



Water policy under the European Green Deal

State of play and key challenges ahead

European River Symposium
26 May 2021

European Commission – Directorate General for the Environment
Director – Quality of Life

We are facing 4 ecological crises



CLIMATE



BIODIVERSITY

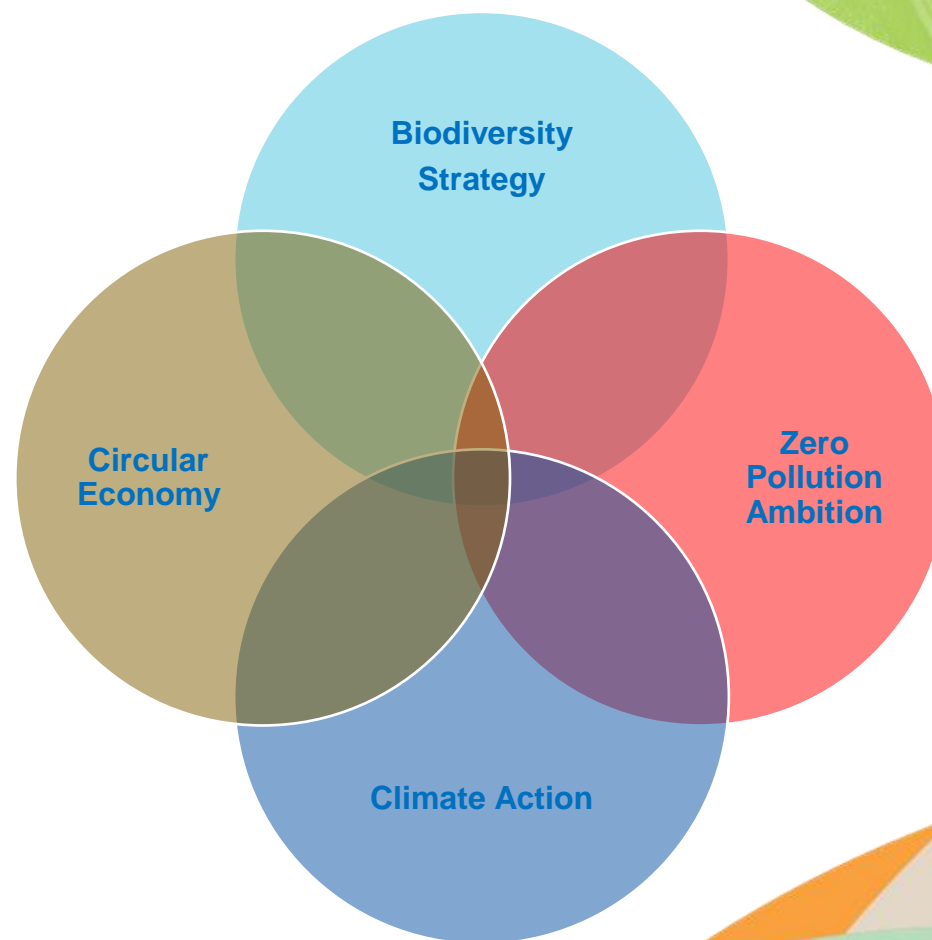


RESOURCES



POLLUTION

The EU is responding through interrelated solutions



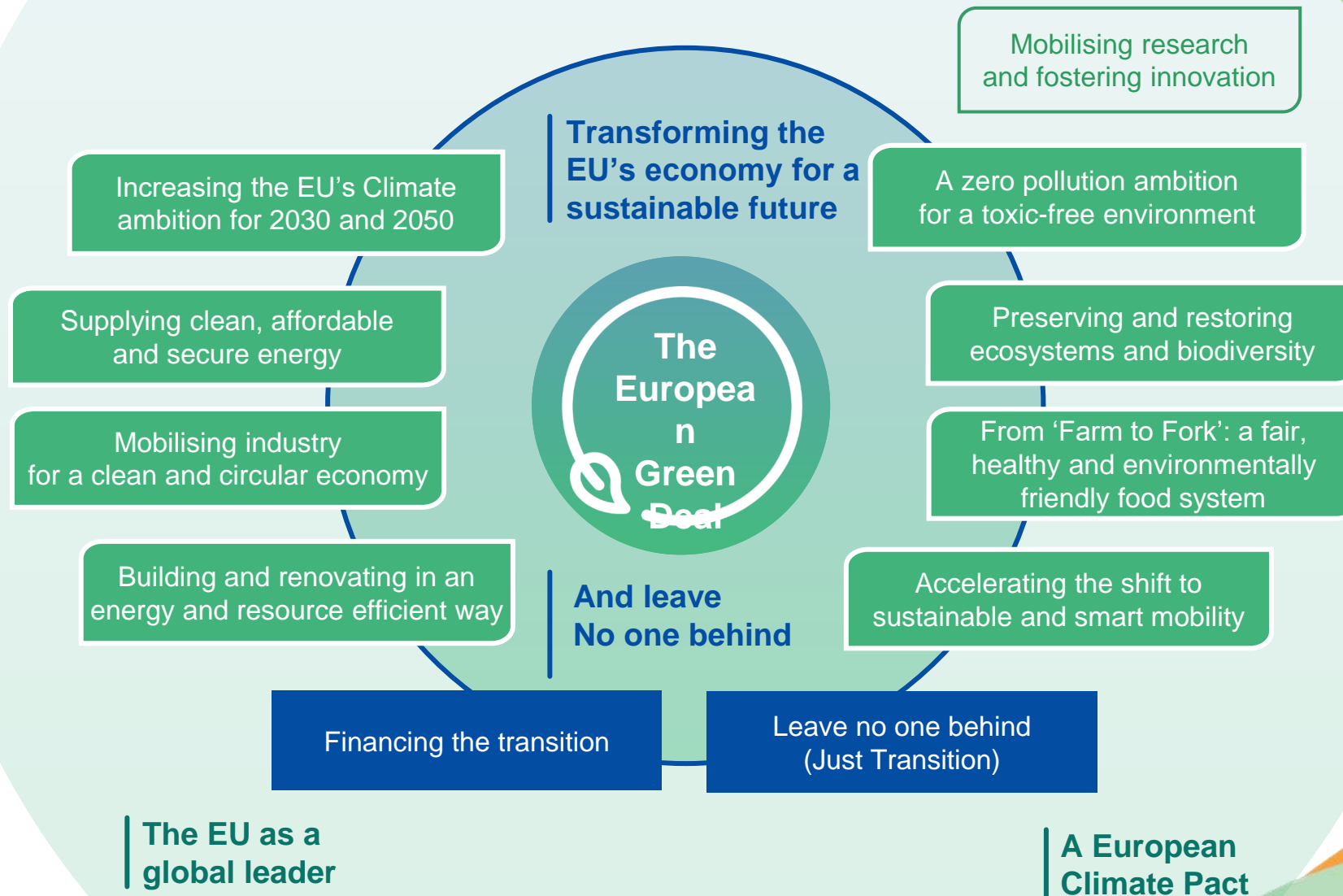


The European Green Deal

COM(2019) 640 final



The European Green Deal



The European Green Deal





A new Circular Economy Action Plan

For a cleaner and more
competitive Europe

COM (2020) 98 final

Photo by Bernard Hermant on Unsplash

CEAP - Key targets related to water



- **Food, water & nutrients** - one of the key product value chains addressed.
- **Water reuse and water efficiency:**
 - Facilitate **water reuse** and **water efficiency**, including in industrial processes
 - Application of the new **Water Reuse** Regulation (2020/741/EU)
- **Sustainable product policy framework** – aim to set principles for product policy and requirements on products placed on the EU market.
- **Review of the Industrial Emissions Directive**, and integration of circular economy practices in upcoming Best Available Techniques (BAT) reference documents
- Address and prevent **microplastics** □ Environment, drinking water and food
- 7 ■ Key sectors: **building** and **textile**



Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

Bringing nature
back into our lives

COM(2020) 380 final



BDS - Key targets related to water

- 30% of EU land and sea protected, 1/3 of which under 'strict protection'
 - **Freshwater ecosystems** are included
- Restoration of freshwater ecosystems:
 - Increased efforts to **restore freshwater ecosystems and the natural functions of rivers** – WFD objectives to be met by 2027
 - **Restore at least 25,000km free flowing rivers**
 - Removal of primarily obsolete barriers
 - Restoration of floodplains and wetlands
 - **Restore and preserve ecological flows** □ Member States review water abstraction and impoundment permits – WFD objectives to be met by 2027
- Focus □ To implement and enforce EU environmental legislation



