



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

## ENVIRONMENT



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### **Water Quality: News from the Swedish Presidency of the European Union**



European River Basin District Authorities are soon to meet in Stockholm to exchange experiences on water management, which includes ground water preservation and improving water quality. The meeting will also address the issue of climate change and water.

The aim is that Europe will have clean and good water and sustainable water resources by 2015. The first programme of measures is soon to be presented to the Commission. "The EU countries need to exchange experiences and discuss how to tackle water problems", says Ann-Louise Månsson of the Ministry of the Environment, one of the speakers at the meeting.

The year 2009 is fraught with challenges for the European River Basin District Authorities. For the first time, all EU countries are to present their management plans and programmes of measures for their river basin areas, which means all water areas including lakes, streams and rivers as well as coastal areas and ground water. Among other things, this involves water quality checks. Good freshwater quality will in turn lead to better marine environment as most inland waters at some point will reach the sea.

"All EU countries have had their own way to handle water issues. At the meeting, representatives from a number of countries will make a presentation of the way they have worked", says Hanna Tornevall at the North Sea River Basin District Authority. She is one of the organisers of the meeting, which starts on 19 August.

The management plan that every country is to have in place this year will help improve surface water quality, reduce pollution caused by the discharge of hazardous substances, protect the



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ground water, prevent pollution, ensure a healthy balance between use and renewal and preserve protected areas.