



# *From pollutant to resource – EU action on nutrients in the Baltic*

**Paul Speight  
DG Environment  
European Commission**



## No doubt that Baltic sea is in trouble

*Eutrophication is a problem across the whole sea*

*Natural conditions require an extra effort to avoid problems*

*Co-operative approach is clearly needed amongst all countries that share the Baltic Sea – Commission pays great attention to equal treatment*





## EU has a number of relevant env instruments to tackle the problem

*Nitrates Directive, Water Framework Directive, Marine legislation...*

*All have the same aim – they fit together to get the desired environmental outcome – clean rivers, lakes and seas*

*Solution is relatively simple in the end – reduce nutrient load to what the science tells us is needed, share this effort fairly*

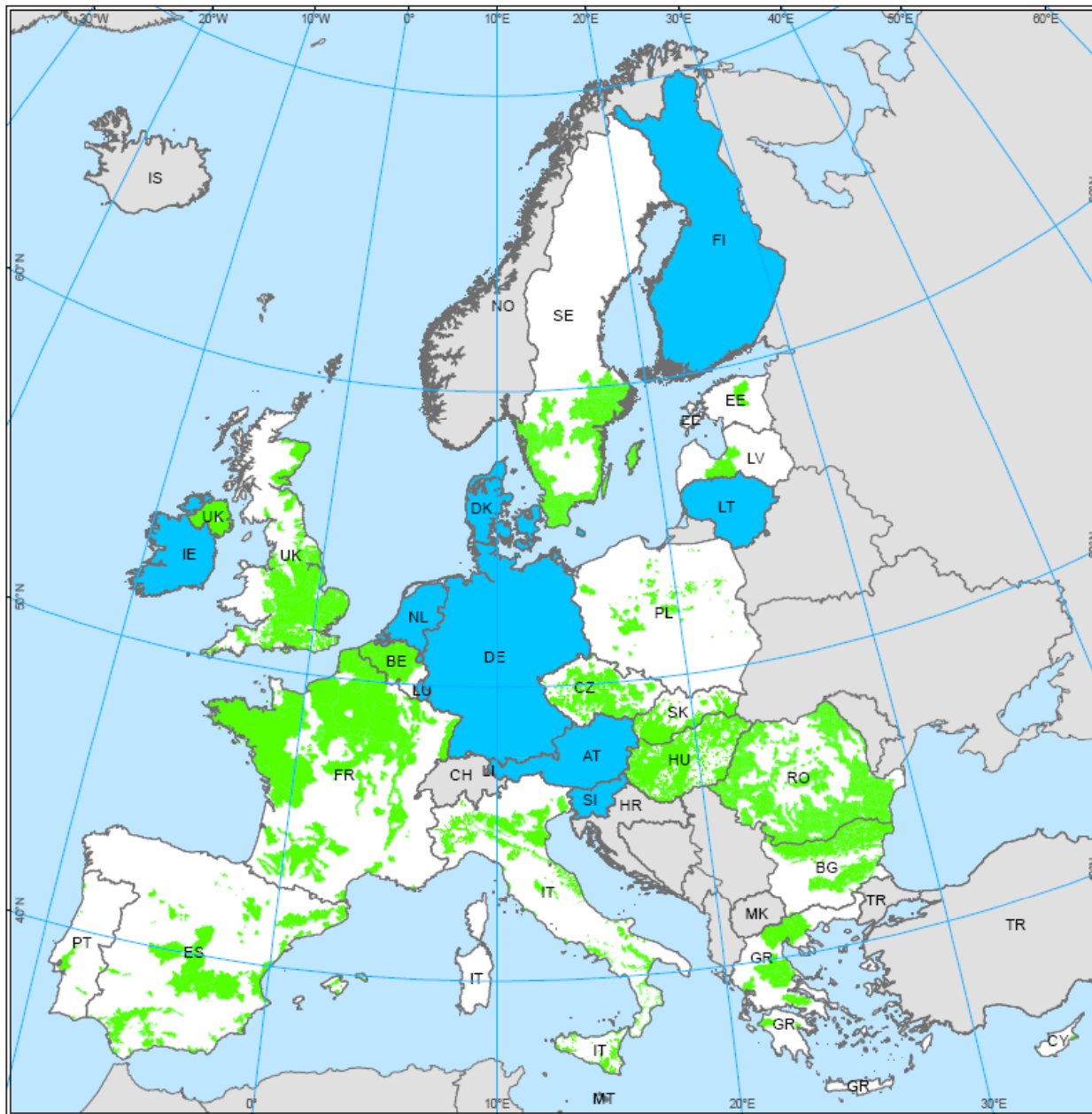




# Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)

**OBJECTIVE:** reduce water pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources and prevent further such pollution





## Nitrates Directive (91/676/EEC)

Map of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones  
(as of 09/04/2013)

### NVZ status

- territory is designated as NVZ
- whole territory is designated as NVZ
- non-EU countries

0 150 300 600 Kilometers

Source : DG ENV, Member States reports on Nitrates Directive Implementation  
 Coordinate Reference System: ETRS89 Lambert Azimuthal Equal Area  
 Cartography : JRC, 04/2013  
 © Eurogeographics for the administrative boundaries  
 © 2013 Copyright, JRC, European Commission  
 Extracted from EUSA (European Land Information System for Agriculture and Environment)