Forging a climate-resilient Europe

The new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change


COM (2021) 82 final, 24.2.2021

EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy



Albufeira Barragem de Salgueiro
© Creative Commons – Victor Oliveira

- Overall objective – smarter, more systemic, faster adaptation
- Towards a climate-resilient **water management**
 - Improve **coordination of thematic plans and other mechanisms** (incl. water resource allocation and water-permits) across sectors and borders
 - Reduce **water use**, encouraging **water efficiency and savings**
 - Stable and **secure supply of drinking water** □ climate change-risks in risk analyses of water management
 - Sustainable **soil management and land-use**
 - **Nature-based solutions** to achieve the goals of the Water Framework Directive and the Floods Directive



EU Action Plan ‘Towards Zero Pollution Action Plan for Air, Water and Soil’

A Pathway to a Healthy Planet for Healthy People

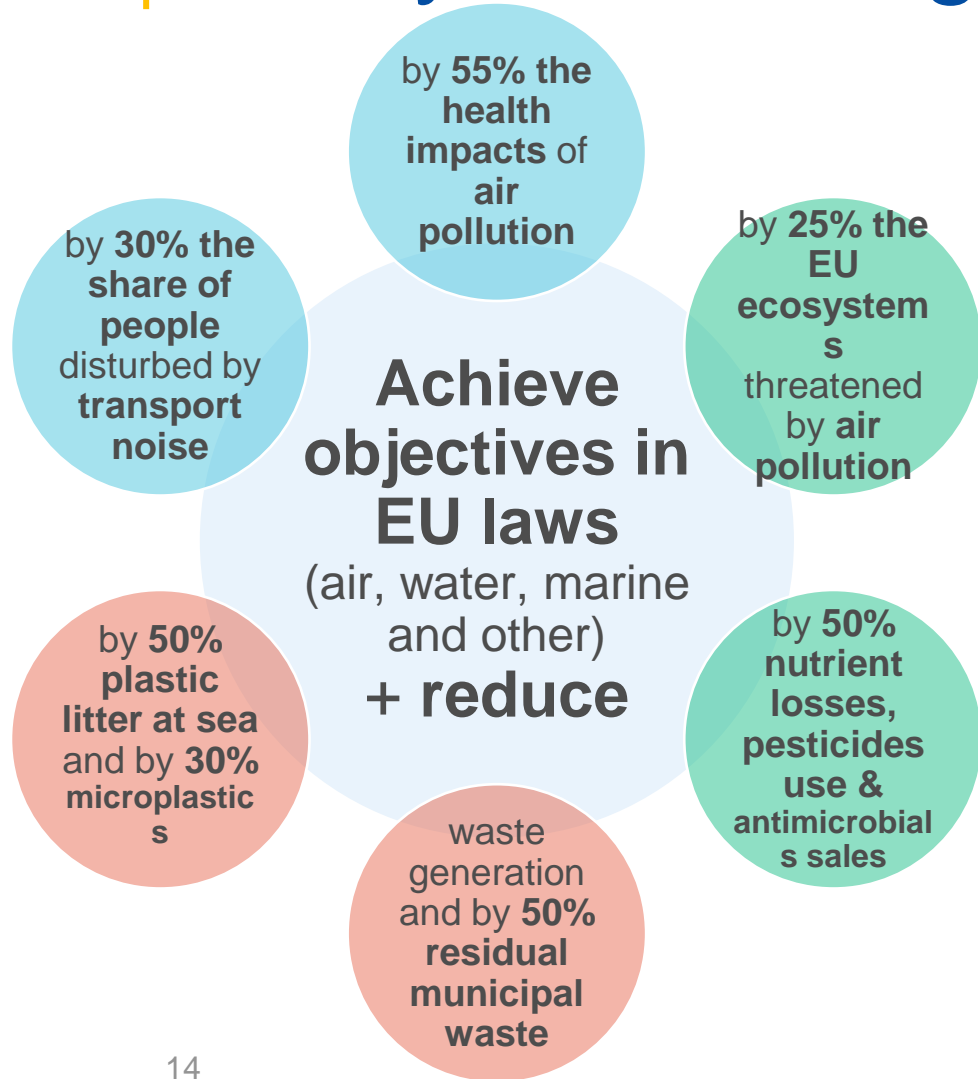
COM (2021) 140 final, 12.5.2021



ZPAP - Key elements

- **2050 vision:** *“Air, water and soil pollution is reduced to levels no longer considered harmful to health and natural ecosystems and that respect the boundaries our planet can cope with, thus creating a toxic-free environment.”*
- An **integrated approach** to:
 - reduce pollution at source
 - strengthen the EU green, digital and economic leadership, and create a healthier, socially fairer world
 - mainstream pollution-prevention across policies, step up implementation and modernize EU law
 - 33 actions, 9 cross-sectorial flagships, 6 key targets to be achieved by 2030 (with a 2025 review clause)

6 Key 2030 Targets – 9 Flagships



1. Reducing health inequalities through zero pollution

2. Supporting urban zero pollution action

3. Promoting zero pollution across regions

4. Facilitating zero pollution choices

5. Enforcing zero pollution together

