



**MINISTÈRE
DE LA TRANSITION
ÉCOLOGIQUE
ET DE LA COHÉSION
DES TERRITOIRES**

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

**FRANCE'S NATIONAL STRATEGY ON REDUCING
NITROGEN POLLUTION OF WATER**
6TH MEETING OF THE UNEP WORKING GROUP ON NITROGEN

Trends in water quality since 1990

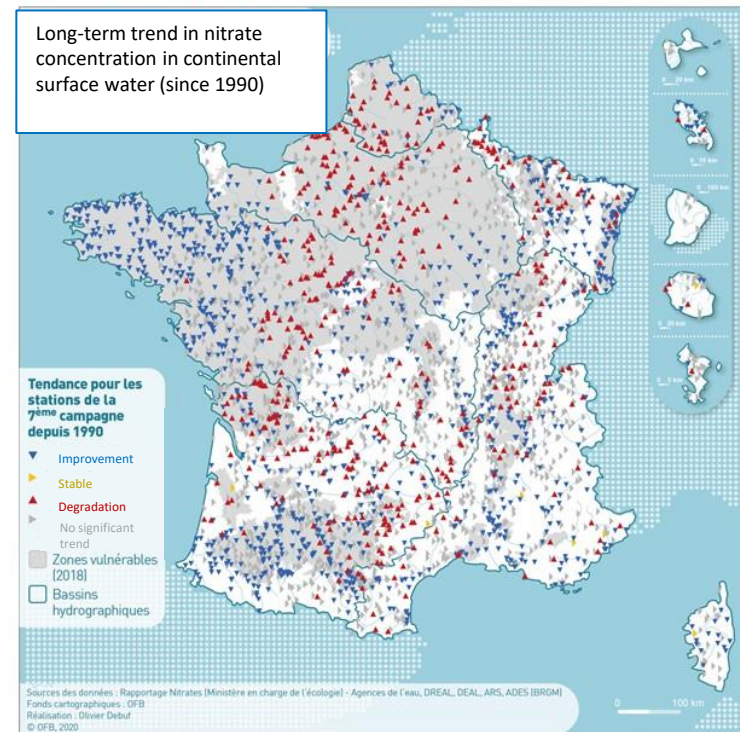
Trends in nitrate levels in surface water and groundwater :

- show an overall stability in results
- with contrasting regional situations

Impact on drinking water production and on the environment



Proliferation of green algae on the coast



The European regulatory framework: the Nitrates Directive

Nitrates Directive

Council Directive of 12 December 1991 concerning the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources (91/676/EEC)



Member States **monitor nitrate levels in water**

Member States define **zones vulnerable** to nitrate pollution

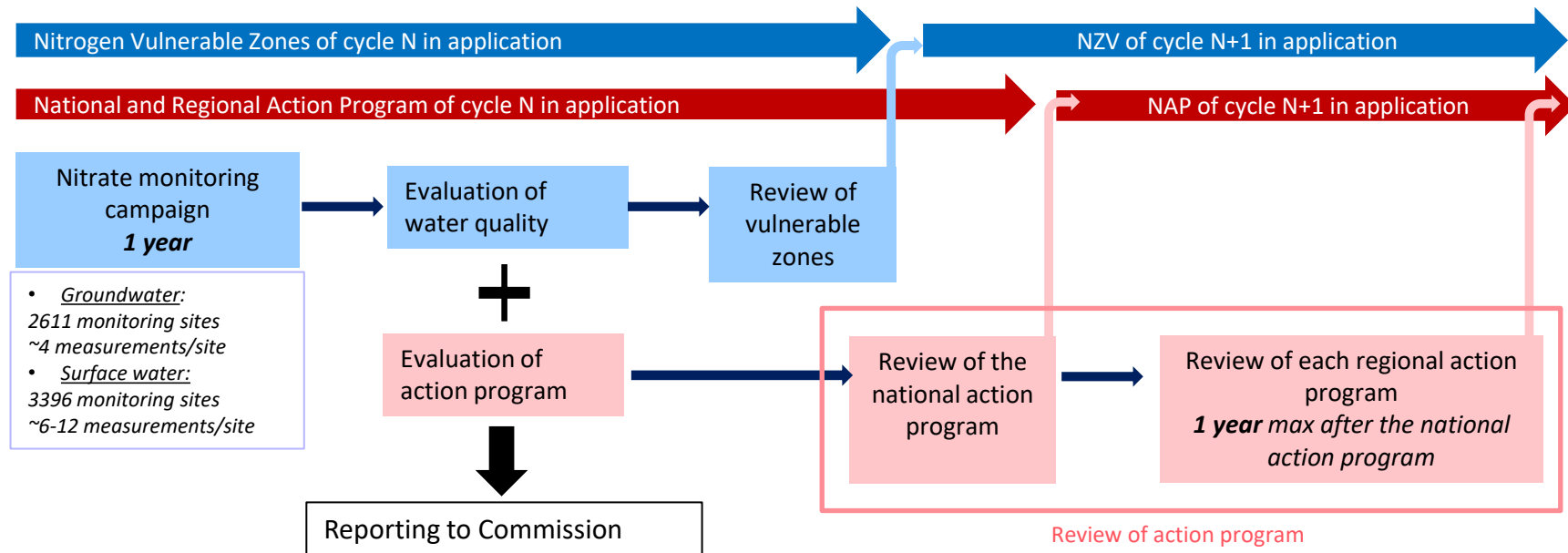
The Member States define **an action program** to combat nitrate pollution, which is applied in vulnerable zones, & **monitor** its effectiveness.

