 Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water Resources
- Circular Economy Action Plan
- New DWD
- Revision UWWTD
- IED revision
- CAP
- Water Reuse Regulation

Figure 2. Water abstraction by economic sector in the 27 EU Member States, 2000-2019



Balancing supply and demand

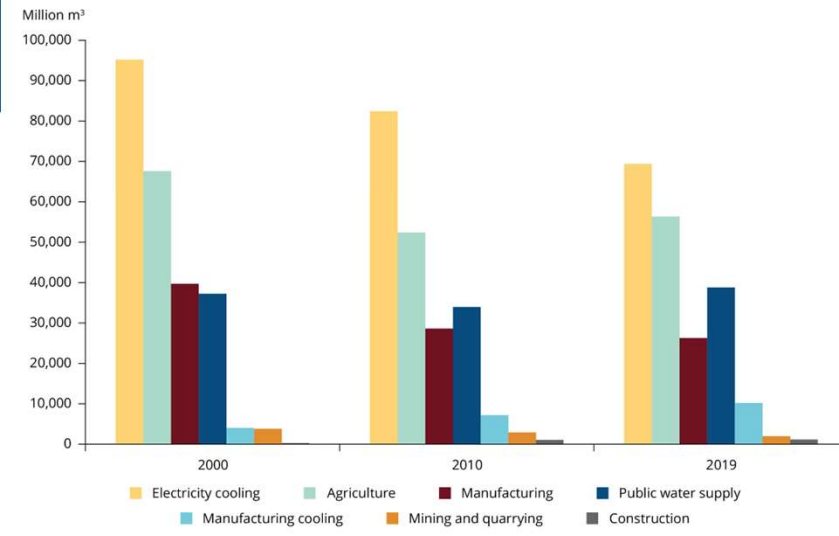


Extending supply

Desalination

- RTD efforts
- High energy consumption
- GHGs emissions
- Negative environmental impacts of brine

Figure 2. Water abstraction by economic sector in the 27 EU Member States, 2000-2019



Water storage and ecological flow

Coping with increasing seasonal or yearly variability of precipitations



Increased water storage- intervention in the water cycle

Increased water storage- nature based solutions

Respect the ecological flow- the water that must stay in the river for the ecosystem to function

Other exercises ongoing

- ❑ A POLICY LAB PROCESS ON WATER RESILIENCE - JRC
- ❑ FORENV Cycle 5: Emerging environmental and other issues impacting our ability to achieve a water-resilient Europe by 2050

NEXT STEPS

- ❑ Corporate communication campaign (2024)
- ❑ Adoption of a Water resilience initiative Q1

Thank you

