Europe has ambitious laws and policies to protect air and water, to promote the circular economy, raise recycling rates and safeguard nature. Implementing them is key to achieving our environmental objectives. This is why the European Commission launched the Environmental Implementation Review (EIR), a tool to help countries address systemic obstacles to environmental integration by identifying the causes behind poor implementation. The EIR comprises a regular cycle of analysis, dialogue and peer-to-peer support. This factsheet summarises the results of the second EIR package published in April 2019.

**Country profile**

Portugal occupies one-sixth of the Iberian Peninsula at Europe’s south-western perimeter. The mainland and its archipelagos host a rich biodiversity and its marine environment is of particular importance. The implementation of EU environmental law and policy has contributed to preserving and improving the environment in Portugal, thanks also to the significant assistance from EU funding. Nevertheless, overall, environmental implementation and enforcement represent a challenge for this Member State.

**Main progress EIR 2019**

- Portugal continues working to promote the transition to a circular economy. In December 2017, the government approved the National Action Plan for the Circular Economy (2017–2020). It is now crucial to implement the numerous measures included.
- On water management, the quantity and quality of the information included in the second River Basin Management Plans pursuant to the Water Framework Directive has significantly improved.
- Portugal has taken additional measures regarding forest management and the prevention of forest fires. For instance, the National Forest Strategy has been updated and improved.

**EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE FROM PORTUGAL**

- Good examples can be mentioned in environmental governance: iFAMA (Single Platform for Inspection and Monitoring in the areas of Agriculture, Sea and Environment); E-GAR (platform for information accompanying waste shipments); and the Single Environmental Permitting Platform (to operationalise the Single Environmental Permitting Regime).
- The Environmental Funding Programme (Fundo Ambiental) is an important investment tool in the fields of climate change, the circular economy and habitat valorisation.
- The Portuguese government has adopted measures to promote green public procurement and a more sustainable use of resources in public administration. Measures include reducing the use of paper and single-use plastics and limiting the acquisition of fossil fuel.
Main challenges EIR 2019

Waste management

Despite progress in the transition to the circular economy, waste management remains an important challenge. According to the Commission’s ‘Early Warning Report’ (2018), Portugal is one of the countries at risk of missing the EU target of recycling 50% of municipal waste by 2020. Based on 2017 data, the overall recycling rate is 28%. There are also big differences across regions, so further efforts are needed to improve waste management.

Nature protection

In May 2018, the Portuguese government adopted the National Strategy for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity. However, Portugal has yet to complete its Natura 2000 network, particularly the marine network, and to provide the necessary management measures for the sites already designated. Further efforts are needed to complete the adoption of suitable measures to protect and manage the Natura 2000 sites in the Atlantic and Mediterranean biogeographical regions. Moreover, complementary measures are still required to ensure the proper implementation of the EU Invasive Alien Species Regulation.

Water management

Despite the progress achieved in recent years in water management, challenges remain, for instance with water governance and the need to close gaps in water investments, especially for waste water. At the municipal level, the sector remains highly fragmented and reorganisation of the water and waste-water services has yet to show its full potential.

Peer-to-Peer support

The EIR is supported by the TAIEX-EIR Peer-to-Peer (EIR-P2P) tool, which finances peer-to-peer learning between environmental authorities in the Member States. Portugal has already benefited from the EIR-P2P in the fields of waste management, air quality and forest management.

The full country report on Portugal, the other Member State reports, as well as the Communication ‘Environmental Implementation Review 2019: A Europe that protects its citizens and enhances their quality of life’ are available here: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/index_en.htm

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