



Vlaanderen
is milieu

CCPIE STAKEHOLDERS DIALOGUE XLIV

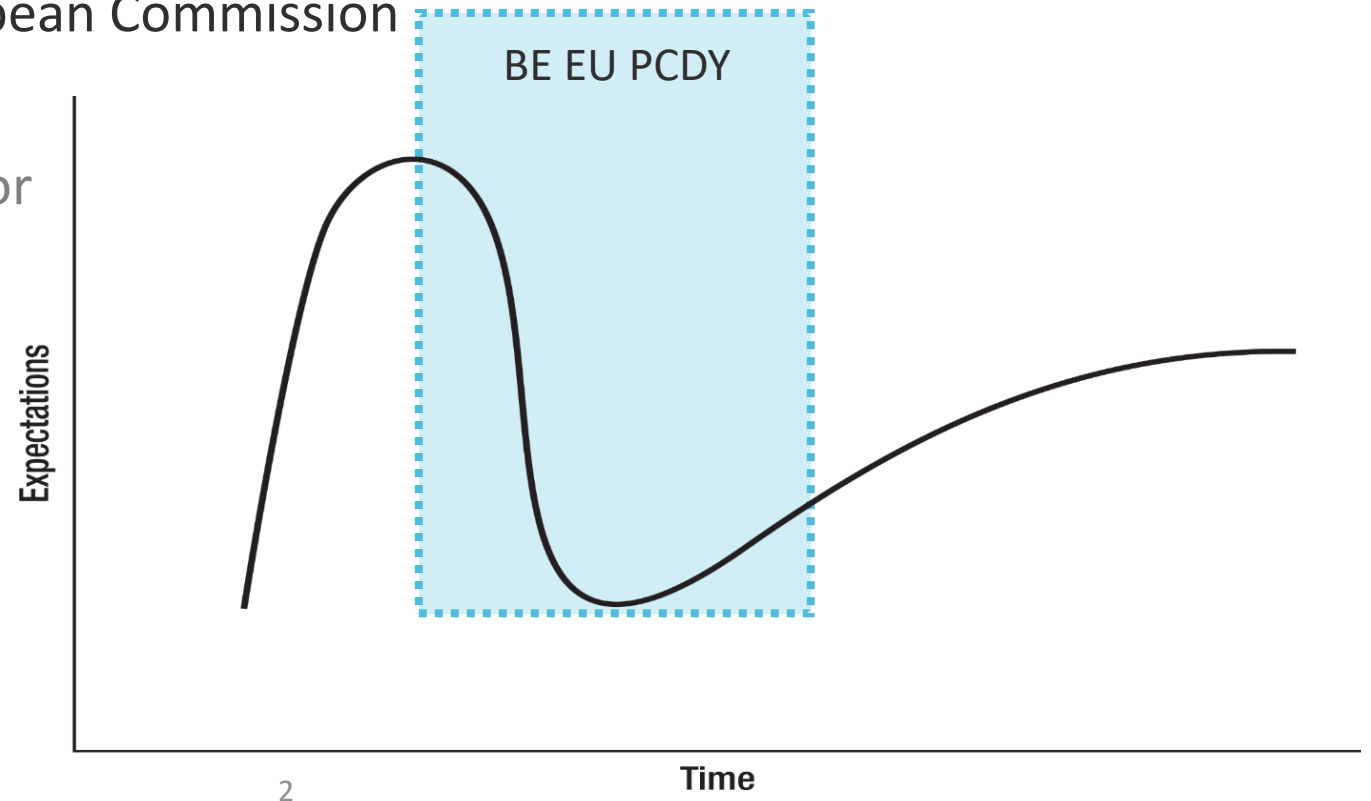
Belgian Priorities and Concerns

European Water Resilience Strategy

Steven Vinckier (Belgisch piloot – Vlaamse Milieumaatschappij)

Timeline – Preliminary Phase

- ▶ Spring 2023: UN Water Conference + debate/resolution in the European Parliament
- ▶ Autumn 2023: Blue Deal from the European Economic and Social Committee
- ▶ Spring 2024: EU Commission work plan / farmer protests / Belgian Presidency
- ▶ Summer + Autumn 2024: new European Commission
- ▶ From Autumn 2024:
 - Pressure from the industrial sector
 - Signals from Member States (including Agriculture Council)
- ▶ Spring 2025:
 - Consultations
 - EU Strategy documents



EU Timeline Council Conclusions

- ▶ 4 June: Publication of EU WRI and Recommendation on Water Efficiency
- ▶ 12 June: WP E under Polish presidency
- ▶ 17 June: AOB at Environment Council
- ▶ 1 July: Start of Danish presidency + WP E priority elements for Council conclusions
- ▶ 17 July: First draft of Council conclusions at WP E
- ▶ 11 September: Discussion of Council conclusions at WP E
- ▶ 1 October: Second discussion WP E
- ▶ 21 October: Council conclusions at Environment Council

