



WHO NEEDS WATER? Managing drought in Alps. Climate change and Alpine water resource to be preserved

Towards an EU Water Resilience Agenda?

Luca Perez, Deputy Head of Unit
European Commission – Directorate General for the Environment
Unit C.1 - Sustainable Freshwater Management Unit

TORINO, 24 aprile 2024 Palazzo della Regione Piemonte Piazza Piemonte 1

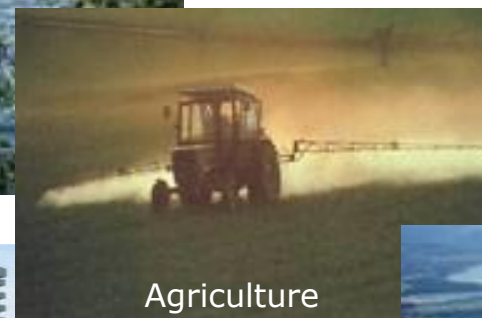
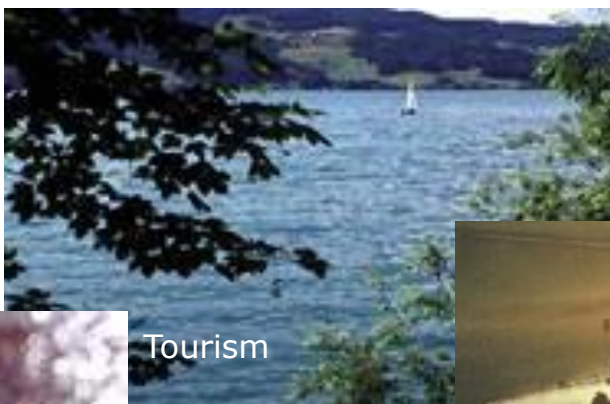
Towards an EU Water Resilience Agenda?



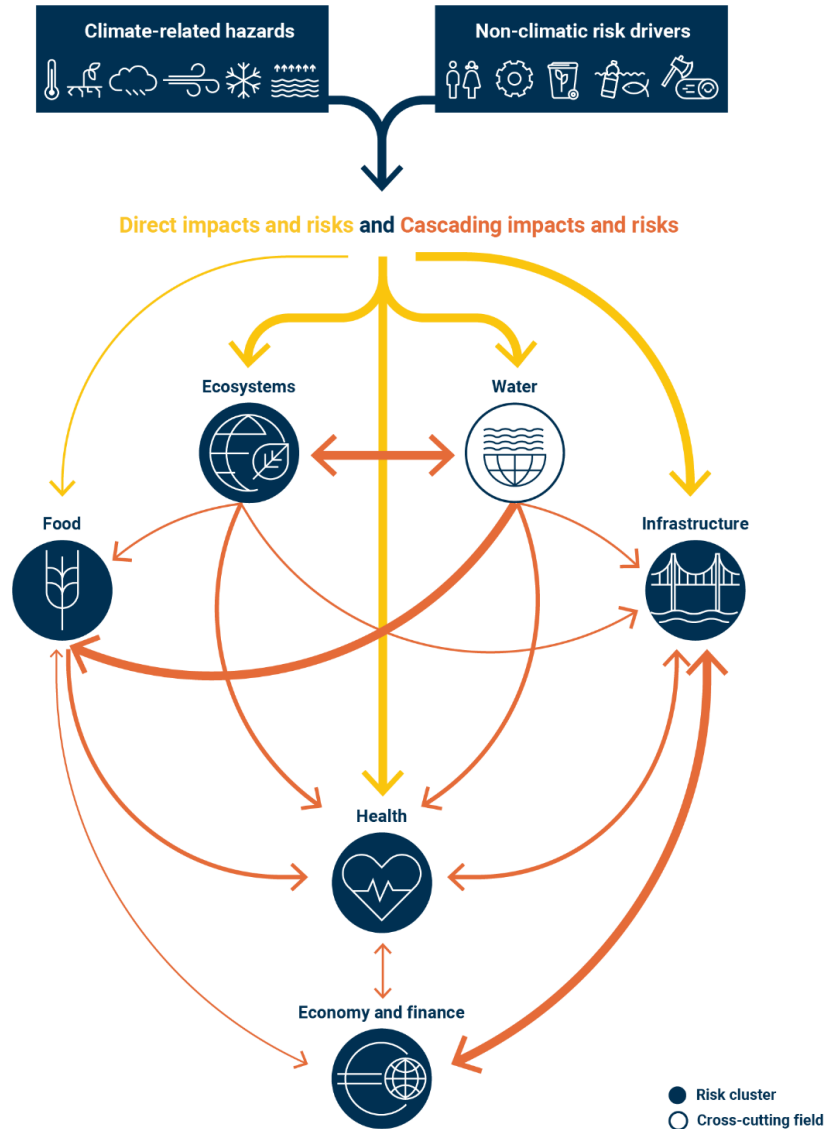
Luca Perez, Deputy Head of Unit
European Commission – Directorate General for the Environment
Unit C.1 - Sustainable Freshwater Management Unit

