Overview of emissions to water existing data collections

D. Preux and B. Fribourg-Blanc, experts on emissions to water
International Office for Water
15 rue Edouard Chamberland,
87065 Limoges Cedex
France
+33 555 11 47 97
d.preux@oieau.fr
b.fribourg-blanc@oieau.fr

ABSTRACT:

Emissions to water are one of the major environmental problems for water. The emissions can stem from point or from diffuse sources and raise various questions related to geographical scale, temporal aggregation and parameters. The main characteristic that make them difficult to assess is however that they follow various pathways from the emission source to the receiving environment.
The various initiatives to collect emissions to water data often support specific objectives and do not allow to show a complete picture. The EEA and more recently the WFD provided new approaches towards a better balanced knowledge.
The existing data collections can be classified in collections dedicated to some sectors and parameters (EPER and UWWTD), collections with a more complete coverage as regards the sources (Marine Conventions OSPAR and HELCOM, EUROSTAT/OECD JQ) and emerging data collections (WFD, E-PRTR). From these various data collections, including the emerging ones, it appears that some are overlapping, needing to collect twice the same data, whereas main gaps exist, especially as regards small and diffuse sources, and that major drawbacks will not allow in the future to gain an adequate knowledge.
Eionet-emission of the EEA proposes a methodology that seek to answer the various needs especially by providing a data organisation, the main elements being the identification of the sources, the pollutants, and geographical and temporal aggregations.
Progress on data quality as regards the various elements and especially the development of shared nomenclatures, are however needed to reach a good level of confidence.