



**2024/2104(INI)**

3.2.2025

# **DRAFT OPINION**

of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

for the Committee on the Environment, Climate and Food Safety

on the European Water Resilience Strategy  
(2024/2104(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Michal Wiezik

PA\_NonLeg

## AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development submits the following to the Committee on the Environment, Climate and Food Safety, as the committee responsible:

### Amendment 1

#### Motion for a resolution

#### Recital A a (new)

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Aa. whereas water is the basis of ecosystems and therefore fundamental for agricultural production;***

Or. en

### Amendment 2

#### Motion for a resolution

#### Recital A b (new)

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ab. whereas Europe's water is under significant pressure<sup>1</sup> resulting in risks related to efficiency, scarcity, pollution and water events, such as flooding and droughts; whereas the EU urgently needs to improve water resilience, which would have a positive impact on the quality of human health, food production and the environment, including agricultural ecosystems;***

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<sup>1</sup>European Environment Agency, report 07/2024, Europe's state of water 2024: the need for improved water resilience, 2024.

Or. en

### Amendment 3

#### Motion for a resolution

#### Recital A c (new)

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ac. whereas freshwater change is one of the processes within the planetary boundaries framework that is critical for maintaining the stability and resilience of ecosystems, which agricultural production depends on; whereas the threshold for the planetary boundary for freshwater change has been transgressed along with the thresholds for climate change, biogeochemical flows of nitrogen and phosphorus, land system change, biosphere integrity and novel entities, all of which are part of an integrated system<sup>1</sup>;***

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<sup>1</sup>Richardson, K., Steffen, W., Lucht, W., Bendsten, J., Cornell, S. et al, 'Earth beyond six of nine planetary boundaries', Science Advances, Vol. 9, Issue 37, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1126/sciadv.adh2458>.

Or. en

### Amendment 4

#### Motion for a resolution

#### Recital A d (new)

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ad. whereas the extent of disturbances to the water cycle is exemplified in the recurrent droughts, major floods and severe forest fires that have gradually become prevalent over recent seasons and are hitting rural areas and agricultural production in particular; whereas climate change is projected to further modify the***

*availability of water resources;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 5**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital D a (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Da. whereas, under Directive (EU) 2024/1203 on the protection of the environment through criminal law<sup>1</sup>, the abstraction of surface water or groundwater within the meaning of Directive 2000/60/EC constitutes a criminal offence where such conduct is unlawful and intentional, and causes, or is likely to cause, substantial damage to the ecological status or the ecological potential of surface water bodies or to the quantitative status of groundwater bodies;***

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<sup>1</sup>OJ L, 2024/1203, 30.4.2024, ELI:  
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1203/oj>.

Or. en

## **Amendment 6**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital D b (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Db. whereas farmers and farming are increasingly affected by extreme weather caused by climate change, including drought and floods;***

Or. en

## Amendment 7

### Motion for a resolution

#### Recital E

##### *Motion for resolution*

E. whereas agriculture is the most significant source of pressure on both surface and groundwater, as a result of water use and pollution from the intensive use of nutrients and pesticides; whereas agriculture is the largest net consumer of water in the EU<sup>23</sup>;

##### *Amendment*

E. whereas agriculture is the most significant source of pressure on both surface and groundwater, as a result of ***inefficient*** water use and pollution from the intensive use of nutrients and pesticides; whereas agriculture is the largest net consumer of water in the EU, ***responsible for 59 % of EU water consumption; whereas changes in farming practices together with the application of nature-based solutions can stimulate adaptation, enhance water retention and maintain agricultural productivity***;

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<sup>23</sup> *European Environment Agency, report 07/2024, Europe's state of water 2024. The need for improved water resilience, 2024.*

Or. en

## Amendment 8

### Motion for a resolution

#### Recital E a (new)

##### *Motion for resolution*

##### *Amendment*

***Ea. whereas soil biodiversity and soil organic carbon affect water retention capacity; whereas soil erosion, compaction and certain soil management practices that cause soil degradation lead to a steady decrease in the water retention capacity of soil, which as a consequence exacerbates drought and flood events with direct negative impacts on farming; whereas healthy soil is therefore one of the drivers of water resilience***;

