

EN

E-000929/2021

Answer given by Mr Sinkevičius  
on behalf of the European Commission  
(1.5.2021)

According to the information reported by the Portuguese authorities in 2016 under the reporting obligations of the Water Framework Directive (WFD)<sup>1</sup>, the Cértima river is in ‘bad’ ecological status whereas its chemical status is reported as ‘good’. In its 2019 assessment report of the second River Basin Management Plan<sup>2</sup>, under the WFD, the Commission urged Portugal to take action, including to improve status assessment and monitoring of water bodies<sup>3</sup>. The Pateira lagoon and part of the Cértima river are also in two Natura 2000 sites, so obligations apply to take the necessary steps to avoid deterioration of the natural values of these sites.

In the absence of more precise data on which public waste water treatment facilities would be among the alleged sources of pollution to the Pateira lagoon and the Cértima rivers, the Commission could not cross check with the compliance assessment under the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive<sup>4</sup>.

While the primary responsibility for correctly implementing the EU legislation lies with the relevant authorities, in this case the Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente<sup>5</sup> and the Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas<sup>6</sup>, the Commission, in line with its role as guardian of the Treaties, will of course continue to closely monitor the situation and will continue its bilateral exchanges with all Member States, including Portugal, to follow up on the recommendations from the above mentioned WFD assessment report.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1–73.

<sup>2</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:bee2c9d9-39d2-11e9-8d04-01aa75ed71a1.0005.02/DOC\\_2&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:bee2c9d9-39d2-11e9-8d04-01aa75ed71a1.0005.02/DOC_2&format=PDF)

<sup>3</sup> Commission Staff Working Document, 2019, Portugal, Second River Basin Management Plans <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=SWD:2019:56:FIN&qid=155120598853&from=EN>

<sup>4</sup> Council Directive 91/271/EEC of 21 May 1991 concerning urban waste-water treatment, OJ L 135, 30.5.1991, p. 40–52.

<sup>5</sup> <https://apambiente.pt/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.icnf.pt/>