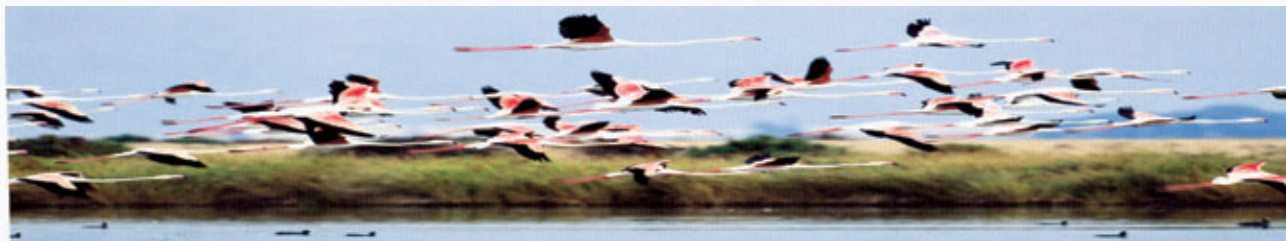


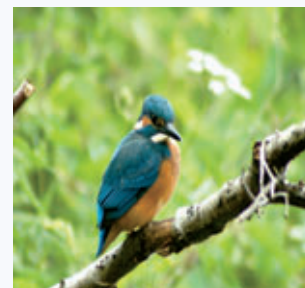
WATER



Land quality and value are mainly determined by its soil, climatic and water conditions. The efficient use of natural resources and the exchange of experiences stimulate the future development of rural areas, in particular as this relates to sustainable land and water management. Landowners have a strong desire to pass on their land in good condition to their children and grandchildren.

ELO's activities on water policy are focused on:

- *Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC)*
- *Proposal for a Directive on Groundwater (COM (2003) 550)*
- *Proposal for a Directive on Flood Risk Management (COM (2006) 15)*



I. Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC)

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is a legislative framework to protect and improve the quality of all water resources within the European Union. In May 2001 the European Commission, Member States and Norway agreed to set up a ***Common Implementation Strategy (CIS)*** which aims to develop a common understanding and guidance on key elements of this Directive. The structure of the CIS is based on several working groups. At present, ELO is a full member of the following groups: *Strategic Coordination Group*, *Strategic Steering Group "WFD and Agriculture"*, *Strategic Steering Group "WFD and Hydro-morphology"*, and *the Working Group on Flood Risk Management*.



ELO's key priorities on water:

- **To promote cost-effective land management measures which protect water resources.**
- **To work towards the establishment of workable, legal and policy tools at European, national and local levels**
- **To contribute to overcoming challenges and identifying opportunities for rural areas**
- **To identify and develop existing and future mechanisms and measures within the CAP and Rural Development Policy (cross-compliance, agri-environmental schemes) which could help to meet the WFD objectives**

WATER

II. Proposal for a Directive on Groundwater (COM (2003) 550)

On 19 September 2003 the European Commission presented a Proposal for a new Groundwater Directive. Based on an EU-wide approach, the proposed Directive introduces quality objectives, obliging Member States to monitor and assess groundwater quality on the basis of common criteria and to identify and reverse trends in groundwater pollution. It is expected that the European Parliament will pass the Directive in 2006.



ELO's priorities on groundwater:

- To follow-up the adoption and implementation of the Directive in order to avoid overlapping with other environmental legislation such as the Nitrates Directive.
- To advocate for proper management at the local level considering groundwater as both an economic and social resource.
- To look for the adoption of a system of incentives to encourage small-scale groundwater users.

III. Proposal for a Directive on Flood Risk Management (COM (2006)15)

During the second semester of 2005, ELO participated in the drafting process of a new Daughter Directive on water policy which aims to reduce and manage the risks that floods pose to human health, the environment, infrastructure and property- the so-called Flood Risk Management Directive. Under the proposed Directive Member States would first need to carry out a preliminary assessment to identify the river basins and associated coastal areas at risk of flooding. Land use planning, land use management and their economic impact will play a key role by determining whether the owner is left with reasonable economic use of the property.

Landowners and land managers are very concerned about the Flood Risk Management Directive's impact on:

- Property rights
- Insurability
- Economic and ecological value of their land

ELO believes that extreme weather events are linked to climate change, and it will be actively involved in future planned working groups on climate change and water protection.

