

**Statement by
Mr Harry Liiv
Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of the Environment of Estonia
On the occasion of the 16th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development,
Review of CSD –13: Decisions on Water and Sanitation**

Mr Chairman,

As we heard already yesterday from statement of European Union the policy how to apply IWRM is described in EU's Water Framework Directive and its water management plans. The most perhaps vital part of the water management plan is the detailed programme aimed at achieving good status of water resources, taking into account economic, social, and environmental and transboundary aspects of water management.

In Estonia the implementation of integrated water resource management through water management plans has been started. In order to elaborate the plans that can really become as effective working tools that can be used for the decision making all interested parties are guaranteed the chance to take part and air their views at water management planning meetings and through the publication of related documents.

Mr Chairman, for implementation of water management plans capacity and governance should be improved at different levels.

For better coordination and supervision of the water management planning the Commission on Water Resource Management has been established. The commission includes the representatives of relevant ministries, scientists and experts. For more detailed management and in order to bring water issues more close to local people and authorities river basin districts are in turn divided into eight sub-river basins. Sub-river basins water management plans are managed by authorised working groups including representatives of governmental authorities and relevant experts. Representatives of interested parties can participate in the meetings in case of interest.

It is also utmost important to improve sustainability of water companies in condition with low density of population which makes it difficult to develop sustainable water and wastewater infrastructure that people can afford, especially in rural areas.

Providing water service efficiently in long term in Estonia: public water supply and sewerage development plan serves as tool for implementation of IWRM principles.

To provide the service also in rural areas Estonian Ministry of Environment has started to promote the allegation of small water companies into bigger ones to increase the operating and management efficiency. As a result, starting from 2004 seven regional water utilities has been established.

These regional water companies now implement large scale infrastructure projects to improve the water service in the region and to increase the amount of people with the access to drinking water and sanitation in the rural areas. So, with this approach they are able to implement ambitious plans of measures in IWRM context.