

LATVIA: LAW ON WATER MANAGEMENT

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CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1 Terms used in this law

The following terms are used in this law:

- 1) **protected areas** - areas intended for the abstraction of water for human consumption, areas designated for the protection of biological resources, water bodies designated as recreational waters or as bathing waters, sensitive areas and vulnerable zones, as well as specially protected nature areas;
- 2) **sub-basin** - the area of land (territory) from which all surface run-off flows through a series of streams, rivers and lakes to a particular point in a water course (normally a lake or a river confluence);
- 3) **ecological and chemical quality elements** - hydrological, biological, physical and chemical properties of a water body expressed in qualitative or quantitative values, which characterise the status of water (high, good, moderate or poor status);
- 4) **emission controls** – measures that ensure emission limitation, including emission limit values or limits and conditions on the effects, nature or other characteristics of emissions or operating conditions of the polluting activities, which affect emissions;
- 5) **lake** - a natural body of water located in a land socket (lake bed) having slow water exchange;
- 6) **inland water** - all standing and flowing water on the surface of the land and all groundwater on the landward side of the base line (the baseline from which the territorial sea waters are measured (hereinafter – territorial waters));
- 7) **artificial water body** - a body of surface water created by human activity and complying with the conditions of this law;
- 8) **aquifer** – a subsurface layer or layers of rock or other geological strata with sufficient porosity and permeability to allow either a significant groundwater flow or the abstraction of significant quantities of groundwater;
- 9) **complex of aquifers** – a cluster of inter-related groundwater layers, aquifers or structures;
- 10) **body of groundwater** - a distinct volume of groundwater within an aquifer or a complex of aquifers;
- 11) **priority substances** - substances that cause significant risk to the aquatic environment, including priority hazardous substances;
- 12) **groundwater** - all water that is below the surface of ground in the saturation zone and in direct contact with the ground or subsoil;
- 13) **transitional waters** - surface waters in the vicinity of river mouths, which are partly saline in character due to the proximity to coastal waters, but which are substantially influenced by freshwater flows;
- 14) **coastal water** – surface water on the landward side of a line, every point of which is at a distance of one nautical mile on the seaward side from the base line or extending up to outer limit of transitional waters;
- 15) **heavily modified water body** – a body of surface, which character is substantially changed as a result of physical alterations by human activity, complying with the conditions of this law;

16) **river** – a significant water course having a clearly marked bed flowing for the most part on the surface of the land, but which may flow underground for part of its course;

17) **river basin** - the area of land (territory) from which all surface run-off flows through sequence of streams, rivers and lakes into the sea at a single river mouth, estuary or delta;

18) **river basin district** - the area of land and sea, made up of one or more neighbouring river basins together with their associated groundwater and coastal waters, which according to this law is the main unit for management of river basins;

19) **priority hazardous substances** - substances or groups of substances that are toxic, persistent and liable to bio-accumulate, and other substances or groups of substances with similar effects;

20) **use of water resources** – use of surface and groundwater resources for the needs of population and national economy (water abstraction, impoundment, treatment, distribution and use, wastewater treatment and discharge into surface water bodies or into the ground), as well as other economic activities, including polluting activities, which may have significant impact on the status and quantity of surface and/or groundwater;

21) **user of water resources** - any natural or legal person that abstracts water or uses water for commercial purposes;

22) **body of surface water** - a discrete and significant element of the hydrographic network: a water course (river, stream, canal, ditch or part thereof), water body (lake, pond, reservoir or part thereof), as well as transitional water or a stretch of coastal water;

23) **surface waters** - all inland waters (except groundwater), transitional waters and coastal waters. In respect to chemical status, the term also applies to territorial waters.

Article 2 Purpose of the law

The purpose of this law is to establish a framework for the protection and management of surface water and groundwater, which:

1) promotes sustainable and rational use of water resources therefore ensuring a long-term protection of the water resources and provision of the sufficient supply of good quality surface water and groundwater to the population;

2) prevents deterioration of terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on water, protects these ecosystems and enhances their status;

3) improves protection of the aquatic environment, progressively reduces emissions and losses of the priority substances, as well as ensures cessation of emissions and losses of the priority hazardous substances;

4) ensures progressive reduction of groundwater pollution and prevents further groundwater pollution;

5) ensures renewal of groundwater resources;

6) ensures protection of the land against floods and droughts;

7) ensures protection of Latvian marine waters;

8) contributes to the achieving the objectives of relevant international agreements, in order to prevent and eliminate pollution of the marine environment, to cease or phase out discharges of the priority hazardous substances, with the ultimate aim of achieving concentrations in the marine environment near background values for naturally occurring substances and close to zero for synthetic man-made substances.

