



Newsletter December 2024

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News from EWA

New Corporate Member



We are excited to welcome **SUEZ** as the newest corporate member of the European Water Association.

Faced with growing environmental challenges, SUEZ has been delivering essential services that protect and improve our quality of life for more than 160 years. SUEZ provides its customers with innovative and resilient solutions for water and waste services. With 40,000 employees across 40 countries, the Group works with customers to create value over the full lifecycle of their assets and services, and to drive their low carbon transition. In 2023, SUEZ provided drinking water for 57 million people worldwide and sanitation services for more than 36 million people. The Group generated 7.7 TWh of energy from waste and wastewater. In 2023, SUEZ generated revenues of 8.9 billion euros.

You can learn more here → www.suez.com

New Research Member



We also would like to welcome our newest Research Member the **National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Laboratory of Climatology and Atmospheric Environment (LACAE)**.

LACAE is part of the Department of Geology and Geoenvironment at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA). It specializes in atmospheric environmental research, climate variability on various time and space scales, atmospheric circulation teleconnections, measurements of ultraviolet radiation and meteorological parameters, air quality impacts of weather and climate on public health, quality of the atmospheric environment, and investigates the causes and processes associated with weather and climate extremes (heat waves, droughts, floods, tornadoes, etc.)

You can learn more on the official [website](#).

Wendy Francken's Vision for Water Solutions in BULAQUA

We're excited to share an insightful interview with our President, Wendy Francken, featured in BULAQUA, the magazine of our National Member, BWA. In this piece, Wendy introduces herself, highlights the association's mission, and discusses the most pressing water-related challenges we face today—plus much more.

Don't miss out—read the full article [here](#) (page 23)!



Wendy Francken,
President of
the European Water Association (EWA):

Water Should Get The Recognition It Deserves

Ms. Francken, please introduce yourself to our readers. Why and how did you decide to pursue the quest of the European Water Association? You are currently the EWA President and the managing director of WAZO. How do you see the future of the European water professionals and the European number of EWA?

In my activities within WAZO I realized that the water sector is and will face more and more challenges that require a European solution. Therefore I have decided to engage myself and my organization in the European level with the EWA. I see a quickly growing number of water professionals and have been a member of the EWA Management

Committee since 2012 and Chairwoman of the European Policy Committee (EPC) from 2012 to 2021. I became vice president of the EWA in 2021 and President in 2023 for 2023-2025. The aim of EWA is to provide a forum for the discussion of key technical and policy issues in Europe and the region. This is done through conferences,

18th EWA Brussels Conference



18th EWA Brussels Conference



The 18th EWA Brussels Conference was a major success, with a diverse audience of stakeholders filling the room. Representatives from across Europe convened to tackle critical water issues, particularly in light of the post-EU elections landscape.

The event featured three engaging sessions:

Session 1: Climate Emergency
Focused on the environmental perspective of water challenges, this session addressed the critical need for climate adaptation in the water sector, with discussions on resilience strategies and innovations.

Session 2: Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive Recast

Experts explored the implications of the directive's updates, emphasizing the transformation of wastewater into a valuable resource and opportunities for advancing water treatment systems.

Session 3: Water Framework Directive

This session evaluated the directive's progress to date and its future, alongside considerations for the Nature Restoration Law and its interplay with water policy.

Key Takeaways:

- Raising awareness is fundamental to building water resilience.
- Aging infrastructures need to be updated—this challenge - also presents an opportunity to create better, smarter systems.
- Wastewater is a valuable resource, not waste.
- We have the solutions; it's time to act and implement them.
- Solidarity and cooperation, especially in data sharing, are essential.
- A long-term strategy with forward-thinking vision is vital for sustainable progress.
- Europe stands at a pivotal crossroads—the time to act is now.

The conference concluded with networking opportunities, fostering collaboration among attendees from diverse sectors.

We would like to use this opportunity to thank again the participants, the speakers as well as our conference sponsors!

For more details about the conference, please check the [event page](#).

Sponsors of the Conference:

GOLD SPONSOR:



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SILVER SPONSOR:



BRONZE SPONSOR:



Happy Holidays



The EWA Secretariat wishes everyone a joyful holiday season!

As we reflect on a wonderful year, we're filled with gratitude for your support and look forward to an exciting 2025 together.

Please note that the Secretariat will be closed from 23 December 2024 to 3 January 2025.

We'll see you in the new year, ready for more great initiatives together!

Happy Holidays!

New Green Capital



The winners of the #EUGreenCapital and #EUGreenLeaf 2026 Awards have been announced !