Various uses, demands, pressures and impacts

Water is a cross-cutting issue

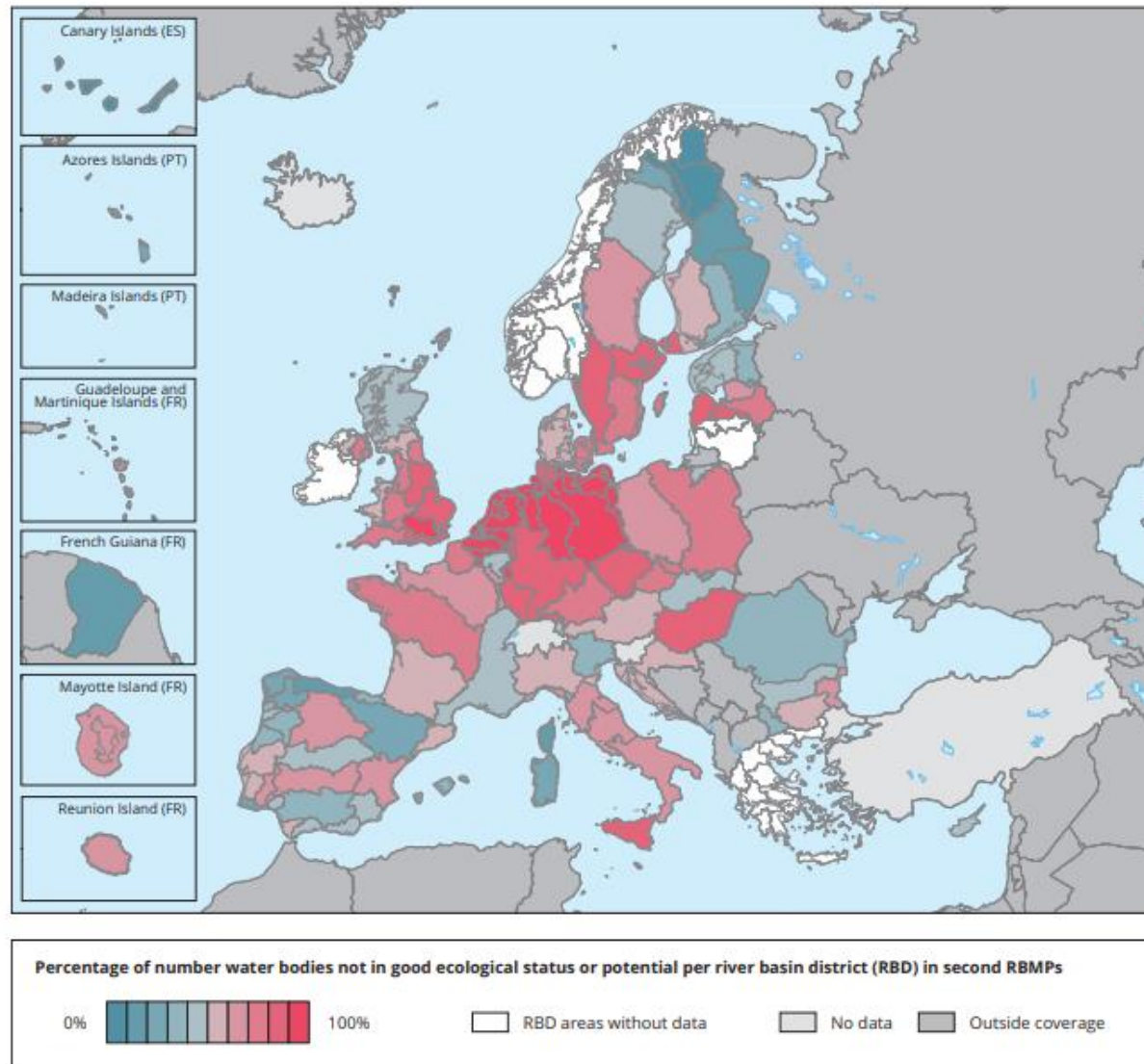


European Climate Risk Assessment (EUCRA)