Article 3 Prevention of discharges

This law prescribes a combined approach to control emissions from point and diffuse sources in accordance with the requirements on pollution prevention and control laid down in the law “On pollution”, by restricting loads of diffuse pollution and, where necessary, by facilitating the application of best available techniques and environmentally friendly technologies.

Article 4 Artificial water bodies and heavily modified water bodies

(1) In a river basin management plan (hereinafter - a management plan) a surface water body may be designated as artificial or heavily modified in the following cases:

1) if the changes to the hydrological, hydro-chemical and morphological characteristics of the water body, which would be necessary for achieving good ecological status would have adverse effects on:

- a) the wider environment;
- b) navigation, including port facilities, or recreation;
- c) activities for the purposes of which water is stored, such as drinking water supply or power generation;
- d) water regulation, flood protection, land drainage;
- e) sustainable development;

2) if the beneficial objectives served by the artificial or modified characteristics of the water body cannot, for reasons of technical feasibility or disproportionate costs, be achieved by means, which are a significantly better environmental option.

(2) Designation of a surface water body as artificial or heavily modified may not compromise the achievement of the aims of this law in other water bodies located nearby or contradict legislation or water quality standards.

Article 5 Status of water body

(1) Surface water status is the general expression of the status of a surface water body, determined by the poorer of its ecological and chemical quality elements.

(2) Ecological status is an expression of the quality of the structure and functioning of the surface water ecosystems; ecological status is classified in accordance with the criteria established by the Cabinet of Ministers.

(3) Good surface water chemical status means the chemical quality of a surface water body required, in accordance with this law, to meet the environmental objectives for surface waters, provided the concentrations of polluting substances in water do not exceed the environmental quality standards.

(4) Good surface water status is achieved when both ecological and chemical status of a water body comply at least with the criteria of good status, established by the Cabinet of Ministers.

(5) Groundwater status is the general expression of the status of a groundwater body, determined by the poorer of its quantitative status and qualitative status

(6) Quantitative status of groundwater is an expression characterising the degree to which the groundwater body is affected by direct and indirect water abstraction.

(7) Good groundwater status is achieved when both chemical and quantitative status of a water body comply at least with the criteria of good status, established by the Cabinet of Ministers.

(8) Ecological potential is the status of a heavily modified or an artificial body of water, so classified in accordance with the criteria established by the Cabinet of Ministers.

(9) Good ecological potential is achieved when the status of a heavily modified or an artificial water body complies at least with the criteria of good ecological potential, established by the Cabinet of Ministers.

(10) The Cabinet of Ministers determines:

- 1) characterisation of surface water body types and the corresponding classification of surface water bodies, as well as the procedure for identification of anthropogenic pressures;
- 2) classes of groundwater bodies and classification criteria, the procedure for identification of anthropogenic pressures, as well as the procedure for review of available groundwater resources;
- 3) quality elements for surface and groundwater as well as elements for high, good and moderate water status;
- 4) a list of priority substances and the relevant emission controls procedure.

Article 6 Rights of the user of water resources

The user of water resources shall have the following rights:

- 1) to use water and water bodies for personal and commercial purposes in accordance with this law and other legislation;
- 2) to carry out construction works within the water bodies and their vicinity and to establish constructions necessary for use of water resources provided all the permits stipulated by the legislation have been obtained and the restrictions stipulated by the legislation have been complied with;
- 3) after all the permits stipulated by the legislation have been obtained, to carry out activities that have effect on the water bodies provided these activities are operated in accordance with the legislation and permit conditions;
- 4) to receive information about the environmental objectives established for water bodies, production of management plans and programmes of measures and to take part in the public consultation on the management plans.