# From pollutant to resource

*More efficient agriculture (less waste)*

*Better recycling of nutrients – use them where they are needed... (resource efficiency)*

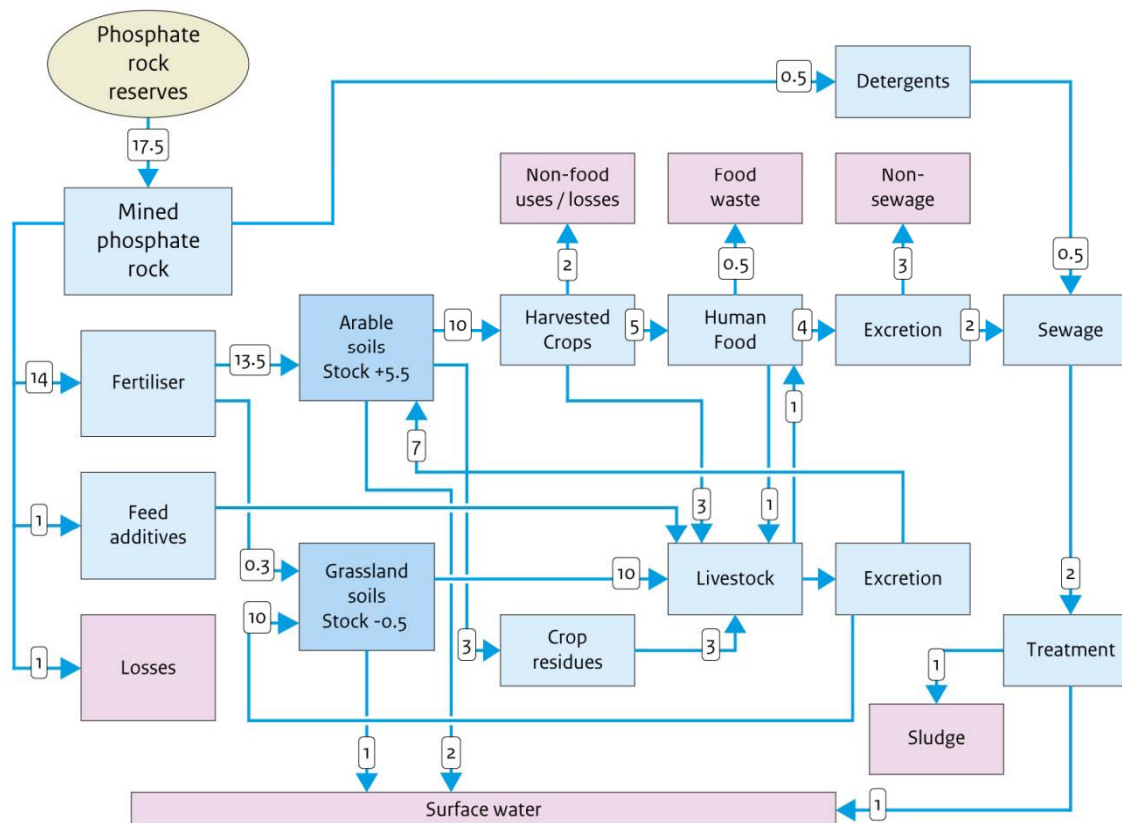
*Concept of nutrient cycles (7th EAP, air strategy, Sustainable phosphorus Consultative Communication)*



# Phosphorus as an example

## Global phosphorus flows, 2000

million tonnes P per year



# Agricultural efficiency

1) Application methods, biotechnology, enzymes in animal feed

2) Timing and dosing of application – "precision agriculture"

3) Looking after the soil – avoiding erosion, using crop rotation etc.







## Role of the CAP

*Cross compliance remains for nitrates, but unfortunate that Water FD not more positively treated – crucial that it is brought in soon*

*Greening of first pillar may help a little – EFA could be used to deal with water quality issues – ie buffer strips*

*Rural development programmes should still be addressing these issues with credible measures*





# Nutrient Recycling

Three main streams with potential:

**Manure** – need to work on processing, move away from saturated areas

**Waste water** – some treatment plants using iron to remove the P which is a problem – for the rest several viable technologies – struvite, ashes...

**Food and other green waste** – composting, or via ashes

EU can help – revision of Fertilizer Regulation, for example + research (EIPs on agriculture and water)





## Ongoing work on phosphorus recycling

*Consultation paper can be found here:*

*[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/phosphorus\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/phosphorus_en.htm) closes 1/12/13*

*European wide attempt to take forward phosphorus recycling – website here:*

*<http://www.phosphorusplatform.org/>*





### Suggestions for **farmers**:

low intensity – focus on soil protection, plus some spatial management (buffer strips etc)

High intensity – 'precision farming' equipment now largely available and quite cost effective

### Suggestions for **policy makers**:

A strategy that focuses on dealing with the problem and bringing the nutrient load to a manageable level will handle compliance with Nitrates, WFD, etc

EU funding is available through a number of sources – should encourage an integrated approach to the problem, using new CAP rules, RD, regional money and perhaps even LIFE

Need to move the nutrients away from saturated regions – processing is the key!