6. Showcasing zero pollution solutions for buildings

7. Living Labs for green digital solutions and smart zero pollution

8. Minimising the EU's external pollution footprint

9. Consolidating the EU's Knowledge Centres for zero pollution



General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030 *(8th EAP)*

COM(2020) 652 final

8th EAP – Main elements of relevant to water policy



- Key enablers:
 - Better **implementing** EU law & **better mainstreaming** environmental concerns across policies
 - Harnessing the potential of **digital and data** technologies
 - Making full use of **nature based solutions** and social innovation
 - First EU-wide **overarching monitoring framework** to track and measure progress
 - Better **information of policy makers, stakeholders and citizens** – through key indicators informing about the state of the environment, the main pressures and the effectiveness of the actions taken – higher standards for transparency, public participation and access to justice
 - Key support from the **European Environment Agency** and the **European Chemicals Agency**

Citizens' and stakeholders' engagement

- The European Green Deal is instrumental to a shift to a more sustainable Europe, but it needs the **support and engagement** of all: policy makers, citizens, stakeholders...
- Common objectives:
 - mainstreaming environmental, sustainability, health concerns into all layers of policy making
 - creating co-ownership, promote collaboration and foster integrated solutions
 - sharing good practices on cross-cutting topics such as financing for green innovation and jobs, boosting sustainable production and consumption
- Opportunities to **bring together stakeholders and experts** from different policy areas:
 - Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform
 - Business@Biodiversity Platform
 - Zero Pollution Stakeholder Platform & Chemicals Roundtable
 - Green City Accord & Covenant of Mayors
 - European Climate Pact



