

Drinking Water Protection: Call to appreciate and keep our Waters clean and Appeal to align the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) with the European Green Deal

Recommendation to sign the European Citizens' Initiative "Save Bees and Farmers!"

Karlsruhe, 11 January 2021. "(Ground)Water is our most valuable material treasure on Earth. This treasure is becoming increasingly endangered and precious with climate change," says Wolfgang Deinlein, Managing Director at IAWR. Therefore, to protect public health, the IAWR, representing drinking water suppliers in the international Rhine Basin, together with drinking water supply associations in the Meuse and Scheldt river basins with a total of 81 million people, has launched a large-scale appeal to redirect the CAP and adapt it to the European Green Deal. The appeal is fully supported by the European umbrella organization of the water sector, EurEau. The appeal is addressed to the final negotiations on the CAP and has been sent to all 27 Ministers of Agriculture in the EU and decision makers in the European Parliament. With regard to the European Commission, the appeal has primarily been addressed to the Commissioner for Agriculture and the Vice-President responsible for the European Green Deal and has also been sent to the President of the Commission. In addition, the appeal has been addressed to the corresponding positions in the German Federal Government.

"With this appeal, we support the goals of the European Green Deal regarding climate protection, the zero-pollutant ambition for a toxic-free environment, the from 'farm to fork, the chemicals and the biodiversity strategy with all due vigor," says Prof. Dr. Matthias Maier, President at IAWR. All actors in politics, industry and society are urgently called upon to unite forces in the upcoming, inevitable transition processes. He recommends EU citizens to sign the European Citizens' Initiative "Save Bees and Farmers!" as a concrete option for action on the CAP to protect drinking water from pesticide use and for a socio-ecological agricultural transformation.

Immediate redirection of the CAP is imperative

The current conventional agricultural practices are associated with considerable inputs of pesticides, manure and fertilizers into the air, soil and (ground)water and can cause irreparable damage to (ground)water quality, as there is usually no retrievability of substances released into the environment. As a consequence, more and more expensive and energy-intensive treatment processes have to be built in waterworks at the expense of the population. In addition, non-degradable (persistent) substances are continuously accumulating in the environment and therefore also in humans ultimately. Moreover, it is foreseeable that in the future even upgrading water treatment in waterworks will not be enough to remove all contamination. As a consequence, the legally required drinking water quality standards could no longer be complied with. The present generation is not allowed to deprive future generations of intact drinking water resources as an indispensable basis of life. This must now be prevented without further delay and the CAP must be redirected with strong political will.

External link: European Citizens' Initiative "Save bees and farmers!",
<https://www.savebeesandfarmers.eu>

The International Association of Waterworks in the Rhine Basin (IAWR) is the association of the drinking water supplier associations AWBR, ARW and RIWA in the upper, middle and lower Rhine river basin with 61 million people depending on clean drinking water. Currently, the IAWR office is located at Stadtwerke Karlsruhe.

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