Article 7 Duties of user of water resources

The user of water resources shall have the following duties:

- 1) to use water resources taking into account the intended use of the water body and complying with the environmental objectives and quality standards established for that water body, as well as complying with the permit conditions, health, construction, fishing and other norms and other requirements stipulated by the legislation;
- 2) to ensure preservation of water quantity and quality within the water bodies and territory in his ownership or possession;
- 3) to obey the measures included in the management plan and in the programme of measures;
- 4) to carry out all activities that involve water use in such a way so not to deteriorate status of surface water and groundwater, not to harm human health or the environment, in particular, aquatic ecosystems and terrestrial ecosystems directly depending on the aquatic ecosystems, and not to contribute to origination of drought and flood;
- 5) to obey the rights of other users of water resources and owners of the land properties neighbouring to the water body;
- 6) to obtain all the permits for the use of water resources stipulated by the legislation;
- 7) to submit reports about the use of water resources to the Regional Environmental Board in accordance with the procedure stipulated by the legislation and in accordance with the conditions of the water resources use permit;

- 8) to allow the representatives of environmental authorities, which, in accordance with the legislation, carry out state control of the water status or environmental monitoring, to make sampling of private surface water and groundwater or to allow soil sampling and controlling of the monitoring installations within a private land property;
- 9) to carry out monitoring as prescribed by permit conditions and legislation and in accordance with the procedure stipulated therein;
- 10) to compensate the damage to the environment or to aquatic resources resulting from the use of water resources if the liability of the user of water resources is legitimate in accordance with the legislation in force;
- 11) to terminate the use of water resources if there are proofs of deterioration of the status of surface and groundwater bodies, harm to human health or the environment, especially harm to aquatic ecosystems and terrestrial ecosystems directly depending on aquatic ecosystems.

CHAPTER II

RIVER BASIN DISTRICTS AND AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR MANAGEMENT

Article 8 Identification of river basin district

(1) River basin district shall be established, taking into account the following conditions:

- 1) individual river basins shall be identified and may be combined to form river basin districts, so to ensure optimum management of the river basin district;
- 2) small river basins may be combined with larger river basins or joined with neighbouring small basins;
- 3) where a groundwater body does not fully follow a particular river basin, it shall be assigned to the nearest or most appropriate river basin district;
- 4) coastal waters shall be identified and assigned to the nearest or most appropriate river basin district.

(2) This law identifies the following river basin districts – Daugava, Lielupe, Gauja and Venta river basin districts. The scheme of the Latvian river basin districts is included as Annex to this law.

(3) The Cabinet of Ministers approves description of the borders of the river basin districts.

Article 9 River basin district authorities

(1) A Co-ordination Committee (hereinafter the Committee) shall be established to co-ordinate the management measures within the each river basin district. The Committee shall include representatives of public authorities, municipalities and non-governmental organisations. The statute of the Committee shall be approved by the Cabinet of Ministers, but the personnel - by the Minister of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.

(2) The Committee shall:

- 1) co-ordinate the issues of interest of the ministries and other public authorities as well as their regional units, municipalities, non-governmental organisations and other stakeholders related to reaching of environmental objectives and intended water use in the respective river basin district;
- 2) review the management plan and programme of measures and issue an opinion about them, as well as about the proposed budget for their implementation.

- (3) The State Geology Survey and its regional units (river basin authorities) shall:
- 1) establish and update drafts of management plans and programmes of measures;
 - 2) carry out an economic analysis of water resources use;
 - 3) ensure participation of the public in production and updating of management plans and programmes of measures and informs about the plans and programmes those municipalities, which administrative territories are covered by these documents;
 - 4) co-ordinate the implementation of programme of measures;
 - 5) develop the budget proposals necessary for the implementation of the programme of measures;
 - 6) facilitate activities of the Co-ordination Committees;
 - 7) co-operate with the competent authorities of the relevant countries to ensure the achievement of the environmental objectives for the whole international river basin district, as well as shall implement joint programmes of measures;
 - 8) participate in the development and implementation of the programmes for monitoring of water status.
- (4) The Latvian Environmental Agency shall:
- 1) develop programmes for monitoring of water status (hereinafter monitoring programmes) within each river basin district;
 - 2) develop budget proposals for the implementation of the monitoring programmes;
 - 3) co-ordinate and arrange implementation of the monitoring programmes;
 - 4) provide the European Commission with the information specified by the Cabinet of Ministers.
- (5) The State Environmental Inspection shall supervise implementation of the programme of measures.