The Portuguese city of **Guimarães** has been named European Green Capital 2026 for its remarkable commitment to sustainability, integrating green practices into its local culture, and fostering collaboration at national and European levels.

Meanwhile, one of the #EUGreenLeaf 2026 titles goes to **Vaasa**, recognized for its exemplary integration of the energy sector and its dedication to educating young citizens about sustainability.

Congratulations to both cities for leading the way toward a greener future!

EWA EVENTS

New Date: Water Resilience in a city wide context

05.12.2024 - 11:00-12:30



*"A water-resilient city is one that can survive and thrive in the face of water-related shocks and stresses—ranging from droughts to flooding, storm surges, pollution, and rising sea levels. These cities can adequately mitigate the impact on the urban water system, such as from earthquakes affecting key water infrastructure."**

In 2024, Europe has been affected by several flooding events in central and eastern Europe and in Spain more recently. These events are a reminder of the importance of cities being adequately prepared for natural disasters.

This upcoming webinar, sponsored by our corporate member **Bentley Systems**, will focus on 'Water Resilience in a City-Wide Context,' featuring presentations from a European Commission representative and a city official sharing their best practices and experiences. Following this, an Experts Roundtable will bring together diverse perspectives from various fields, such as digitalization, city planning, academia, and more. The event will take place on **December 5th from 11:00 to 12:30 CET** and offers an opportunity to engage with stakeholders and learn insights from successful initiatives across Europe."

You can register and read the full program on our [website](#).

Sponsor of the Conference



> REGISTER NOW

Introduction course to EU Water Policy and Legislation

Due to popular demand, we are delighted to announce that the next Introduction Course to EU Water Policy and Legislation will take place on January 22nd and 23rd. Don't miss your chance to participate — [register now](#) to secure your spot! <



INTRODUCTION COURSE TO EU WATER POLICY AND LEGISLATION



22 & 23 January
10:30 AM - 01:00 PM



Join us !



with **Arthur Guischet**
EWA Secretary General



Topics covered in the News from Brussels

The articles in the News from Brussels section here below cover the following topics:

1. European Environment Agency: Europe`s state of waters 2024
2. Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive: Commission implementation report 2023-2024
3. Danube Water Program: Exploring leakage reduction potential
4. European Court of Auditors: Common Agricultural Policy, assessment of Member States` policy plans
5. EU Enlargement report 2024
6. New Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive: now formally adopted also by the 2nd legislator, the Council
7. European Environment Agency: Just sustainability transitions. From concept to practice 2024
8. United Nations Water Report 2024
9. World Bank Group report on groundwater
10. Upholding the law: update on infringement procedures
11. European Parliament: water-related Parliamentary questions
12. EU budget 2025 agreed by European Parliament and Council
13. New Environmental Crime Directive 2024 to become operational
14. Farewell

1. European Environment Agency report

Europe's state of water 2024: the need for improved water resilience

The European Environment Agency published its most recent report "Europe's state of water 2024: the need for improved water resilience" on 15 October 2024.

It outlines three overarching challenges facing future European water management:

1. protecting and restoring aquatic ecosystems;
2. achieving the zero pollution ambition;
3. adapting to water scarcity, drought and flood risks.

EWA NEWS provides you the the key messages as well as a link to the full 109 pages report.

Read the full article:

➔ [EEA Report](#)

2. Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive: Commission implementation report 2023-2024

presenting the situation in the EU and in its 27 Member States for the year 2020

The 2023-2024 implementation report presents the reported data of the situation in the EU and in its 27 Member States for the year 2020. Individual national summary reports and data viewers are available

Read the full article:

➔ [UWWTD Report](#)

3. Danube Water Program

Exploring leakage reduction potential to adapt to drought risk under climate change in the Danube region

In order to support Danube countries in their water management efforts, the Danube Water Program, a partnership program between the World Bank and the International Association of Water Service Companies in the Danube River Catchment Area (IAWD), has extended its scope of activities, addressing issues related to 'Water Security', including water services delivery, water resources management and water-related risk mitigation in the context of socio-economic development, climate change, and work on the implementation of the water-related EU Acquis Communautaire.

Extending work on water scarcity and drought, particularly for the water services sector, is an important element to support countries in their efforts to adapt to become more resilient to climate change.

Read the full article:

➔ [Danube Water Program](#)

4. European Court of Auditors: Common Agricultural Policy, assessment of Member States` policy plans

The European Court of Auditors has the current legislation on the Common Agricultural Policy. A key sentence of the report is “We conclude that the Plans are greener than in the previous CAP, but do not match the EU’s ambitions for the climate and the environment, and that key elements for assessing green performance are missing.”