Member States draw up a **voluntary Code of Good Agricultural Practice** for all farmers

Member States **review** Vulnerable Zones and the action program at least **every four years**

The regulatory framework in France on water pollution by nitrate

A 4-year cycle



Monitoring and development based on exchanges involving various stakeholders

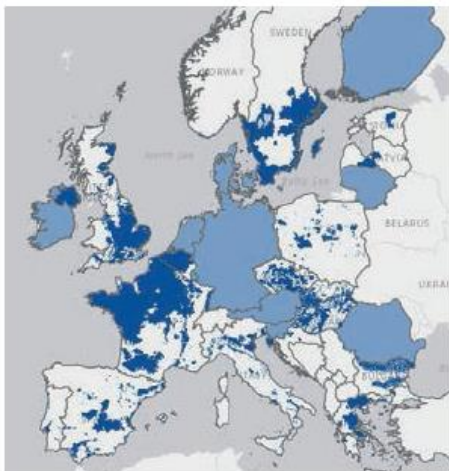
- **Ministry of the Environment and Ministry of Agriculture :**
 - Elaboration, implementation and evaluation of zoning and action programs
 - Revision of ZVs and regional action programs carried out by the ministries' services at a regional level
- **GENEM** : Discussion group composed of stakeholders in the fight against nitrate pollution and more broadly in the management of nutrients and associated emissions to the environment (water and air)
- **Scientific and technical committee** on the management of nutrients and associated emissions to the environment : issues opinions and recommendations
- **Groups of “nitrogen” experts** at the **regional level** can be mobilized to review regional action programs.

Nitrate vulnerable zones

Two zoning levels:

- Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZ)
- Reinforced action zones : drinking water catchment areas > 50mg NO₃ /L and green algae watershed

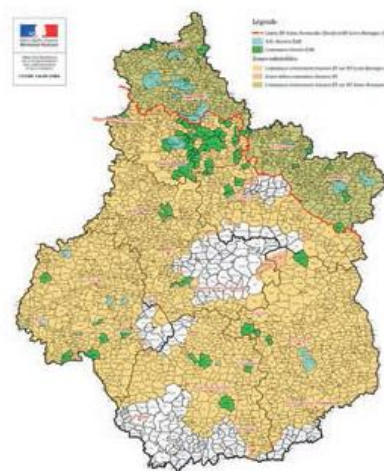
European Union
Nitrates Directive
(NVZ in blue)



French NZVs
National action program



ZV of a region with possible local
reinforcements
Regional action program



The national action program: 8 mandatory measures

- Measure 1°: minimum prohibition periods for spreading fertilisers
- Measure 2°: storage of livestock effluent
- Measure 3°: limits on the spreading of nitrogenous fertilisers based on a balance per plot of land
- Measure 4°: provisional fertilisation plan and spreading register
- Measure 5: limitation of the maximum quantity of nitrogen from livestock manure spread annually on each farm (170 kg/ha)
- Measure 6°: conditions for spreading in relation to watercourses, on steeply sloping, wet, flooded, frozen or snow-covered ground

Nitrates Directive
binding measures

- Measure 7°: plant cover during rainy periods to absorb nitrogen from the soil
- Measure 8°: plant cover along watercourses

Additional measures

Regional action programs

- The Regional AP reinforces the national AP, taking into account agro-pedo-climatic characteristics and nitrates pollution of each zone
- The Regional AP can not weaken the National AP measures
- Content of the Regional AP :
 - Reinforcement of measures of national AP, on all regional NVZ or on parts of regional NVZ (closed periods –reinforcement mandatory in some regions and parts of regions, restriction of spreading on catch crops and intermediate crops...)

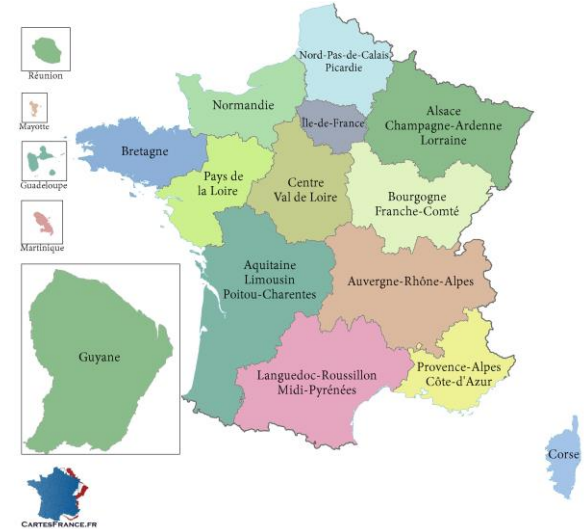
- Complementary measures on specific parts of NVZ

Targeted zones : drinking water catchment areas > 50mg NO₃ /L and green algae watershed , zones presented high livestock density

Measures : reinforcement of National AP, limits on farm nitrogen balances, N fluxes declaration, mandatory treatment of manure beyond a production threshold, ...

- And other measure needed

Map of France's regions



Other regulations and public policies on nitrogen pollution

Incentive policies → financial support for farmers :

- Common agricultural policy → good agricultural and environmental conditions to receive EU income support
- Agri-environmental and climate measures (under the CAP)
- Payments for environmental services
- ...

Other regulations :

- Regulations on installation classified for the protection of the environment
- European Directives on air quality → reducing ammoniac emissions
- Regulatory policy on water catchment areas
- ...