

Joint statement: Europe needs a coherent Industrial Emissions Directive within a water-smart strategy for the European industries

Why talk about water and industry?

Water is an essential resource for our society, economy, food production, agriculture, and the industries supporting prosperity and security at large. Water scarcity and droughts are emerging situations across Europe, and in some areas, they have become the predominant situation. Water scarcity is driven primarily by two factors:

- climate, which controls the availability of renewable freshwater resources and seasonality in water supply, and
- water demand, which is largely driven by population and related economic activities.¹

While water scarcity has been discussed as a global resource challenge, it is today also becoming a European issue and we need action. Many European Industries are water-dependent, and in some regions, they are already facing water resource challenges, impacting not only jobs but the resilience and competitiveness of the European economy.

With the revision of the Industrial Emissions Directive, Europe has the opportunity to positively impact water demand within a relatively short time.

When meeting the demands of our European societies in the future, especially water intense industries need to utilise resources in a more efficient and sustainable way/matter. This is not only to meet the risks of water shortage in the water resource and the ability of the water resource to be restored but also to reduce the impact on and leave space for nature and biodiversity. The cost of water risks to business is calculated as five times higher than cost of taking action.

With the revision of the Drinking Water Directive the European Parliament and the Council endorsed the reduction of water losses in the distribution infrastructure.

For instance, the share of water consumption in mining and quarrying, manufacturing, and construction is calculated to reach approximately 11% of total water consumption in Europe.²

Which Solutions?

Several solutions were discussed in recent years, and particularly during the Industrial Water Users Forum at the IWA World Water Congress & Exhibition in Copenhagen in September 2022. There is a need to:

Ease up bureaucracy and ways to improve industrial water use by coordination of many legislative requirements from several sectors and purposes, e.g., health, environment, as well as a standards-based approach to requirements on water quality in various water-consuming industries to ease up implementation.

An integrated approach to water resource management, water reuse, and wastewater discharge that goes from the water framework directive directly to the Industrial Emissions Directive supported by the Green Taxonomy and the ESG-reporting as well as the rules on the treatment of urban wastewater.

¹ Water Exploitation Index | EEA - [Water use and environmental pressures — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/press-releases/2022/04/water-use-and-environmental-pressures)

² [Water resources across Europe — confronting water stress: an updated assessment — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/press-releases/2022/04/water-resources-across-europe)

Exchange know-how and improve tools within and across sectors, where actions can be taken within the framework of JRC, Horizon EU, and the new INCITE that comes with IED 2.0.³

In Europe, the regulations on The Green Taxonomy and ESG-reporting focus on other sustainability issues on water. This new instrument will address companies' actions into sustainability actions at a new level. Moreover, the Industrial Emissions Directive shall support the deployment of the relevant technologies to achieve a water-efficient industry in Europe. Stimulating investment and innovative ecosystem across Europe. Lastly, a water-smart strategy shall establish a coherent framework and set of instruments, looking across regulations to incentivise high water resource efficiency where needed.

The European industry is ready!

Implementable solutions and best-case examples already exist in Europe to create water and resource-efficient solution in certain industries. The water-energy nexus is also paramount to saving our resources. This is also a benefit of good resource management in operations and business development.

In Denmark, companies like Carlsberg Group and FLSmidth together with Grundfos and NIRAS, have shown new solutions in the value chain that contribute to the manufacturing of the necessary goods for society in a sustainable manner, by way of using such as smart metering, efficient and manageable pumps, valves as well as temperature controls.

Through public and private leadership between utilities and industry, based on a combination of political ambitions and innovative water solutions, industry can properly address the water challenges of Europe. Europe can stand up as the frontrunner, driving towards a resilient and thus Water-Smart Society.

Today, we the under-signed companies and organisation therefore encourage the European Parliament and the Member States to raise the political ambitions for improvement in water efficiency reducing the water consumptions within the European industries. There is a possibility in every drop of water and every step taken. Europe needs a coherent water strategy for the European industries. We therefore encourage the European Commission to propose a concrete roadmap for EU that can help the water challenges within the European industries.

Signatories: *Grundfos, Carlsberg, the Confederation of Danish Industry, WaterEurope and FLSmidth*

³ [Industrial water users forum - shared \(worldwatercongress.org\)](https://www.worldwatercongress.org)