Priority Substances – Outcome of Water Directors meeting

WG Chemicals
15-16 December
Review of PS list

• Review of PS list every 6 years, and proposals as appropriate. Last COM proposal in 2012.

• Current review:
  • Technical work by JRC and dedicated subgroup. Presentation of results of this technical work to WG Chemicals mid-December.
  • COM proposal would happen after mid-2018.

  -> Overlap between preparation and negotiation of this proposal and the WFD review
This timetable is tentative and has not yet been formally validated by the European Commission.
The WFD review: an opportunity to develop a new approach to chemicals

**Proposal:** Develop a *more holistic approach to chemicals, taking into account mixtures*

- groups of substances identified by their mode of action and group EQSs / individual EQS likely still necessary, incl. at national level and EQSs set at EU level. Emphasis on trends for uPBTs.

- *Preliminary proposal based on existing work at expert level* - Need for comprehensive study (assess reliability and maturity of tools), discussion and consultation.
Proposal for the WFD review as regards chemicals

**Aims:**

- **Better assessment of risks:**
  - better coverage of different categories of use of substances,
  - Staying "ahead of the game" for newly introduced substances,
  - Avoiding ever-increasing list of PSs (usually resulting in maps becoming more red),
  - Taking into account mixtures effect.

- **Better targeting of measures.**
Proposal for the coordination of the EQSD and WFD review

• *Instead of COM proposal in 2018, bundle PS related proposal with any proposal from WFD review, after 2019.*

• *Conclusions of technical work would be taken into account in assessment of pressures and impact to prepare 2021 RBMPs.*
Rationale for the proposed way forward

- **Consistency with the WFD review**: would not be coherent to prepare and negotiate a PS legislative proposal based on current approach while at the same time considering a new framework.

- **Changes from EQSD revision would be late for 2021 RBMPs.** Results of technical work taken into account in the pressures and impact analysis -> effects already in 2021.

- **Prioritisation of resources and focus on WFD review.**
Conclusions from the Water Directors

- WD supported the process and timetable proposed by the Commission to coordinate the reviews of the WFD and the EQSD.

- WD welcomed and supported the proposal by the Commission to consider a more holistic approach to regulation of chemicals in the aquatic environment in the context of the WFD review, based on the principles outlined in the Commission’s paper.

- WD emphasised the need to take into account feasibility and cost when designing the approach, and to tackle legal and practical issues related to the identification and implementation of measures to reduce emissions, on the basis of the assessment of the risk coming from mixtures. WD also highlighted the need to ensure coordination with other legislations (such as legislation to authorise the use of chemicals and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive). WD called for further discussions at expert level within the Working Group Chemicals to ensure a proper consideration of all technical aspects.
Conclusions from the Water Directors

- WD agreed that the **on-going technical work on the review of the priority substances list needs to be finalised** before it can be discussed how this could be considered in the preparations of the 3rd River Basin Management Plan.
Questions to the WG Chemicals

• Are there any general principles missing in the new proposed approach to chemicals?

• Do you see other important issues that should be tackled by the new approach?
Thank you for your attention