

Commissioner Adina Vălean
Transports
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels – Belgium

Brussels, 9th June 2020

Subject: Main priorities for water under the Commission 2019-2024

Dear Commissioner,

For nine consecutive years, the World Economic Forum has ranked water crises as a top global societal risk in terms of impact on every aspect of our lives. The post COVID19 situation in Europe is a wake-up call to switch to a new paradigm in which consideration for water security and risk management are prerequisites.

The EU Water Alliance, composed of a broad range of water-related stakeholders, has therefore addressed key messages to Von der Leyen's Commission (see annex 1). As you are entrusted with the role of Commissioner for Transport, water challenges directly impact your mission to create sustainable and smart mobility in Europe.

If the finding of solutions to address water-related challenges is not established as a priority, Europe will suffer from additional extreme events such as drought-induced shipping disruption which can impact the EU's mobility and the objectives regarding the reduction of pollution. **Therefore, this large coalition of water-related stakeholders kindly request a meeting with you to discuss the following points of interest:**

- The anticipated increase in waterborne transport should be considered as an opportunity to redevelop waterways sustainably, contributing to the ambition of the European Commissions to meet environmental targets, in particular with regards to biodiversity. The aim concerning the restoration of the natural functions of ground and surface waters in order to preserve and restore biodiversity in lakes, rivers, wetlands and estuaries should be fully integrated with the desire to increase inland waterborne transport in order to reduce overall transport-based greenhouse gas emissions.
- Water-related risks represent one of the principal issues of the decade. The increase of pollution in our waters also constitutes a key challenge as do the emissions caused by transport in general. We would suggest, therefore, that the EU should support investment in technological and non-technological research and innovation to identify and overcome increased pollution due to inland water transport, but that also resulting from road transport. Developing and implementing a zero-pollution strategy by controlling pollution at source is, in the opinion of this coalition, constitutes an important aspect of the tasks outlined within your portfolio.
- Applying an Integrated Water Resources Management approach to address the needs of the transport, environmental and other sectors could greatly contribute to the improvement and

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maintenance of surface waters, providing sufficient water resources for all depending sectors, both in quantity and quality.

- Furthermore, the digitalisation of transport will prove to be a pivotal aspect within the modernisation of transport systems, and those actions aimed at ensuring quality water for all economy activities. This priority will have a substantial impact on the water sector and is expected to contribute by no small means to the achievement of the EU Green Deal. The EU Water Alliance would therefore like to encourage the directorate for which you are responsible to fully consider the issues at hand and to work towards a decrease of the environmental impact of transport on waterways.

We firmly believe in fully inclusive approaches that involve all stakeholders and create a proactive joint ownership of the implemented solutions.

We are determined to form a proactive part of the solution.

Therefore, we look forward to scheduling a meeting to discuss these issues at your earliest convenience. The contact point for further communication is Durk Krol, Water Europe Executive director, durk.krol@watereurope.eu, tel: +32 2 7068292

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Water Europe Director
Durk Krol



On behalf of:



Enclosed:

- Annex 1: EUWA Manifesto