

Waste collection systems in rivers and streams

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Waste collection systems in rivers and streams

Dear Ms GALBENU,

The text below is in answer to your enquiry.

Some examples of systems installed on rivers and streams to collect waste

- CLEAR RIVERS: [website](#)

CLEAR RIVERS is a not for profit organization registered as a brand name of the Recycled Island Foundation (RIF). [Recycled Island Foundation](#) (and CLEAR RIVERS) are registered at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce. The Recycled Island Foundation has the ANBI-status, also known as a Public Benefit Organisation (PBO). RIFs efforts are almost entirely committed to the public benefit.

[Upcycled Litter Traps](#)

- [LIFE SouPLess](#) (Sustainable riverine PLastic removal and management)

LIFE17 ENV/NL/000339

[Project website](#)

- The Ocean Cleanup: [website](#)

[The Interceptor](#): *This is the Ocean Cleanup's answer for river plastic waste. It is the first scalable solution to prevent plastic from entering the world's oceans from rivers.*

- [Litter Traps and Clean Up Actions](#): education programme

[LIVES project](#) (Litter Free Rivers and Streams): see [project goals](#)

- [Autonomous plastic collector tested by DEME Environmental Contractors \(DEC\)](#), 19 December 2019

EU legislation

As regards river pollution, EU legislation tackles it at the pollution source, the waste prevention being the main objective.

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- [Water Framework Directive](#) (2000/60/EC) aims to achieve [good ecological and chemical status](#) of waters.

See the [summary](#), [overview](#) on the website of DG Environment, and [fitness check](#) of the EU water legislation 2019

Under Article 13, the WFD requires MS to ensure that a river basin management plan is produced for each river basin district lying entirely within their territory. In the case of an international river basin district falling entirely within the Community, MS shall ensure coordination with the aim of producing a single international river basin management plan. The plan is a detailed account of how the objectives set for the river basin (ecological status, quantitative status, chemical status and protected area objectives) are to be reached within the timescale required.

See: [River Basin Management Plans](#)

- Coastal and marine policy

Marine Strategy Framework Directive: [overview](#)

Regarding marine litter, this directive is the EU legal instrument, which tackles it explicitly and directly. In the Marine Strategy, 'marine litter' is one of the 11 indicators of [good environmental status](#).

See [The review of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#)

- Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive: [overview](#)

The Directive concerns the collection, treatment and discharge of urban wastewater and the treatment and discharge of wastewater from certain industrial sectors. It also defines threshold values for a set of compounds.

Based on an evaluation in 2019, it was decided that the directive needs to be updated to better address current and future challenges.

See dedicated [website](#)

- [Bathing Water Directive](#) (BWD)

See the [summary](#)

As part of the [Zero Pollution Action Plan](#) and in line with the [Biodiversity Strategy](#) the European Commission has recently launched a new [review of BWD](#). The objective is to assess whether the current rules are still fit for purpose to protect public health and improve water quality or if there is a need to improve the existing framework, notably by addressing new parameters.

- [Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste](#).

See [the summary](#)

Targets:

By 31 December 2025, at least 65% by weight of all packaging waste must be recycled. The recycling targets for plastic is 50%.

By 31 December 2030, at least 70% by weight of all packaging waste must be recycled, including 55% of plastic.

See also [overview](#) on the website of DG Environment

Recently, several pieces of legislation deal with plastic waste, plastics being the main component of marine litter.

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- Single-use plastics (SUP) directive

[Directive \(EU\) 2019/904](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 June 2019 on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment

The directive introduces:

- Market restrictions (bans)

- Consumption reductions

EU countries are required to:

- take measures to reduce the consumption of certain single-use plastics for which there is no alternative (drinking cups including covers and lids, and containers of prepared food for immediate consumption);
- monitor consumption of these single-use products as well as the measures taken and report the progress made to the European Commission.

The directive requires an ambitious and sustained quantitative reduction in consumption of these products by 2026 (compared to a 2022 baseline).

- Separate collection and design requirements for plastic bottles:

The directive sets a collection target of 90% recycling for plastic bottles by 2029 (with an interim target of 77% by 2025).

These bottles should contain at least 25% recycled plastic in their manufacture by 2025 (for PET bottles), and 30% by 2030 (for all bottles).

- Compulsory marking:

The directive lays down general requirements on the [marking of certain single-use plastic products](#) that are frequently inappropriately disposed of. The marking is to inform consumers of the presence of plastic in the product; of the waste disposal means to be avoided for that product; and the resulting negative impact of littering or other inappropriate means of waste disposal of the product on the environment.

- The directive also incorporates the ‘polluter pays’ principle.

See [the summary](#)

- Plastic bags directive

[Directive \(EU\) 2015/720](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2015 amending Directive 94/62/EC as regards reducing the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags

See the [summary](#)

In view of tackling resource waste and littering, EU governments had until 27 November 2016 to adopt measures to cut the consumption of lightweight plastic carrier bags, and inform the European Commission about it. This is required by the EU Plastic Bags Directive. It obliges Member States to achieve this by putting a price on plastic bags, and/or introducing national reduction targets. National governments can choose from among a number of measures to achieve the commonly agreed objectives. These include economic instruments, such as charges or levies. Another option is national reduction targets: Member States must ensure that by the end of 2019 no more than 90 of these bags are consumed per person a year.

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By the end of 2025 that number should be down to no more than 40 bags per person. Both options may be achieved either through compulsory measures or agreements with economic sectors. It is also possible to ban bags provided those bans are in line with EU law.

- [EU strategy for plastics in a circular economy](#), COM/2018/028

Transforming the way plastics and plastics products are designed, produced, used and recycled.

The Plastics Strategy tries to combine environmental with economic gains and presents four complementary approaches: improving the economics and quality of plastics recycling, curbing plastic waste and littering, driving investments and innovation towards circular solutions, harnessing global action. The Strategy calls on industry players to step forward with voluntary commitments to ensure that by 2025 ten million tonnes of recycled plastics find their way into new products on the EU market.

- EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy

In order to further promote the transition to a circular economy, the Commission adopted in March 2020 [new circular economy action plan](#) (CEAP), which is one of the main building blocks of the [European Green Deal](#).