Research - Water in Horizon Europe



- **Horizon Europe**

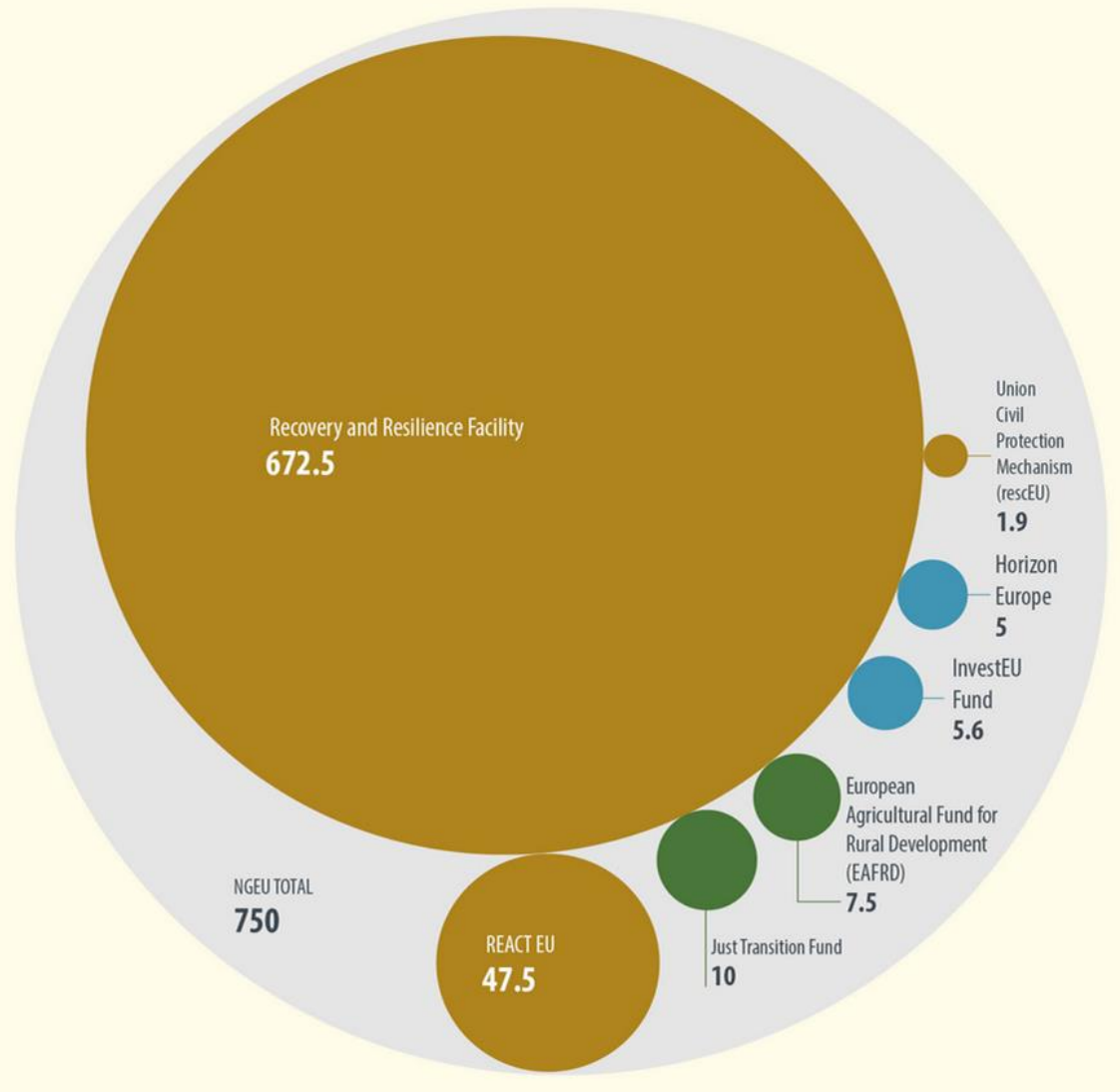
- 95.5 Bo € for 2021-2027 (incl. 5.4 Bo € NextGenerationEU) - 30% increase

- **Elements of relevance:**

- **6 Thematic clusters** □ Collaborative research relating to societal challenges
- **5 EU missions** □ Ambitious, time-bound and achievable goals
EU mission on [Healthy oceans, seas, coastal and inland waters](#)
- **European Partnerships** □ Research and innovation programmes jointly developed and implemented by the EU with private and public partners
 - Co-funded partnership □ *‘Water Security for the Planet’* ([Water4All](#))
 - Co-programmed partnership □ *‘Zero-emission Waterborne Transport’*

Recovery and Resilience Plans

All amounts in € billion (2018 prices)



- The EU's long-term budget and the “**Next Generation EU**” instrument: A total of **€1.8 trillion** to help rebuild a post-COVID-19 greener, more digital and more resilient Europe
- Next Generation EU (2021-24) = **EUR 750 billion**
- **30% of the EU funds to fight climate change**, the highest share ever of the European budget (NGEU, MFF).
- **MS Recovery and Resilience Plans** due on 30 April: reform and investment agenda (green and digital transitions, fairness, macroeconomic stability)

Summing up

- The European Green Deal initiatives opens up **many important work-strands to become water-smart** in our way of living **within the boundaries of our wonderful blue planet**
- Post-Covid EU budget: *‘Europe’s moment: Repair and Prepare for the Next Generation’* – **unique investment opportunities**
- **Get involved!**
 - Several platforms and other fora for engagement
 - Opportunities to directly contribute to policy through public consultations, stakeholder consultations

