

Webinar: Risk assessment and management in the context of the Urban wastewater treatment Directive recast

Main Conclusions

1. Totally aligned with the WFD's and MSFD's environmental objectives and the compromise with the Green Deal's zero pollution.
2. Welcome the ambition of the recast of a 30-year-old directive.
3. It is important to keep it simple (implementation and compliance assessment).
4. Decision of tertiary and quaternary treatments considering only a certain load may also result in low or negative benefits for environment. Does not include the overall trade-offs and synergies assessment between the administrative decision supported on load *versus* the differences among the multiple receiving water bodies.
5. Gèneve Farabegoli (project WiNE) showed that the compliance of ELV for treated UWW discharges linked with WFD goals lead to a higher transition for a circular model when compared with the simple compliance of uniform values, since allows the promotion of natural values with consumption of less resources.
6. Nathan Obermaier showed us how to reduce micropollutants in water bodies in an efficient way, based on the experience of Germany, and taking into account the little information still available in what quaternary treatment concerns.
7. Therefore, Anabela Rebelo showed a methodology for assessing the risk to the environment and human health, supported by a multicriteria analysis, that could be a very useful tool for defining the level of treatment. This type of approach will make possible to integrate the susceptibility of the water body to pollution and allows to observe multiple pollution sources.
8. The proposal for the UWWTD recast also includes a new principle that aims to identify the risks that urban wastewater discharges may pose to the environment and human health. However, the application of this concept is not transversal to all population groups covered by the directive.
9. It is unquestionable that the environmental and public health protection objectives must be ambitious and the same for all Member States, but this can be achieved using the tools already in place in the WFD (combined approach), Risk assessment (reuse), technical and scientifically well supported, in order to establishing the best way to achieve the environment goals, since there are different characteristics and specificities in each water body.
10. We kindly invite you to reach out to your Permanent Representations, and experts following the negotiation, if you are interested in supporting or further working on the Portuguese proposals on article 18.