- Climate change is a risk multiplier that can exacerbate existing risks and crises.
- Climate risks can cascade from one system or region to another, including from the outside world to Europe.
- Water as cross-cutting themes / “Conveyor belt”

Map 2.1 Percentage of water bodies in Europe's RBDs that are not in good ecological status/potential: second RBMPs



Where we are...

Around 40% of surface waters (rivers, lakes and transitional and coastal waters) are in good ecological status or potential, and only 38 % are in good chemical status.

Good chemical status has been achieved for 74 % of the groundwater area, while 89 % of the area achieved good quantitative status.

Source: EEA (2018) *European waters. Assessment of status and pressures 2018*

5

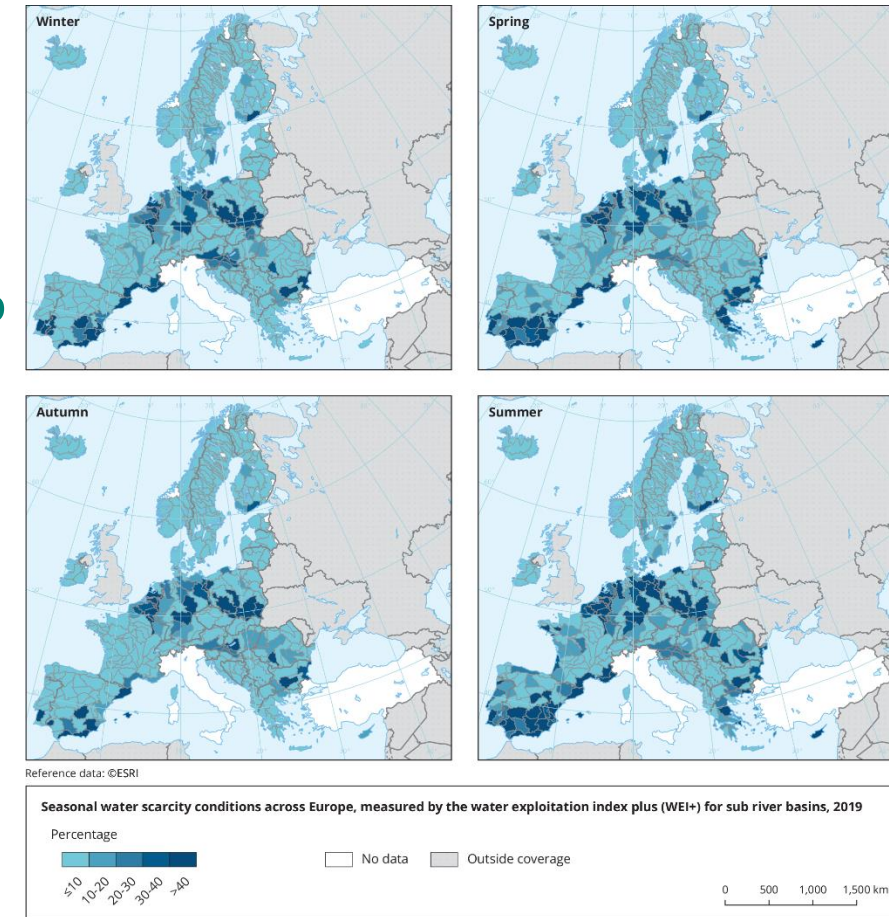
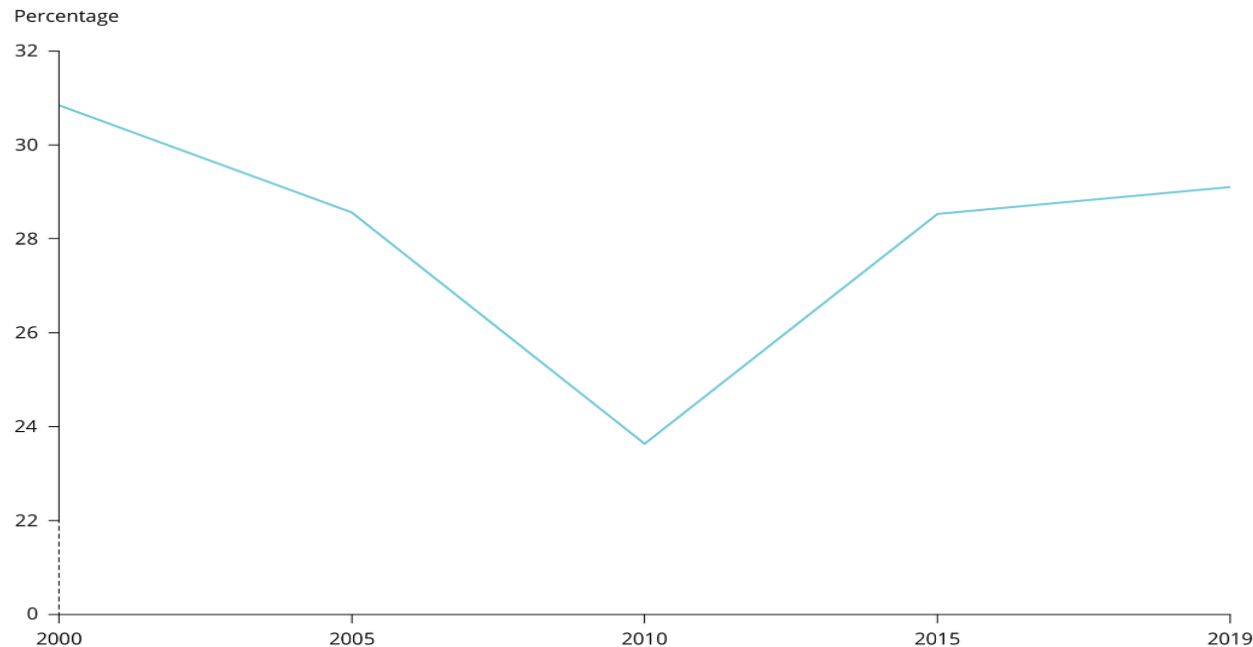
Source: Results are based on WISE-SoW database including data from 24 Member States (EU-28 except Greece, Ireland, Lithuania and Slovenia). Water bodies failing to achieve good status, by RBD; see also [Surface water bodies: Ecological status or potential \(group\)](#) and [Surface water bodies failing to achieve good status by RBD](#).

