

PRESS RELEASE

Industrial discharges must be effectively reduced by revision of IED

Karlsruhe, 08.12.2022: Currently, the EU Parliament and Council are dealing with the EU Commission's proposal for a [revision](#) of the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED), and amendments will be tabled in the Parliament this week. This proposal provides for stricter limit values for industrial discharges and a broader application of "best available techniques" (BAT). It is accompanied by a transfer of the previous Pollutant Release/Transfer Register (PRTR) into a more comprehensive Industrial Emissions Portal (IEP). In the view of the ERM Coalition, a disadvantage of the IED proposal consists in its limitation to large installations, so that about 80 % of emissions/discharges would be outside its scope. In its IED position, the ERM Coalition therefore calls for the scope to be extended to include all "Substances of Very High Concern" (SVHC) under REACH, in particular all per fluorinated and polyfluorinated alkyl substances ([PFAS](#)). In general, only substances for which a permit has been granted should be allowed in discharges. In addition, the impact of a discharge on drinking water abstraction points downstream should be assessed. In general, the disclosure of substances in the IEP should not be circumvented by declaring them as business secrets. And: A functioning legislation cannot do without controls and effective sanctions in case of violations.

IAWR-President Prof. Dr. Matthias Maier: "Drinking water suppliers take their task of supplying safe drinking water seriously. At the same time, the removal of pollutants must not be blamed solely on the waterworks, but must primarily aim at prevention at the source of pollution. Therefore, if highly complex technical measures are required in waterworks due to PFAS, this must be accompanied by a ban on substances and the closing of the corresponding approval gaps (e.g. [PMT/vPvM](#) substances) in order to prevent continuation of pollution. Protection against environmental pollution must not be limited to drinking water, while pollution via other intake pathways continues unabated as a result of lengthy prohibition procedures with uncertain outcomes. This is not in line with European primary law ([Art. 191](#) TFEU). We very much hope that the regulatory competence [is at all strong enough](#) to ban hazardous chemicals like PFAS."

IAWR Managing Director Wolfgang Deinlein adds: "The development is leading to ever more complex treatment techniques in all the waterworks and visibly towards reverse osmosis, the highest and most complex treatment technique. This process is not only associated with enormous costs, which make it questionable whether it can be financed in poor regions, but also with an additional water demand of up to 25 %. Subsequently, this additional water has to be disposed of as contaminated concentrate, commonly without a disposal option being available for these enormous quantities of waste water. This makes it clear that the solution so far, i.e. removal at waterworks, will foreseeably reach its limit. This needs to be communicated in time. With regard to the discharge of substances into drinking water resources, there must now be a consistent change of direction and the sources of pollution must be rectified in accordance with EU primary legislation."

Climate change increases the need for action, as in times of drought, water quality deteriorates simply if the same quantities of pollutants are discharged into smaller quantities of water. This effect increased this year's fish mortality in Oder river. From this, the [German Environment Agency](#) concluded that discharge permits should be put to the test.



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