## **Amendment 9**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital E b (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Eb. whereas the soil moisture deficit is one of the most adverse factors of plant growth and productivity threatening sustainable crop production; whereas in the second water management cycle, droughts were only considered as a relevant feature for water management in about half of the Member States; whereas the area affected by the soil moisture deficit during the growing season in the EU increased between 2000 and 2019; whereas the soil moisture deficit also worsened in the Fennoscandian region and has also been observed in winter in recent years, which could lead to meteorological and agricultural drought in the spring and summer that follow;***

## **Amendment 10**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital E c (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ec. whereas agricultural drought incorporates the balance between soil moisture content, crop type, crop stage, and crop production practice; whereas conditions that constitute an agricultural drought for a highly water-intensive crop***

*in a certain management system could be suitable conditions for the production of low water intensity crops;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 11**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital E d (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

*Ed. whereas satisfying higher freshwater demand with finite freshwater resources remains a policy and feasibility dilemma; whereas one of the most common solutions to freshwater demands in agriculture is the application of higher irrigation efficiency; whereas this is beneficial to irrigators and saves water for reallocation to other sectors, including to the environment; whereas substantial scientific evidence has shown that increased irrigation efficiency rarely delivers increased water availability at river basin level<sup>1</sup>;*

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<sup>1</sup> Grafton, R.Q., Williams, J., Perry, C.J., Molle, F., Ringler, C. et al. 'The paradox of irrigation efficiency', *Science*, Vol. 361, Issue 6404, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aat9314>.

Or. en

## **Amendment 12**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital E e (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

*Ee. whereas, due to drought conditions, the continuation of traditional*



*production of high value cash crops may require urgent changes in agricultural practices, including by implementing nature-based solutions; whereas agroforestry could be one such solution;*

Or. en

### **Amendment 13**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E f (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

*Ef. whereas pasture-based animal production is also negatively affected by drought; whereas the drought and heat conditions of recent years have shown that agroforestry also has benefits for animal production;*

Or. en

### **Amendment 14**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E g (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

*Eg. whereas the ecological flow is directly impacted by the agricultural model established;*

Or. en

### **Amendment 15**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital I a (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ia. whereas plant protection products, including PFAS pesticides, are a source of increasing pollution for water basins, further deteriorating drinking water and agricultural land, as well as putting pressure on agricultural productivity and human health; whereas the cost of treating PFAS pollution in drinking water alone is estimated at EUR 18 billion a year; whereas recent independent measurement analyses have detected PFAS, including more soluble short-chain PFAS, exceeding the theoretical quality threshold<sup>1</sup>;***

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<sup>1</sup>Aubert, R., Foucart, S., Horel, S., Mandard, S., 'PFAS: France's drinking water is massively contaminated by 'forever chemicals,' including in Paris', *Le Monde*, 24 January 2025, [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/environment/article/2025/01/24/pfas-france-s-drinking-water-is-massively-contaminated-by-forever-chemicals-including-in-paris\\_6737375\\_114.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/environment/article/2025/01/24/pfas-france-s-drinking-water-is-massively-contaminated-by-forever-chemicals-including-in-paris_6737375_114.html).

Or. en

## **Amendment 16**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital I b (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ib. whereas the positive impact of organic farming on the prevention of nutrient leaching can be observed; whereas the EU has set an ambitious objective of increasing the area under organic farming to 25 % by 2030; whereas the latest data confirm the continuation of a fast and sharp expansion in organic farming in the EU, although with observed annual decreases in a few Member State; whereas there is a lack of support for the development and***

*approval of innovative plant protection and fertilising products needed for a just transition to alternative systems, as well as for conventional farming;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 17**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital I c (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

*Ic. whereas high nitrate concentrations in river basins in the EU directly impact public health and drinking water supplies; whereas hundreds of thousands of people in Spain have been left without a source of drinking water after nitrates originating from intensive agricultural activity were found in their drinking water; whereas the excessive application of nutrients resulting in run-off also negatively impacts marine water quality, especially in coastal areas;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 18**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital I d (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

*Id. whereas demands to cut nitrate pollution have been made through class legal action;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 19**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital I e (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ie. whereas actions to better monitor and reduce pollution at source from non-domestic discharges should contribute to improving the quality of the sludge produced and ensure its safe use in agriculture;***