Article 10 International co-operation

- (1) Where a river basin is partly lying within the Latvian territory and partly within the territory of another state, which is a EU Member State or Candidate Country, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall co-operate with competent authorities of the relevant states to establish and manage an international river basin district.
- (2) Where an international river basin district has been established, the relevant Latvian river basin authority shall ensure administrative arrangements within the portion of the international river basin district lying within the Latvian territory.
- (3) Where a river basin is partly lying within the Latvian territory and partly within the territory of another state, which is not a EU Member State or Candidate Country, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall co-operate with competent authorities of the relevant state with the aim of achieving the objectives of this law throughout the river basin.

CHAPTER III ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES

Article 11 Environmental objectives for water bodies

- (1) The following environmental objectives shall be established in the management plan:
- 1) to prevent deterioration of the status of all bodies of surface water; to protect them, to enhance and, if necessary, restore water quality - with the aim of achieving good surface water status in all surface water bodies;

- 2) to protect and enhance all heavily modified water bodies and artificial water bodies, with the aim of achieving good ecological potential and good surface water chemical status;
 - 3) to reduce progressively pollution from the priority substances and to cease or phase out emissions and losses of the priority hazardous substances;
 - 4) to prevent or limit input of pollutants into groundwater and to prevent deterioration of the status of all groundwater bodies;
 - 5) to protect groundwater bodies, to preserve or enhance their status and to ensure a balance between abstraction and recharge of groundwater with the aim of achieving good groundwater status in all bodies of groundwater;
 - 6) to reverse any upward trend in the concentration of any pollutant resulting from the impact of human activity or to achieve progressive trend reversal;
 - 7) to achieve compliance with standards and objectives, which are identified in the management plan for protected areas.
- (2) Environmental objectives shall be achieved via implementation of the management plans and programmes stipulated by this law. Identification of the measures necessary to achieve environmental objectives shall be based on the status of the particular water body and also on the water status of the other water bodies lying within the same river basin district.
- (3) Environmental quality standards necessary for the achievement of the objectives referred to in Paragraph one, shall be determined in accordance with the “Law on Pollution”.
- (4) Where more than one of the environmental objectives relates to a given water body, the most stringent shall apply.

Article 12 Exceptional environmental objectives for specific water bodies

Environmental objectives, which differ from those required under Article 11, Paragraph one, may be established in the management plans for specific water bodies when they are so affected by human activity or their natural condition is such that the achievement of the objectives required under Article 11, Paragraph one, would be infeasible or disproportionately expensive, and the following conditions are met:

- 1) the environmental or socio-economic needs served by such human activity cannot be achieved by other means which are a significantly better environmental option not entailing disproportionate costs;
- 2) for surface water, the highest possible ecological and chemical status is achieved, or for groundwater, the least possible deviations from a good groundwater status are ensured, given impacts that could not reasonably have been avoided due to the nature of human activity or pollution;
- 3) no further deterioration occurs in the status of the affected water body;
- 4) the establishment of different environmental objectives, and the reasons for it, are specially mentioned in the management plan and those objectives are reviewed at least every six years.

Article 13 Temporary exemptions

(1) Temporary deterioration in the status of water bodies shall not be in breach of the requirements of this law if this is the result of *force majeure*, in particular extreme floods, prolonged droughts or accidents, which could not reasonably have been foreseen (hereinafter – exceptional circumstances), when all the following conditions are met:

- 1) all practicable steps are taken to prevent further deterioration in status and to prevent compromising the achievement of the objectives of this law in other water bodies not affected by those circumstances;
 - 2) the conditions and parameters under which the Regional Environmental Board may apply the provisions of this Article, are stated in the management plan;
 - 3) the measures to be taken under exceptional circumstances are included in the programme of measures and will not compromise the recovery of the water body once the circumstances are over;
 - 4) all practicable measures are taken with the aim of restoring the water body to its status prior to the effects of exceptional circumstances as soon as reasonably practicable;
 - 5) a summary of the effects of the circumstances and of the measures taken or to be taken is included in the next update of the river basin management plan.
- (2) The relevant Regional Environmental Board shall identify the measures referred to in Paragraph one, Clause 1 and 4, on cases by cases basis. These measures shall be binding for the users of water resources. The Regional Environmental Board together with the river basin authorities shall evaluate the impact of exceptional circumstances at least once a year and, if necessary, revise the prescribed measures.