Water scarcity on the rise in Europe

Water stress affects approximately 20 % of the European territory and 30 % of the European population on average every year.

Southern Europe, European metropolises, intensive irrigated areas and popular touristic destinations are becoming vulnerable more and more to the water scarcity.

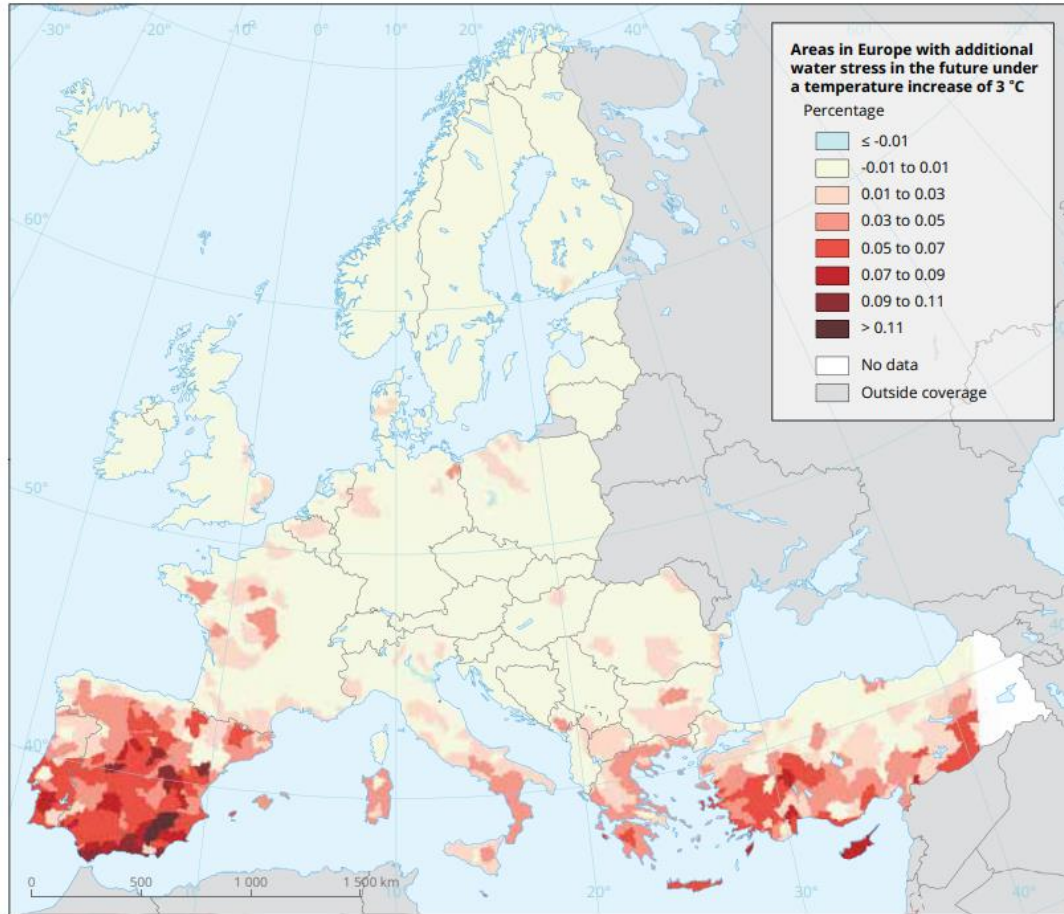
Area affected during at least for one quarter of the year by water scarcity