



## **Manual of European Environmental Policy**

The following pages are a section from the Manual of European Environmental Policy written by the Institute for European Environmental Policy.

The Manual was published by Earthscan/Routledge from 2010 to 2012. It was designed as an on-line interactive reference work and annual printed versions were also produced.

This section is the text of the Manual as published in 2012. It is therefore important to note the following:

- The contents have not been updated since 2012 and no guarantee is given of the accuracy of the contents given potential subsequent developments.
- The sections include links to external websites (e.g. to legal texts). These links continue to work as long as those links are not broken by those websites.
- The sections also include the original links that enabled interactivity within the published on-line version of the Manual. These links no longer work.

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# International Conventions: Industrial Pollution

International Conventions that have a major impact on the environmental performance of industry in Europe are generally agreed under the specific objectives of protection of air or water, etc. Indeed, there is only one specific Convention aimed at industrial environmental performance (in relation to accidents), but there are a number of individual Protocols under a range of Conventions relating to industry or where there is an expectation that industry contributes to achieving the objectives of The Conventions. For this reason, much of this section will highlight the links to relevant Conventions in other Chapters in this *Manual of European Environmental Policy*.

## Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Place of signature                     | Helsinki  |
| Date of signature                      | 17.03.1992  |
| Date of entry into force               | 19.04.2000  |
| Secretariat                            | UN Economic Commission for Europe, Environment and Human Settlements Division               |
| Website                                | <a href="http://www.unece.org/env/teia/text.htm">http://www.unece.org/env/teia/text.htm</a> |
| Date of Council Decision on conclusion | 23.03.1998  |
| Date of entry into force in EC         | 19.04.2000  |
| Reference of Council Decision          | <a href="#">98/685/EC</a> (OJ L326 3.12.1998)   |

The Convention aims to protect human health and the environment from industrial accidents capable of causing transboundary effects. It also aims to promote active international cooperation before, during and after such an accident. The content of The Convention was influenced by the Major Accident Hazards Directive [96/82/EC](#) although The Convention applies stricter thresholds for defining ‘hazardous activities’. Despite these differences, the EC ratified The Convention in 1998 but with reservations covering the thresholds. New legislation would be required to bring the EC in line with the full text of The Convention. A new Protocol to this Convention and The [Convention](#) on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes was opened for signature at Kiev in 2003. It covers liability and compensation for damage to transboundary waters resulting from industrial accidents (see below).

## **Other Conventions**

The following Convention is relevant to industry, adopted in relation to protection of [freshwaters](#):

### **Convention on the Protection of the Rhine (Rhine Convention)**

The Convention provided for strict control of discharges of substances to the Rhine. Annex I substances were to be controlled in accordance with limit values to be set by the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine against Pollution. Annex II substances were to be controlled by governments under the supervision of the International Commission. These Annexes were similar but not identical to the lists of Directive 2006/11/EC. Importantly, the emission limit approach and action based on technological development were important in driving EU law.

There are a number of Conventions relevant to industry adopted in relation to protection of [marine waters](#):

### **Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention)**

This Convention has concluded a Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-based Sources (Land-based Sources Protocol). This Protocol includes a need to address major industrial discharges.

### **Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (Helsinki Convention)**

A major element of this Convention is the identification of land-based pollution sources, including from industry (and including deposition from emissions to air) and adopting measures to address these.

### **Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention)**

The Convention was signed in Paris in September 1992 by the European Community and several Member States. It entered into force in 1998, replacing the 1974 Paris Convention on marine pollution from land-based sources and it continues to address these sources, including from industry.

### **The Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution**

The Convention has adopted a Protocol on Protection of the Black Sea Marine Environment against Pollution from Land-based Sources.

The following [Convention](#) is relevant to industry, adopted in relation to protection of the atmosphere:

### **Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP)**

This Convention has adopted a series of Protocols relating to emissions of which industry (including the power sector) are major sources:

- Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or their Transboundary Fluxes (NO<sub>x</sub> Protocol).
- Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds or their Transboundary Fluxes (VOC Protocol).
- Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions.
- Protocol on Heavy Metals (Heavy Metals Protocol).
- Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs Protocol).
- Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Multi-Pollutant Protocol).

These Protocols were important drivers in stimulating development of Directives including the Large Combustion Plant Directive [2001/80/EC](#), the Waste Incineration Directive [2000/76/EC](#) and the Solvents Emissions Directive [1999/13/EC](#).

The following [Convention](#) is relevant to industry, adopted in relation to access to information and justice:

### **Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)**

The Convention requires citizens and interested parties to have access to environmental information and justice and its adoption resulted in an amendment to the, then, Directive [96/61/EC](#). The Convention has also adopted a Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR Protocol) which is important in reporting on industrial emissions (see section on the European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (E-PRTR) for more information).