Article 14 Cases when a water body may be exempt from achievement of environmental objectives

- (1) This law will not be in breach when:
- 1) failure to achieve good groundwater status, good ecological status or, where relevant, good ecological potential or to prevent deterioration in the status of a body of surface water or groundwater is the result of new modifications to the physical characteristics of a surface water body or alterations to the level of groundwater bodies;
 - 2) failure to prevent deterioration of a surface water body from high status to good status is the result of new economical activities.
- (2) The Regional Environmental Board may apply the exemptions referred to in Paragraph one, when all the following conditions are met:
- 1) all practicable steps are taken to mitigate the adverse impact on the status of the water body and to avoid compromising of the achievement of environmental objectives in other water objects not affected by the above mentioned conditions;
 - 2) the reasons for such exemptions are specifically explained in the management plan and the objectives are reviewed at least every six years;
 - 3) the reasons for those exceptions are of overriding public interest or the benefits to society and to the environment of achieving the environmental objectives are outweighed by the benefits to human health, safety or to sustainable development;
 - 4) the beneficial objectives served by those exceptions cannot for reasons of technical feasibility or disproportionate costs be achieved by other means, which are a significantly better environmental option.
- (3) The relevant Regional Environmental Board shall identify the measures referred to in Paragraph two, Clause 1, on case-by-case basis.
- (4) Application of Articles 12, 13 and 14, shall not compromise the achievement of the objectives of this law in other water bodies in the vicinity of the given water body, contradict with the legislation or water quality standards.

CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF WATER RESOURCES USE AND RECOVERY OF COSTS FOR USE OF WATER RESOURCES

Article 15 Economic analysis, characteristics of the river basin district and review of the environmental impact of human activity

(1) The Minister of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall approve for each river basin district or the portion of an international river basin district falling within Latvian territory, an economic analysis of water resources use (hereinafter economic analysis), characteristics of the river basin district and review of the environmental impact of human activity, taking into account the conditions of Article 16.

(2) The economic analysis, characteristics of the river basin district and review of the environmental impact of human activity referred to in Paragraph one, shall be updated at least once in a six years.

Article 16 Economic analyses

The economic analysis shall contain information:

- 1) that provides a basis for calculations of the costs of necessary measures, taking into account the principle that the user of water resources shall cover all costs of the use of water resources, as well as taking into account the calculations of the available water resources and long term forecasts of water demand and costs, as well as a forecast of the necessary investments;
- 2) that allows making judgements about the most cost effective measures to be included in the programme of measures.

Article 17 Recovery of costs for use of water resources

(1) Natural and legal persons shall have the right to use free of charge the through flow waters used for production of electrical energy and fish farming (except for a natural resources tax or adjustment of damages for water pollution resulting from the abovementioned activities), as well as to use free of charge water resources for non-commercial transport, swimming, water sports, water tourism or personal needs, where the amount of water abstracted for personal needs does not exceed the limits fixed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

(2) Natural resources tax to be paid by natural and legal persons for water abstraction and water pollution as well as tariffs [public utilities payments] for water supply and wastewater treatment and fees for the use of water resources, except for those uses referred to in Paragraph one, shall be established in accordance with the legislation, considering:

- 1) that natural and legal persons shall cover all costs related to the use of water resources, including environmental and resource costs;
- 2) polluter – pays principle;
- 3) that the water resources shall be used efficiently, thereby contributing to the achievement of the environmental objectives established by this law;
- 4) geographical, geological and climatic conditions, evaluating also social, environmental and economic effects of the costs recovery and of the level of the costs recovery.

(3) Management plans shall report on the planned steps towards implementing of the conditions of this Article, as well as on the contribution made by various water users to the recovery of the costs for use of water resources.

(4) Implementation of this Article shall not prevent the funding of particular preventive, investigative or remedial measures proposed to achieve the objectives of this law.

CHAPTER V

RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT PLAN AND PROGRAMME OF MEASURES

Article 18 Management Plan

- (1) The management plan shall include:
- 1) characteristics of the river basin district;
 - 2) information about the most significant pressures of human activity and impact of human activities on the status of surface water and groundwater;
 - 3) information about the protected areas;
 - 4) information about the monitoring network and about the results of the implemented monitoring programmes;
 - 5) summary of the economical analysis;
 - 6) quality objectives established for water bodies and protected areas;
 - 7) information about the measures planned to prevent or reduce emissions of pollutants and to achieve the environmental objectives;
 - 8) information about other programmes related to the management of the river basin district;
 - 9) a summary of the public information and consulting measures taken during the production or updating of the plan.
- (2) The Cabinet of Ministers determines the content and form of the information to be included in the management plan and also additional information to be provided in the updates of the plan.
- (3) The Latvian Environment Agency shall make the management plans publicly available.
- (4) A management plan shall be taken into account during production of the territorial development plans or their amendments in the regional, district or municipal level. If the measures included in the management plan cover territories of several municipalities, but these municipalities have not agreed on their inclusion in the [respective] territorial development plan, the Co-ordination Committees shall propose possible decision and the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall make the [final] decision.