conditions in the EU, measured by the water exploitation index plus



[Seasonal water scarcity conditions across Europe, measured by the water exploitation index plus \(WEI+\) for sub river basins, 2019 — European Environment Agency \(europa.eu\)](#)

[Water scarcity conditions in Europe \(Water exploitation index plus\) \(europa.eu\)](#)

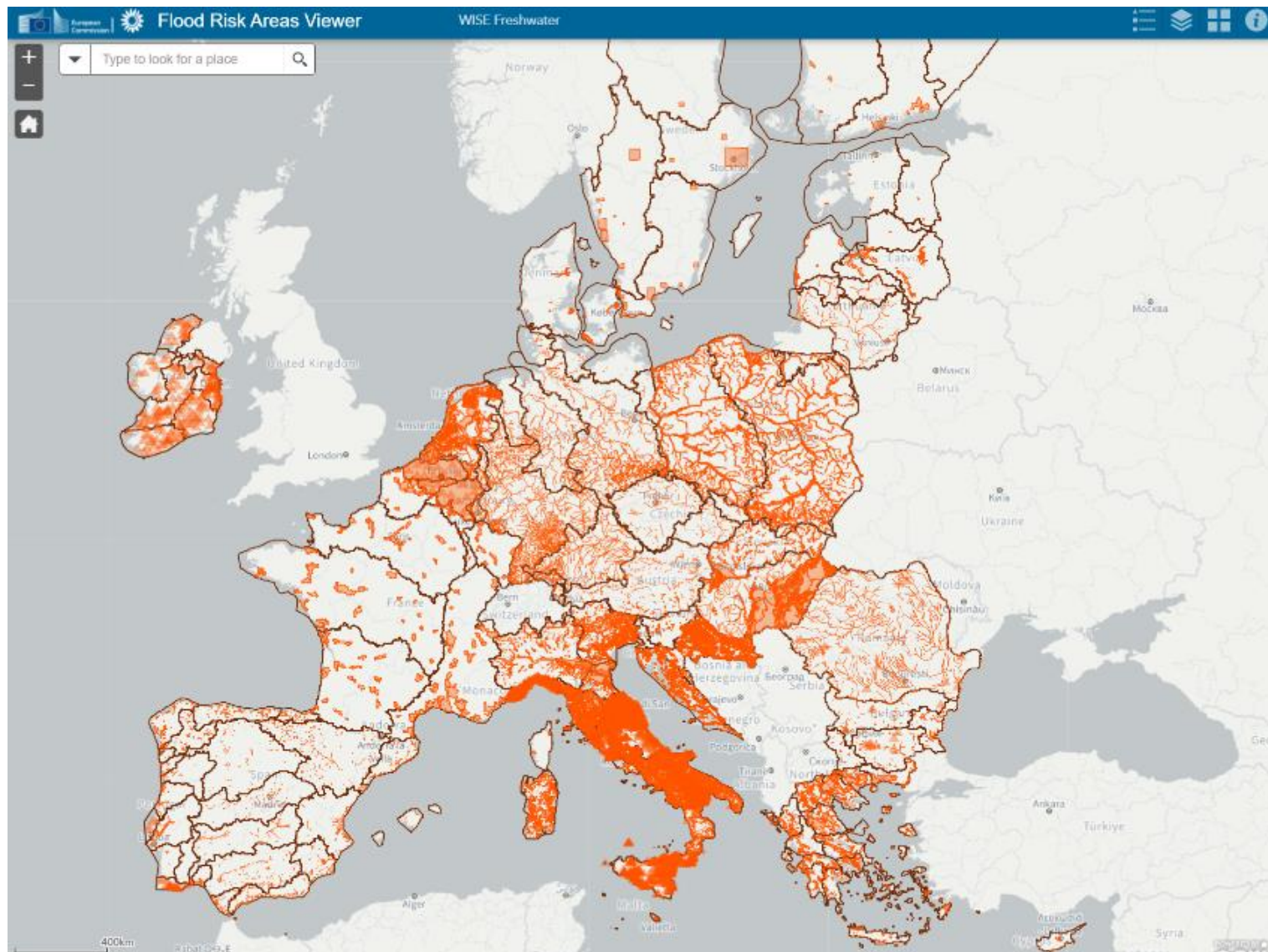
Future projections (scenarios) of water stress in Europe



