



*Brussels, 17.11.2015
C(2015) 7887 final*

*Mr Milan ŠTĚCH
President of the Senát
Valdštejnské náměstí 17/4
CZ – 118 01 PRAGUE 1*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senát for its Opinion concerning the Commission Communication on "The Water Framework Directive and the Floods Directive: Actions towards the 'good status' of EU water and to reduce flood risks" {COM(2015) 120 final}.

The Commission welcomes the Senát's support to the Commission's efforts to achieve the 'good status' of EU waters. Water management deserves increased attention and additional efforts are needed in the Member States to properly implement EU legislation and achieve 'good status' of all water bodies, including coastal ones. This is necessary to reduce pollution inputs such as insufficiently treated wastewater, fertilisers and pesticides.

The Commission shares the Senát's view that preventive and protective measures need to be taken to preserve aquatic ecosystems. In this respect, it agrees on the need for Member States to implement natural water retention measures, increasing the capacity of the soil to retain and/or slow water run-off through, for example, the restoration of wetlands and floodplains or through the use of sustainable urban drainage. These can reduce the EU's vulnerability to floods and droughts and improve water efficiency.

The Commission would like to point out that water challenges are expected to increase due to climate change and socio economic developments such as increasing demand for food, energy and biomass. Proper implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive will go a long way in meeting these challenges.

The Commission recognises the financial needs of water management and infrastructure to protect water resources. In this regard, it recalls that for 2014-2020, the Czech Republic has been allocated around €22 billion in total through Cohesion Policy funding¹. Of this, €768,8 million has been allocated to the improvement of water quality and reduction of flood risks under the Priority Axis 1 through the Operational Programme Environment 2014-2020.

¹http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/information/cohesion-policy-achievement-and-future-investment/factsheet/czech_republic_en.pdf.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Senát and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Karmenu Vella
Member of the Commission*