International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine

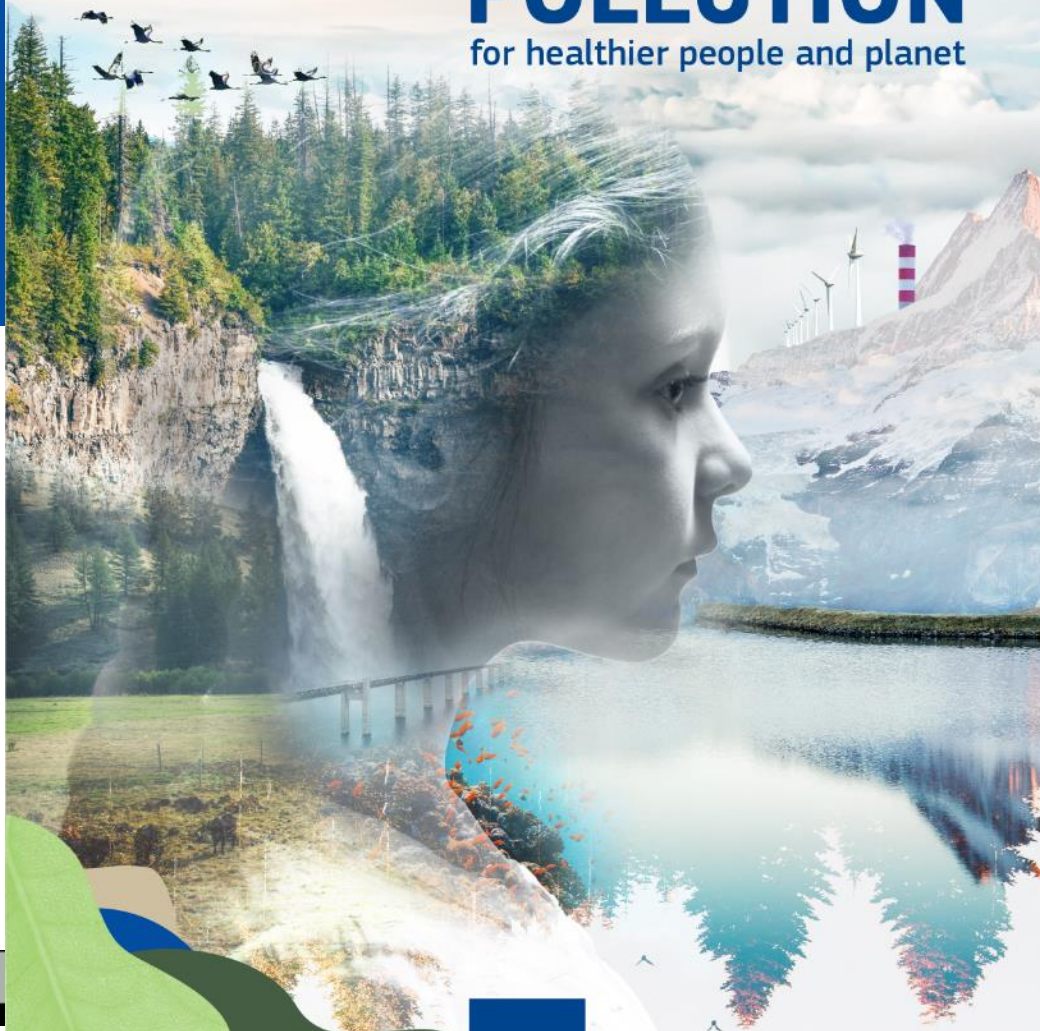


- Inter-European River Basin with 9 Riparian States (DE, FR, NL, LUX, BE, AT, IT, CH, LI)
- Coordinating Body for Integrated Water Management – pollution, biodiversity, floods and low water
- Programme Rhine 2040
- **Open Public Consultations are ongoing**
 - **3rd International River Basin Management Plan:**
<https://www.iksr.org/en/eu-directives/european-water-framework-directive/river-basin-management-plan-2021>
comments possible until **15 October 2021** to sekretariat@iksr.de
 - **2nd International Flood Risk Management Plan:**
<https://www.iksr.org/en/eu-directives/floods-directive/flood-risk-management-plan>
comments possible until **30 June 2021** to sekretariat@iksr.de



ZERO POLLUTION

#EuGreenWeek
May 31 → June 4
for healthier people and planet



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See you at the Green Week 2021!

More information:

- [Zero Pollution webpage](https://zero-pollution.ec.europa.eu/)
- [Analysis of open public consultation](#)
- Contact: ENV-ZERO-POLLUTION@ec.europa.eu

Your input is welcome!