

To the attention of Executive Vice-President Stéphane Séjourné
Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy

Brussels, 16.02.2025

Subject: Meeting request to discuss EU water policy

Dear Executive Vice-President SÉJOURNÉ,

As we stand at the crossroads of the triple planetary crisis¹, your leadership in championing the resilience of our most precious resource - water - is not just a necessity; it's an urgent call for the future of our planet and its people.

Each corner of Europe is increasingly affected by either too much, too little, or too polluted water or a combination thereof. Together, these water challenges constitute a water crisis that is finally coming to the attention of the public and European policymakers. This crisis threatens the availability of a resource that is essential to our society, economy, and environment.

The call for an EU Blue Deal² and an action plan by the EU Economic and Social Committee as well as EU Committee of the Regions³, which has resonated widely across Europe has culminated in the announcement of a Water Resilience Strategy by President von der Leyen in the Political Guidelines 2024-2029⁴. The recent European Environment Agency (EEA) report *Europe's State of Water 2024*⁵ also reminds us of the urgency of ensuring our resilience against water-related extreme events and ensure sustainable freshwater supplies.

As Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy, you will closely support the work on the **Water Resilience Strategy**. Your mission will pave the way to a social, environmental and just transition. Yet, such a transition cannot happen without overarching and holistic actions in close cooperation with the College of Commissioners; each should value water in their respective portfolio.

Therefore, we, a group of European members-based organisations representing a wide range of water stakeholders across the entire value chain (associations, NGOs, academia, large water users, SMEs, water operators, and local authorities), kindly request a meeting with you to discuss the following points linked to your missions:

- The scope of the **Water Resilience Strategy** as an integral part of EU industrial strategy and the urgent need of prioritising water during this mandate, ensuring it is fully integrated into other initiatives, such as the **Clean Industrial Deal**, and the **Circular Economy Act**, the **Chemicals Industry Package** and **EU Climate Adaptation Plan**;

¹ Climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.

² European Economic and Social Committee, Declaration for an EU blue Deal, 2024 <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/documents/declaration-eu-blue-deal> ² European Economic and Social Committee, Declaration for an EU blue Deal, Brussels, 2024 <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/documents/declaration-eu-blue-deal>

³ We refer to two options: Committee of Regions, *Creating an EU Blue deal from an agriculture and rural development perspective across EU Regions*, 2024 <https://cor.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions/cdr-5513-2023> and Committee of Regions, *Towards a resilient water management to fight climate crisis within an EU Blue Deal*, 2024 <https://cor.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions/cdr-5587-2023>.

⁴ European Commission, *Europe's choice: political guidelines for the next European Commissions 2024-2029*, 2024. https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6cd4328-673c-4e7a-8683-f63ffb2cf648_en?filename=Political%20Guidelines%202024-2029_EN.pdf

⁵ European Environment Agency. *Europe's State of Water 2024*, 2024, <https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/analysis/publications/europes-state-of-water-2024>.

- The need to **advance water efficiency measures in all sectors, including buildings** through metering and smart technologies, ensuring the efficient use of resources, reducing the environmental footprint of the built environment and alleviating water stress in urban areas;
- The financial support to developing robust markets for strategic products, through the setting up of an **EU Competitiveness Fund**;
- The role of **InvestEU** in increasing public funding and creating synergies between public and private investments in infrastructure, maintenance as well as innovation and research;
- **Recognition of the water-energy nexus** with the benefits of investing in water-saving technologies and sustainable management to secure both economic and environmental benefits, as well as the recognition of the critical role of water for the production and deployment of net-zero technologies that aim to boost the strategic autonomy of the European Union;
- **Availability of public and private financial resources** in water infrastructure and maintenance.

We look forward to your views and remain at your disposal for a meeting to exchange further on those questions and discuss ways we, the signatories, can be supportive.

Kind regards

On behalf of the signatories

Durk Krol
 Executive Director
 Water Europe
Durk.krol@watereurope.eu
 +32 473805042

List of signatories