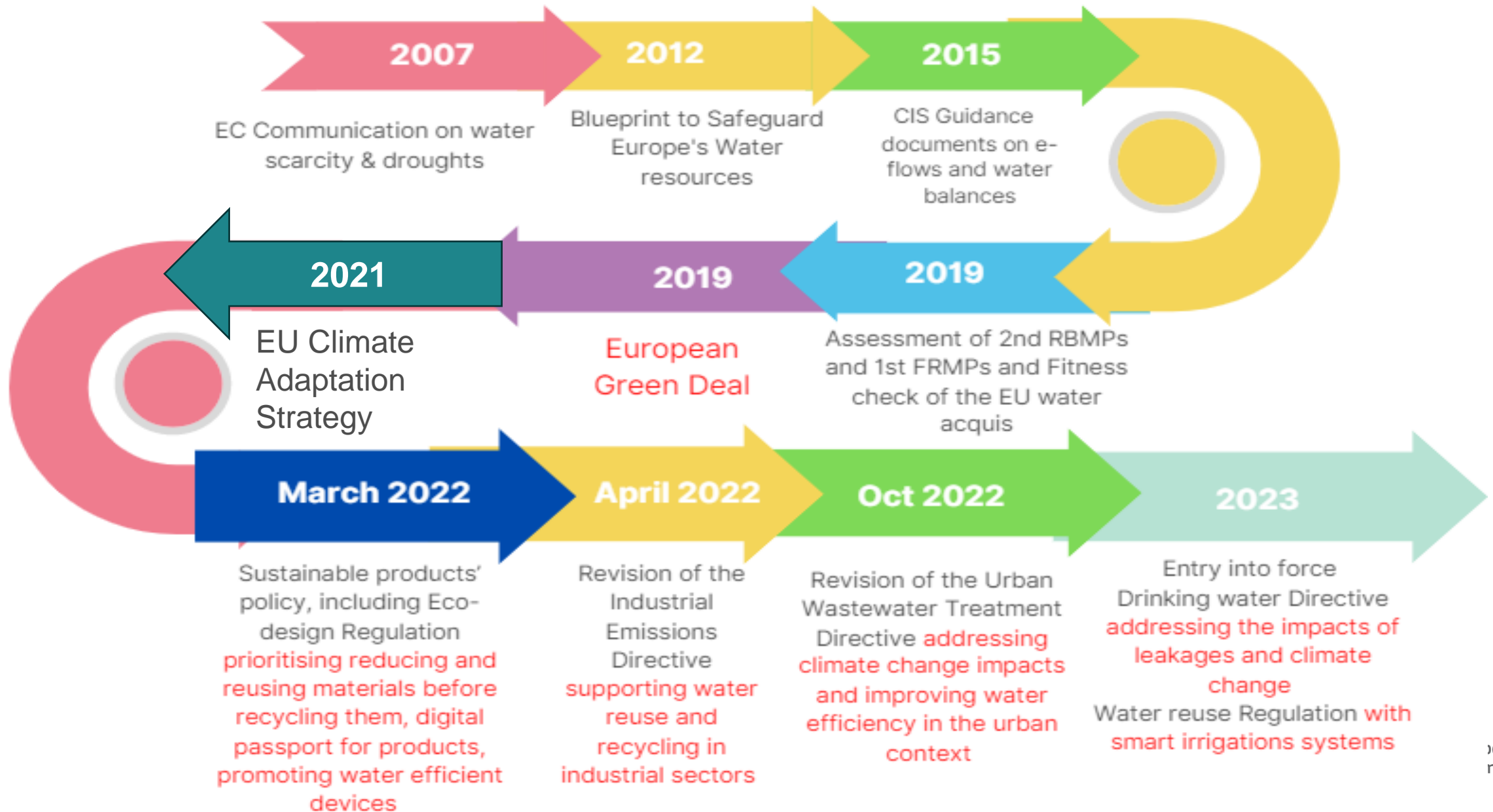
Source: Peseta IV project (Bisselink et al., 2020).

