

EU Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plans - what to look for and why...

The EU Water Framework Directive is a huge and extremely ambitious piece of water legislation. This part of the website highlights a number of questions designed to explore the aspects of a river basin management plan (RBMP) most likely to affect commercial or recreational, inland or maritime navigation interests, including ports and dredging. It is not, however, a comprehensive guide. There will be very many other local or site-specific water-related issues which could affect port or navigation activities. The following questions thus provide only a starting point to help those who need to assess and respond to the draft RBMPs.

1. Which water body or water bodies cover the port/marina or other area of navigation or dredging interest?
2. Is the water body designated as heavily modified or artificial? (If yes, a different ecological objective applies although the water body will still have to meet good chemical status)
3. Is the water body identified as being 'at risk' of failing to meet good status/potential? If so, why? Which parameters are unlikely to achieve good status or potential?
4. Are any of the measures proposed for the water body likely to affect port/marina, navigation or dredging interests? If so, is scientific evidence provided to demonstrate that there is, indeed, a problem?
5. If the evidence demonstrates that there is a problem, are the measures proposed technically viable?
6. If the water body is designated as a heavily modified or artificial water body, would the measures proposed have a significant adverse effect on navigation interests?
7. Are the proposed measures shown to be cost-effective and not disproportionately costly?
8. Are exemptions (extended deadlines or less stringent targets) likely to be justified? If so, are they in place?
9. Are any proposed physical modifications which could affect the water status in the water body identified in the plan?

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