EWA NEWS presents you the key conclusions and recommendations of the report, as well as - for indepth reading – a link to the full version of the report.

Read the full article:

➔ [ECA Report](#)

5. EU Enlargement:

2024 state of play Communication and Reports published

On 30 October 2024, the European Commission adopted its annual Enlargement Package, providing a detailed assessment of the state of play and the progress made by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Türkiye, on their respective paths towards EU accession. The assessments are accompanied by recommendations and guidance on the reform priorities.

EWA NEWS provides you the key elements of the Communication, as well as links to the full Communication text and the individual progress reports on the ten countries concerned.

Read the full article:

➔ [EU Enlargement](#)

6. New Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive: now formally adopted also by the 2nd legislator, the Council

Following the political agreement by European Parliament and Council (29 January 2024) and the formal adoption by the European Parliament (10 April 2024), the second EU legislator – the Council – has on 5 November 2024 formally adopted the new Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive.

Read the full article:

➔ [New UWWTD adopted by Council](#)

7. European Environment Agency: Just sustainability transitions. From concept to practice 2024

This report considers how justice is tackled in the policies which are currently in place to deliver the European Green Deal. It summarizes the lessons learnt for policy-makers seeking to achieve a fair green transition, by moving from the concept of justice to the practice of embedding fairness in the design and implementation of policies.

Case studies from Spain, Finland, Estonia and Belgium are presented.

Read the full article:

➔ [EEA Report Sustainable Transition](#)

8. United Nations Water Report 2024

Mid-term status of SDG Indicator 6.6.1 and acceleration needs with a special focus on Biodiversity

This report presents the global status on water-related ecosystems and acceleration needs to achieve target SDG 6.6 by 2030 using indicator 6.6.1.

Indicator 6.6.1 tracks changes over time in water-related ecosystems. Earth observations are used to determine changes to surface water bodies, such as lakes, large rivers, flooded wetlands and reservoirs. Recent advances in analysing satellite imagery have also enabled global data sets on lake water quality, coastal mangroves and inland wetland areas. Knowing if and why changes in the extent of water-related ecosystems are occurring is important for water managers to ensure that ecosystem services continue to be provided.

EWA NEWS presents you the key messages of the report as well as a link to the full report.

Read the full article:

➔ [UN Water Report](#)

9. World Bank Group report on groundwater

Groundwater is our most important freshwater resource, but the lack of systematic analysis of its economic importance has evaded attention from policymakers and the general public.

The World Bank Group Report offers new data and evidence that advances understanding of the value of groundwater, the costs of mismanagement, and the opportunities to leverage its potential.

EWA NEWS presents you the key messages of the report as well as a link to the full report (62 pages plus annexes on

1. Aquifer typology: four aquifer types and their key characteristics
2. What economic theory tells us about groundwater
3. Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs)
4. Groundwater and cities
5. Groundwater quality: the exponential threats
6. Will We Run out of Groundwater? Groundwater Policy and Management Instruments
7. Examining the multi-risk insurance of groundwater)

Read the full article:

➔ [World Bank](#)

10. Upholding the law: update on infringement procedures

The European Union is constitutionally designed as a Union of Law. According to the Treaties (Treaty on European Union, Treaty on Functioning of the European Union), Member States are obliged to comply with EU legislation adopted by the legislator (European Parliament and Council), and the Commission has the right and the obligation to scrutinise such compliance and where appropriate take legal action.

Past weeks saw a range of infringement procedures, from the Seveso Directive to EU nature protection legislation and from the Water Framework Directive to the Drinking Water Directive, against the following Member States:

Austria
Belgium
Bulgaria
Cyprus
Finland
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Portugal
Romania
Sweden

The Commission is at the same time closing a three-digit number of cases in which the issues with the Member States concerned have been solved without the Commission needing to pursue the procedure further.

EWA NEWS provides you the key elements of the cases, an overview of the system of infringement procedures and links to environmental cases where the Court imposed financial sanctions.

Read the full article:

➔ [Upholding the law](#)

11. European Parliament: water-related Parliamentary questions

Members of the European Parliament show a regular interest of water issues in their Parliamentary questions.

In the period between 25 September and 27 November 2024, 18 water-related questions were tabled, from the water scarcity to waste water treatment, from drinking water quality to the human right for water and sanitation, and the Water Framework Directive.

EWA News presents you the outline texts of the questions and the coordinates of the MEP who has submitted them, plus links to the full text and (once available) the answers.

