Posters

Theme 2: A new era in environmental monitoring and assessment: what is at stake?

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Evaluation of the Belgian coastal waters in the frame of the EU Water Framework Directive

According to the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC), the river basin management plan needs to be updated every six years. This includes a presentation of the monitoring results of the considered water bodies. Within the river basin management plan for the Belgian coastal waters, the ecological status is evaluated in the 1 nautical mile zone while the chemical status is evaluated in the 12 nautical miles zone. Monitoring results gathered during the period 2009-2014 are presented in the current revision of the first river basin management plan. Different priority substances as well as Scheldt specific pollutants (agreed in the frame of the International Scheldt Treaty) have been evaluated. Priority substances that exceed the environmental quality standard belong to the persistent, bio-accumulating and toxic substances that stay present for a long time in the aquatic environment, even after drastic measures or a total ban. In general, an evolution of decreasing trends can be noticed. The ecological status is evaluated as moderate: benthic invertebrate fauna score moderate with an Ecological Quality Ratio close to the defined threshold and chlorophyll *a* exceeds the threshold concentration (moderate). The assessment includes an evolution over time of nutrient concentrations and refers to the importance of cross-border inputs to the Belgian coastal waters, indicating that the achievement of good water status will depend upon international collaboration.

Keywords: WFD, chemical status, ecological status, Belgian coastal waters