
Legal instruments for the protection of groundwaters used as a source of drinking-water supply in Romania

MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION –ROMANIA-

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Romanian Water Law no. 107/1996 stipulates, within its fifth article, the obligation to set up sanitary protection areas, with severe or restricted regime and hydrogeological protection perimeters around the drinking water supply sources. The operating regime of the sources and the regime of use of protection areas are subjected to the provisions of this law as well as to the specific norms. The special norms concerning the characteristics and size of the protection areas were approved by the Governmental Decision no.101/1997, on the proposal of our ministry, together with the Ministry of Health.

This governmental decision provides the specific framework for the protection of the sources of surface water and groundwater used for human consumption and related installations, as well as for the protection of mineral water sources and therapeutic lakes and mud.

During the four years of enforcement, some technical aspects, initially non-considered, were revealed, for example the difference between biodegradable and non-biodegradable pollutants and between the protection areas of the sources exploiting shallow aquifers and those exploiting confined aquifers. Also, there were some problems concerning the control of delineation of the protection areas, their establishment in the field and the compliance with the requirements imposed. The experience gained proved the necessity to improve the special norms. As a result, the Strategies, Regulations and Licenses Directorate prepared a new draft for introduce some necessary changes in the special norms, draft intended to be approved by governmental decision, and also a draft of Guidelines for delineation of groundwater sources protection areas, which will be approved by ministerial order.

The presentation contains the analyze of the mentioned legal provisions and of the proposed changes and reports on principal hydrogeological considerations and methods used to determine the dimensions of protection areas in the case of wells, drains and springs included in the guidelines for delineation.