Read the full article:

➔ [EP Questions](#)

12. EU budget 2025 agreed by European Parliament and Council

The European Parliament and the Council on 16 November 2024 reached agreement on the EU's annual budget for 2025. Next year's budget strongly focuses on the EU's main policy priorities and addresses the currently difficult geopolitical context.

Total commitments are set at €192.768,6 million and the total payments at €149.615,7 million, excluding appropriations foreseen for special instruments outside the MFF.

€800,5 million have been kept available this year under the expenditure ceilings of the current multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027, allowing the EU to react to unforeseeable needs.

Read the full article:

➔ [EU Budget](#)

13. New Environmental Crime Directive 2024 to become operational

Environmental crime is a growing concern and causes significant damage to the environment, citizens' health and the economy within the EU and worldwide.

Environmental crimes are infringements of relevant legal obligations, such as wildlife crimes and deterioration of habitats, illegal shipment or dumping of waste, pollution crimes and illegal trading in hazardous substances.

These crimes, which often have a cross-border nature, are highly lucrative and yet hard to detect, prosecute and punish. Unfortunately, these factors make it highly attractive for organised crime groups. Research shows that environmental crime is the 4th largest organised crime activity, with an annual growth rate of 5 to 7% and a damage/loss of 80 to 230 billion EUR.

The new Environmental Crime Directive (EU) 2024/1203 was adopted and entered into force this year, supporting the protection of the environment through criminal law and replacing the old 2008 Environmental Crime Directive.

EWA NEWS present you the key elements of the Directive and a link to the full version (available in all EU languages).

Read the full article:

➔ [Environmental Crime Directive](#)

14. Farewell

Dear readers,

After more than 12 years of editorial responsibility for EWA Water News from Brussels, this is the last edition I am writing for you – from the final adoption of the new Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive to the latest report by the European Environment Agency on Europe's waters.

It has been a pleasure all these years to inform EWA members and EWA friends about the latest news and developments in European water policy.

Helmut Bloech MSc, PhD

Read the full article:

➔ [Farewell](#)

Other Events

19th DWF Water Research Conference

30.01.2025 - Aarhus, Denmark

You are invited to join the water day, where the latest results and achievements from the Danish water sector will be presented.

The plenary session will focus on how water is handled politically and scientifically in EU, now with a new parliament for the next 5 years.

The sessions planned are on among others:

- Groundwater management and mapping
- Water supply
- Treatment processes and optimization
- New technologies

More information [here](#).



AfWASA International Congress & Exhibition

16-20.03.2025 - Kampala, Uganda

Under the theme "Water and Sanitation for All: A Secure Future for Africa," this congress promises to be a pivotal gathering, uniting water and sanitation stakeholders from across the globe to share knowledge, experiences, and innovative breakthroughs aimed at ensuring universal access to water and sanitation throughout Africa.

The conference is to be the premier water and sanitation event in Africa for 2025, attracting all key professionals in the field. Of particular note is the enriching professional programme comprising over 80 technical and poster sessions, numerous workshops, pre-congress seminars, and special forums. Anticipate the participation of more than 3,000 delegates from over 100 countries.

Event website: <https://www.afwasa2025.org/>

IFAT Africa

08.07.2025–10.07.2025 - Johannesburg, South Africa

IFAT Africa is the ultimate platform to showcase technologies and solutions for water, sewage, refuse and recycling for the sub-Saharan Africa market. The trade fair is the gateway for international companies to the African market and for African enterprises to the global market, connecting key industry players with senior buyers and decision makers in the region. As Africa's leading environmental trade fair, IFAT Africa offers an effective business and networking platform for South African and international professionals in the environmental sector and is accompanied by a first-class supporting program. It is the ideal platform for professionals in the environmental industry to develop business, exchange ideas and network.

More information on the [official website](#).

IFAT Munich 2026

04-07. Mai 2026- Munich, Germany

IFAT Munich is the World's Leading Trade Fair for Water, Sewage, Waste and Raw Materials Management.

Here you can successfully present your strategies and new solutions from the fields of water, wastewater, waste and raw materials management. So that in future even more resources can be preserved in intelligent cycles in the long term and with the greatest possible efficiency.

You can now register to exhibit.

More information on the [official website](#).

Until we meet again ..

The next EWA Newsletter will be sent out February 2025.

Until then, please visit us at:

★ [LinkedIn](#) (European Water Association)

★ [Youtube](#): EWA Online

Any suggestions, comments or content from the members to the next issue may be send to this [email](#).

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More Information: <http://www.ewa-online.eu/>

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African Water and
Sanitation Association

Association Africaine de
l'Eau et de l'Assainissement



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