

TO THE WATER DIRECTORS OF EU

Free use of reported Water Framework Directive data

The member states contribute with large amounts of water related data within their obligations to report under the water framework directive. After the reporting some of the data is publicly available through the WISE system but there are more opportunities, in the spirit of the Aarhus convention, to disseminate the information to a broader audience. One opportunity is through Wikipedia, the largest encyclopedia available today and one of the most visited sites on the web. Since the data is structured it can best be made available through Wikidata, a database which is built to feed Wikipedia with information. However, to be able to disseminate the information through Wikidata (and many more databases) there can be no restrictions on the use of the data. This is ensured through Creative Commons Zero (CC0) which is a licensing form to show that data is free and in the public domain without any restrictions.

The European Commission is recommending CC0 for public sector content and data: “the CC0 public domain dedication is of particular interest. As a legal tool that allows waiving copyright and database rights on PSI, it ensures full flexibility for re-users and reduces the complications associated with handling numerous licenses, with possibly conflicting provisions.”¹ Other supporting documents from the European Commission are “A digital Agenda for Europe”², “Open data”³ and “Towards a thriving data-driven economy”⁴.

We therefore propose that the commission recommends the member states to mark their public data with CC0 to ensure that the data can be re-used by the public without restriction. This is a unique opportunity to increase awareness of the work done under the water framework directive

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Water Director YYYY

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1 Timothy Vollmer, Creative Commons, European Commission endorses CC licenses as best practice for public sector content and data, 17 July 2014, <https://creativecommons.org/2014/07/17/european-commission-endorses-cc-licenses-as-best-practice-for-public-sector-content-and-data/>

2 A Digital Agenda for Europe, 26 August 2010,

[http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0245R\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0245R(01))

3 Open data, An engine for innovation, growth and transparent governance, 12 December 2011,

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0882:FIN:EN:PDF>

4 Towards a thriving data-driven economy, 2 July 2014,

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0442>