Water stress in Europe is expected to worsen in the future due to;

- ❑ Potential impacts of climate change on water availability in future
- ❑ Urbanisation is expected to concentrate increasing demand for water
- ❑ Intensive tourism
- ❑ Land use land cover changes will affect groundwater recharge conditions



EU policies on water and climate



EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy



COM (2021) 82 final, 24.2.2021



Albufeira Barragem de Salgueiro
© Creative Commons – Victor Oliveira

- Towards a climate-resilient **water management**
 - Improve **coordination of thematic plans and other mechanisms** (incl. water resource allocation and water-permits) across sectors and borders
 - **Drought risk management** to be improved
 - Reduce **water use**, encouraging **water efficiency and savings**
 - Stable and **secure supply of drinking water** → climate change-risks in risk analyses of water management
 - Sustainable **soil management and land-use**
 - **Flood risk management** to better consider climate change impacts
 - **Nature-based solutions** to achieve the goals of the Water Framework Directive and the Floods Directive



UN WATER CONFERENCE 2023

The EU vision for 2050 Water Resilience endorsed by the College

“In 2050, global society will be water resilient, offering water security for all.

This entails the protection and restoration of aquatic ecosystems, and a fair balance between water supply and water demand responding to current needs, including the realization of the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, without compromising the rights of future generations.”

European policy context



European Council - March 2023

It acknowledged “[...] **the need for enhanced EU and global action on water and the importance of a strategic EU approach to water security**”