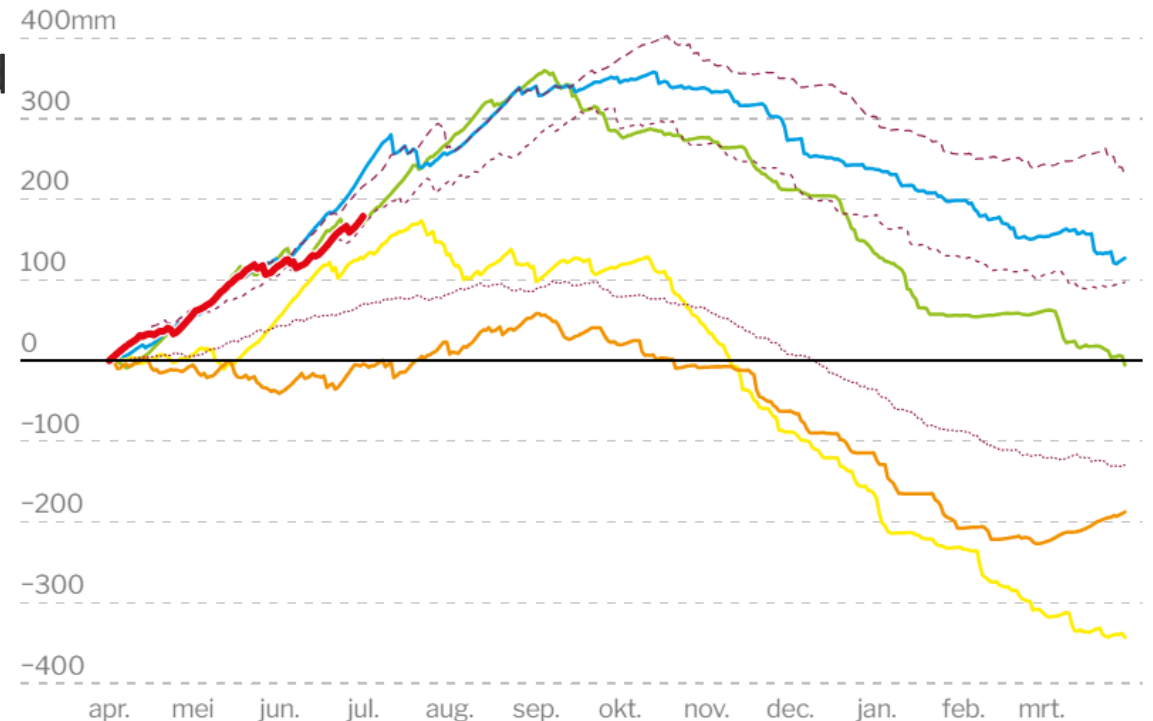
Belgium is waterstress sensitive

- ▶ High population density
- ▶ River delta
- ▶ Water-intensive sectors (industry and agriculture): high (and increasing) water demand
- ▶ Exacerbated by climate change:
 - Longer drought periods alternating with heavy rainfall
 - Existing policies to strengthen water resilience are already in place

Opgebouwd neerslagtekort

Vergelijking met voorbije jaren en recordjaar 1976

— 2022 — 2023 — 2024 — 2025 — 1976 eens om de 2 jaar - - - eens om de 20 jaar - - - eens om de 50 jaar



De vergelijking begint op 1 april, het begin van het hydrologisch zomerseizoen.

DS Infografiek | Bron: Patrick Willems, KU Leuven, o.b.v. metingen KMI, VMM en HIC

Belgian Priorities and Concerns (1/2)

- ▶ No one-size-fits-all: importance of Member States' role (+ regional approach)
 - Combined with a European level playing field
- ▶ Investment gap and financing: sufficient attention to water resilience in the next EU Multiannual Financial Framework
 - Every euro well spent: water resilience contributes to climate adaptation, long-term agricultural perspective, European competitiveness, drinking water supply
- ▶ Importance of:
 - Supporting innovations in water technology
 - Strengthening nature-based solutions (NBS)
 - Necessary infrastructure works
- ▶ PFAS phase-out

Belgian Priorities and Concerns (1/2)

- ▶ **Water efficiency: 10% target (?)**
 - Belgium already has many efficiency measures: should be considered in EU agreements / methodology definition
 - Consideration of seasons and climatic variables
 - Economic reflection: additional water demand in exceptional circumstances
 - Regulation on Water Reuse
- ▶ **Monitoring and follow-up of the EU Water Strategy**
 - Role for existing network with Water Directors (Water Framework Directive)
 - Involvement of sectors and stakeholders
 - Support and coordination within the European Commission: other DGs (CLIMA, RTD, ...)

Member states first assessments and priorities

- ▶ Action plan with timeline: very ambitious
- ▶ Sufficient European water policy: more implementation + more EU investment support
- ▶ Integration with other relevant policy areas: agriculture, energy, adaptation, nature restoration law, water reuse, ...
- ▶ European competitiveness and innovation
- ▶ Combination of measures: NBS + infrastructure works
- ▶ Non-conventional drinking water production (desalination)
- ▶ Role and importance of agriculture
- ▶ Water pricing and allocation