

## **Water Information System for Europe and the EU Water Framework Directive data requirements**

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**ABSTRACT:** The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is an ambitious piece of legislation for the protection and improvement of the quality of all water resources within the European Union, and presents an opportunity to develop an integrated data management system for water related information that will allow the information needs of all actors to be met.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) includes a number of reporting requirements, including a requirement to report on the characterisation of the river basin districts, and review the impacts and the economic analysis of water use.

Under a Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) Expert Advisory and Working Groups are working on the development of guidance documents on how to implement the WFD, from monitoring through to reporting, including GIS. The WFD and CIS present an opportunity to all organisations involved in reporting in Europe to work together to develop an effective reporting mechanism for water. The development of such a mechanism should draw on the experience of existing reporting mechanisms and guidelines.

The European Commission and the European Environment Agency have set up a steering group on reporting and committed themselves to work together on the development of a new, comprehensive European data and information management system for water, to be implemented by 2010. The challenge will be to design an efficient system that recognises multiple needs, makes best use of existing information in countries, respects principles already established and takes account of those being developed under the Framework Directive on reporting and other Community initiatives.