The European Parliament – Highlights

- Resolution on droughts in 2022
- 2 plenary discussions on water crisis in 2023

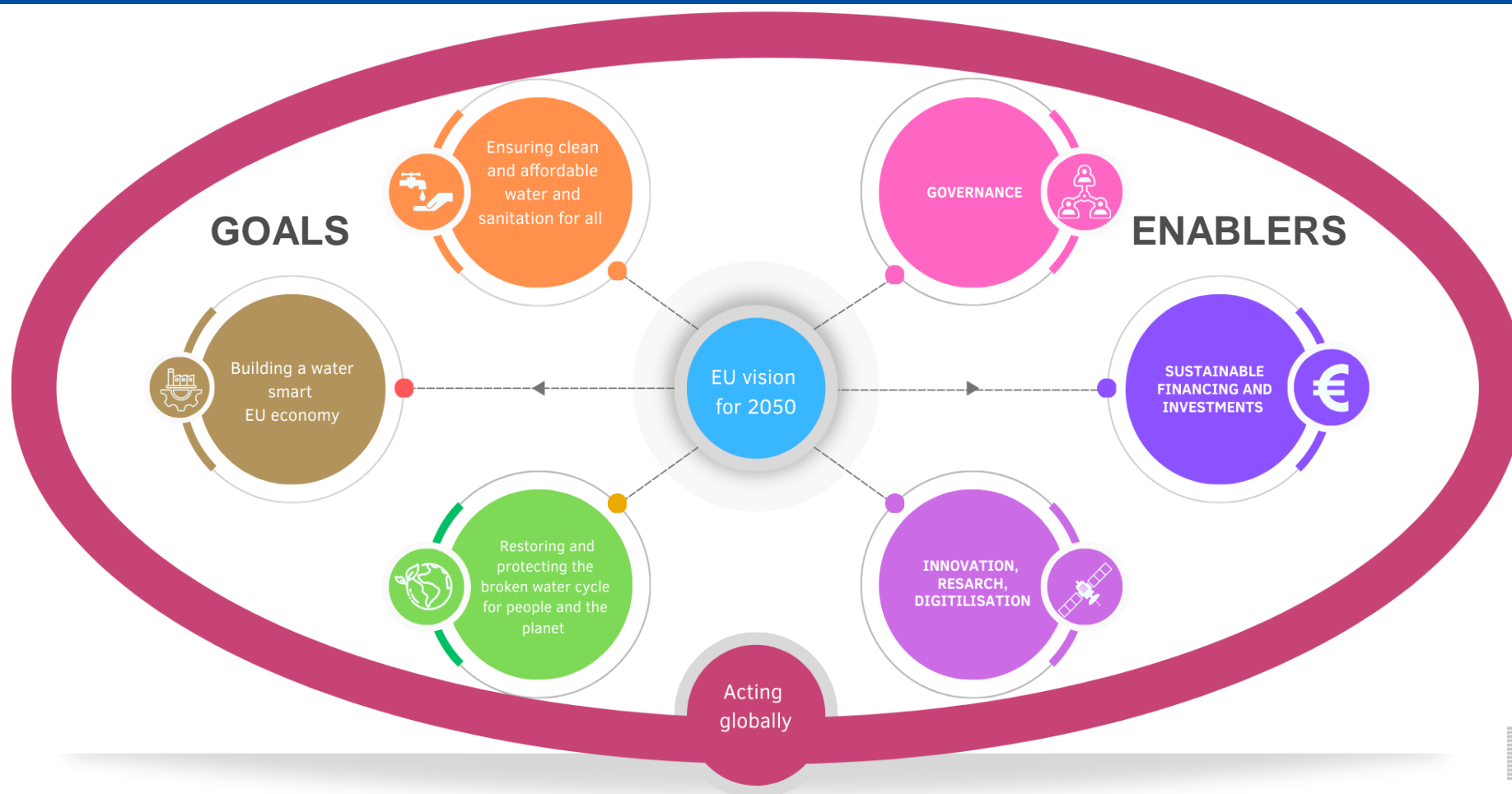
The call for a EU Blue Deal by the EESC



European Economic and Social Committee

- ❑ Umbrella Opinion "A call for an **EU Blue Deal**"
- ❑ Access to water: tackling **water poverty** and its implications for social policy
- ❑ Sustainable and resilient **water infrastructures** and distribution networks
- ❑ Water-intensive **industries** and **water-efficient technologies**
- ❑ **Water scarcity** and climate emergency: circular and other solutions for **the EU agri- food system** in a future "EU Blue Deal"
- ❑ The **economics** of an "EU Blue deal"
- ❑ Water Politics: Between Desertification and Securitization - Time for a **Blue Diplomacy**
- ❑ Water efficient consumption and **consumer awareness** about their **water footprint**

« Towards EU Water Resilience »



Next steps

1. [#WaterWiseEU](#) communication campaign to raise awareness - “See Water Differently”;
2. **Green Week on Water Resilience** (29-30 May), with partner events from 29 May to 1 September (registration closed on 17 March);
3. Commission assessment **report on implementation of the Water Framework and the Floods directives**, as well as Programme of Measures under the **Marine Strategy Framework Directive**; & the EEA’s “**State of European waters 2024**” report (Summer 2024);
4. Forthcoming **evaluations of the Marine Strategy Framework, the Nitrates and Bathing Water Directives**.
5. Internationally, **World Water Forum** (May 2024), **One Water Summit** (September 2024) and **CBD COP16** (October 2024).

Thank you