Or. en

## **Amendment 20**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital J a (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ja. whereas there is a lack of comprehensive research on the comparative water relations of different farming systems, cropping systems and crops; whereas this is suboptimal given the importance of water for crop production and the increasing water scarcity;***

Or. en

## **Amendment 21**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital J b (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***Jb. whereas changes in climate conditions and soil moisture threaten specific tree species and the planted forests in which these species are***

*dominant; whereas old-growth forests in analogous climate conditions serve as a reference and provide guidance for reforestation with higher resilience potential for forests managed for wood supply;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 22**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital L a (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

*La. whereas compensation from State aid schemes to primary producers for the damage caused by droughts and floods in the EU in recent years has reached hundreds of millions of euro; whereas State aid rules, to a large extent, do not provide an incentive for minimising the risk of drought or flooding through preventive measures;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 23**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 2 a (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

*2a. Calls for the full application of the precautionary principle, the control at source principle and the polluter pays principle; calls for control-at-source measures to be included in agricultural sector legislation, accompanied by the proper implementation and enforcement of EU legislation; highlights that this must be accompanied by the streamlining of funding into the just transition in*

*agriculture;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 24**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 5 a (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

**5a. Calls on the Commission to propose, within the upcoming water resilience strategy, measures and guidance to lay down a path for rules and conditionality under the common agricultural policy post-2027 for both EAGF and EAFRD; calls for similar measures to be proposed for a new State aid framework for agriculture, forestry and rural areas, in order to improve water aspects of agricultural production and its resilience;**

Or. en

## **Amendment 25**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 8**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

8. Calls for the transition to a sustainable farming model assisted by the implementation of **innovative technological** solutions that can help ensure continued productivity while enabling agriculture to reduce pollution and adapt to lower water use;

8. Calls for the transition to a sustainable **low input** farming model assisted by the implementation of solutions that can help ensure continued productivity while enabling agriculture to reduce pollution and adapt to lower water use;

Or. en

## Amendment 26

### Motion for a resolution Paragraph 8 a (new)

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

**8a. Calls on the Commission to set up an EU agroforestry platform for water resilient agriculture, delivering vocational centres of excellence for knowledge transfer and training in agroforestry to facilitate its expert application in the EU; stresses that the presence of trees on agricultural land must not constitute a legal barrier to farmers receiving funding for the use of that land under the common agricultural policy; calls further for an action plan for agroecological agricultural practices to be drawn up;**

Or. en

## Amendment 27

### Motion for a resolution Paragraph 9 a (new)

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

**9a. Deplores cases where illegal water abstraction has been legalised; reiterates the importance of water and its sustainable use and reuse, including in agriculture; calls for the application of strong dissuasive measures to protect the ecological and quantitative status of surface and groundwater bodies; calls for technical guidance and training to be developed for enforcement and legal authorities, in order to identify possible gaps and to improve institutional knowledge capacity on the value of the quantitative and qualitative status of water bodies;**

Or. en

**Amendment 28**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 9 b (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

**9b. Highlights that increased irrigation efficiency is of wider public interest and should therefore benefit from public funding; proposes the exploration of policy scenarios and rules where beneficiaries of increased irrigation efficiency account for return flows, and where the allocation of permits in agriculture accounts for uncertainties in key water parameters and explicitly embeds conditionality criteria regarding compliance with minimal ecological flow, which should be a core criteria for any activity;**

Or. en

**Amendment 29**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 9 c (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

**9c. Emphasises that inefficient and obsolete irrigation systems further increase the pressure on surface and groundwater abstraction; considers that the modernisation and restoration of existing installations without net increase in water use should be preferred to the construction of new installations;**

Or. en



## **Amendment 30**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 11 a (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***11a. Emphasises the positive impact of integrated pest management on water quality and calls for a gradual decrease of pesticide use, contributing to the zero pollution ambition;***

Or. en

## **Amendment 31**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 11 b (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***11b. Calls on the Commission to propose an integrated nutrient management action plan without delay to effectively address nutrient loss, nutrient pollution and inefficiencies in the nutrient cycle; suggests that with respect to critical raw materials such as phosphorus, a minimum combined reuse and recycling rate should be set at EU level in order to ensure the proper and safe recovery of phosphorus from organic sources and to incentivise investments in its recovery;***