Article 19 Approval of the management plan

- (1) The Cabinet of Ministers approves a management plan for each river basin district. The management plan shall be updated at least once in six years.
- (2) In the cases referred to in Article 10, Paragraph one, the State Geological Survey shall co-operate with the competent authority of the relevant country so to develop a management plan for an international river basin district. Before the time when an international river basin management plan is approved in accordance with Paragraph one of this Article, the State Geological Survey shall produce and the Cabinet of Ministers approves management plans for those parts of the international river basin district lying within the territory of Latvia.

Article 20 Requirements for programme of measures

(1) To achieve the environmental objectives determined by this law, the Minister of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall approve a programme of measures for each river basin district or for the part of an international river basin district lying within the territory of Latvia. The programme shall be co-ordinated with the corresponding river basin management plan.

(2) The programme of measures shall be produced, taking into account the results of the economic analyses, characteristics of the river basin district and review of the environmental impact of human activity required under Article 15.

(3) The Cabinet of Ministers establishes minimum requirements, conditions and prohibitions to be included in the programme of measures and the measures to be taken if the environmental quality objectives established by this law have not been achieved in a specific water body.

(4) Each programme of measures shall include the basic measures and, where necessary, supplementary measures that should be taken in the particular river basin district in order to achieve the established environmental objectives. The programmes of measures shall also indicate the measures applying to the whole country.

CHAPTER VI WATER RESOURCES USE PERMITS AND MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

Article 21 Activities that shall obtain a water resources use permit

(1) Regional Environmental Boards shall issue water resources use permits for the following activities, which have or may have an impact on water status, water quantity or ecosystems and which are not Category A or B polluting activities:

- 1) operation of hydro-technical facilities;
- 2) abstraction of surface water or groundwater;
- 3) artificial recharge and artificial discharge of groundwater, as well as related activities;
- 4) activities resulting in creation of an artificial or heavily modified water body;
- 5) other activities involving regular changes in surface water level or stream-flow regime.

(2) The Cabinet of Ministers determines conditions for the use of water resources, procedure for application for and issuing of water resources use permits [and the relevant] time frame, requirements on the monitoring and control of the permit conditions as well as an application form and a permit form.

(3) The Cabinet of Ministers determines the thresholds below which the impact on water status, water quantity or ecosystems, caused by the activities referred to in Paragraph one, shall be deemed insignificant and therefore they may be operated without a water resources use permit.

Article 22 Monitoring of status of surface and groundwater and protected areas

(1) The Minister of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall approve programmes for the monitoring of water status within each river basin district, which shall include monitoring of surface water, groundwater and protected areas.

(2) For surface water, the monitoring programme shall cover:

- 1) the volume and rate of flow to the extent relevant to evaluate ecological and chemical status and ecological potential;

- 2) the ecological and chemical status and ecological potential.
- (3) For groundwater, the monitoring programme shall cover monitoring of the chemical status and quantitative status.
- (4) For protected areas, the monitoring programme shall cover the measures taken in addition to the monitoring of protected areas required by the legislation.
- (5) The Cabinet of Ministers determines monitoring requirements and requirements for the establishment of the monitoring programmes referred to in this Article, as well as requirements for monitoring of bathing waters and bathing sites.

CHAPTER VII

INFORMATION TO GENERAL PUBLIC, OTHER STATES AND EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Article 23 Information to the general public

(1) The State Geology Survey shall encourage active involvement of general public in the implementation of this Law, in particular, in the development, review and updating of the river basin management plans, ensuring that, for each river basin district, the following information is published and made available for comments to the public, including water users:

- 1) a timetable and work programme for the production of the plan, including a statement of the measures for involvement of the public to be taken - at least three years before the beginning of the period to which the plan refers;
- 2) an overview of the significant water management issues identified in the particular river basin district - at least two years before the beginning of the period to which the plan refers;
- 3) draft copies of the management plan - at least one year before the beginning of the period to which the plan refers.

(2) Upon request of any natural or legal person the State Geology Survey and other involved institutions shall give access to the background documents and information used for the production of the draft management plan.