Or. en

## **Amendment 32**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 11 c (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***11c. Highlights that novel products,***

*fertilising products, biostimulants, soil improvers and plant protection products aiming for higher environmental sustainability, including in relation to water and circularity, may face unfair competition and trading practices; calls for enhanced guidance and assistance to improve EU market access for EU candidate country products; calls for cooperation with farmers to be facilitated for field trial purposes, including via the agricultural European Innovation Partnership, in order to improve the process of registration for sustainable products and CE certification and to promote knowledge transfer on alternative approaches, resulting in more tools being made available for farmers;*

Or. en

### Amendment 33

#### Motion for a resolution Paragraph 12

##### *Motion for resolution*

12. Calls on the Commission to establish comprehensive EU-wide quality standards for PFAS totals in groundwater and surface water;

##### *Amendment*

12. Calls on the Commission to ***urgently address pollution from PFAS, including more soluble short-chain PFAS, and to*** establish comprehensive EU-wide quality standards for PFAS totals in groundwater and surface water, ***as well as to phase out their production for use in agriculture;***

Or. en

### Amendment 34

#### Motion for a resolution Paragraph 13 a (new)

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

**13a.** *Expects the water resilience strategy to set out a proposal on biopesticides and their sustainable use;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 35**

### **Paragraph 13 b (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

**13b.** *Reiterates the importance of regular soil monitoring to support and inform any actions aimed at improving its properties, also with a view to improving its water retention capacity;*

Or. en

## **Amendment 36**

### **Motion for a resolution**

#### **Paragraph 20 a (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

**20a.** *Notes that carefully designed forest management measures can improve watershed health, regulate water flow and reduce drought stress; highlights that the loss of forest intactness leads to declines or changes in key environmental services, including watershed regulation; notes that intact ecosystems are more capable of overcoming environmental stressors ; calls for old-growth and primary forests, as defined in the country where they are located, to be mapped as a matter of urgency;*

### Amendment 37

#### Motion for a resolution Paragraph 20 b (new)

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

**20b.** *Calls for carbon farming activities to contribute to water resilience; calls for adequate, independent and science-based guidance for farmers in order to harness the synergies between various co-benefits of the schemes, promoting ecosystem services and the role of wetlands, agroforestry systems and close-to-nature forestry;*

Or. en

### Amendment 38

#### Motion for a resolution Paragraph 21

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

21. Emphasises that the EWRS should ensure adequate funding from public and private sources in order to support resilient water infrastructure, sustainable water management, data collection, research, nature-based solutions and the uptake of water-efficient technologies, as well as to uphold nature restoration and biodiversity;

21. Emphasises that the EWRS should ***close the funding gap and*** ensure adequate funding from public and private sources in order to support resilient water infrastructure, sustainable water management, ***the retention of water in agricultural ecosystems***, data collection, research, nature-based solutions and the uptake of water-efficient technologies, as well as to uphold nature restoration and biodiversity;

Or. en

## **Amendment 39**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 22 a (new)**

*Motion for resolution*

*Amendment*

***22a. Calls for targeted funding via the agricultural European Innovation Partnership for field trials on the water relations of different cropping systems, in particular low input systems such as agroecological, regenerative, organic and agroforestry systems, and conventional systems, assessing factors including agronomic water use, soil moisture, pollution, and leaching into groundwaters and surface waters, as well as the resistance of farming systems to current or future drought scenarios;***

Or. en

**ANNEX: ENTITIES OR PERSONS  
FROM WHOM THE RAPPORTEUR HAS RECEIVED INPUT**

Pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure, the rapporteur for the opinion declares that he received input from the following entities or persons in the preparation of the draft opinion:

<b>Entity and/or person</b>
Edelman Public Relations Worldwide
European Federation of National Associations of Water Services (EurEau)
European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
The Nature Conservancy
Wetlands International Europe

The list above is drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur for opinion in his capacity as rapporteur for opinion.

Where natural persons are identified in the list by their name, by their function or by both, the rapporteur for opinion in his capacity as rapporteur for opinion declares that he has submitted to the natural persons concerned the European Parliament's Data Protection Notice No 484 (<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/data-protect/index.do>), which sets out the conditions applicable to the processing of their personal data and the rights linked to that processing.