(3) In order to allow active public involvement and consultation, the time for comments on the documents referred to in Paragraph one, shall be at least six months.

Article 24 Information to other states and European Commission

(1) The Latvian Environmental Agency shall send a copy of the management plan (including subsequent updates) to the European Commission and to any other state concerned within 3 months of their publication. Where international river basin districts are established, at least that part of the management plan covering the territory of Latvia shall be submitted.

(2) The Latvian Environment Agency shall, within 3 months after approval of the relevant documents, submit to the European Commission:

- 1) economic analysis, characteristics of the river basin district and review of the environmental impact of human activity referred to in Article 15;
- 2) monitoring programmes referred to in Article 22.

(3) The Latvian Environment Agency shall, within 3 years of the publication of a river basin management plan or its update, submit to the European Commission an interim report describing progress in the implementation of the programme of measures related to the plan.

(4) Information submitted to the European Commission shall be available for the public.

CHAPTER VIII

IMPLEMENTATION, ENFORCEMENT AND APPEALING

Article 25 Implementation

(1) When the State Environmental Impact Assessment Bureau or the Regional Environmental Boards carry out environmental impact assessment or produce the technical regulations, they shall prohibit activities that compromise achievement of the environmental objectives established by this law or that compromise implementation of the measures included in the management plan.

(2) When Regional Environmental Boards are issuing permits for water resources use or extending their validity, they shall adhere to the environmental objectives identified for the territory concerned or to the measures and deadlines for their implementation included in the management plan.

Article 26 Enforcement and procedure for appeal

(1) The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development is responsible for implementation of the requirements of this law.

(2) The Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development shall review complaints about the production and implementation of the management plans and programmes of measures as well as about insufficient public participation during the production of these documents.

(3) The State Environmental Impact Assessment Bureau shall review complaints about the measures that the Regional Environmental Boards have identified in accordance with Article 13, Paragraph two, and Article 14, Paragraph three, as well as complaints about the issuing of the permits required by this law or about permit conditions.

(4) If the State Environmental Impact Assessment Bureau concludes that the measures referred to in Paragraph three, decisions about the issuing of the permit or an issued permit itself, contradicts the requirements of this law or other legislation, the Bureau shall decide to review the decision of the Regional Environmental Board, to amend the permit, to annul the permit or to issue another permit.

Transitional provisions

1. The Cabinet of Ministers adopts the Regulations referred to in Article 8, Paragraph three; Article 9, Paragraph one; Article 18, Paragraph two and Article 20, Paragraph three of this Law by the 1st March 2003, but the Regulations referred to in Article 5, Paragraph ten, Clauses 1 – 4; Article 21, Paragraphs two and three; Article 22, Paragraph five of this Law, by 22nd December 2003.

2. Institutions referred to in Article 9 shall be established by the 1st March 2003.

3. Emissions and losses of the priority hazardous substances referred to in Article 11, Paragraph one, Clause 3, shall be phased out by 22nd December 2020.

4. Economic analysis, characteristics of the river basin district and review of the environmental impact of human activity referred to in Article 15 shall be completed and approved by the 22nd December 2004.

5. Requirements of Article 17, Paragraph two, shall be implemented by the 1st January 2010. Until the 31st December 2015, implementation of the conditions of this Article shall not restrict the allocation of the state, municipal and international finance for the implementation of the state investment programme in the drinking water and urban wastewater sector.

6. Monitoring programs referred to in Article 22 shall be established and approved by the 1st January 2005, and shall be fully operational at the latest by the 22nd December 2006.
7. Management Plans referred to in Article 18 shall be approved and published by the 22nd December 2009.
8. Programmes of measures referred to in Article 20 shall be approved by the 22nd December 2009. The measures provided for therein shall be made operational by the 22nd December 2012.
9. Environmental quality objectives referred to in Article 11, except those referred to in Article 11, Paragraph one, Clause 3, shall be achieved by the 22nd December 2015.
10. Provisions of Article 24 concerning reporting to the European Commission and also Article 9, Paragraph three, Clause 10, shall enter into force upon adoption of a special law.

Reference to the relevant EU Directive

This Law transposes requirements of the Directive 2000/60/EC.

This Law has been adopted by the Saeima on the 12th September 2002.

Acting for the President
Chairperson of the Saeima

J. Straume

Riga, October 1, 2002

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