

The Environmental Implementation Review



Denmark

Environmental Implementation Review 2025

Environmental policy implementation in Denmark remains at a high standard although reducing waste production, improving water quality and expanding, and restoring and protecting the country's nature remain challenging. Agriculture is the dominant type of land use and has significant impact on the environment.

Denmark has recently decided on an ambitious reform for the agriculture sector to reach climate targets but also to benefit the country's water bodies and biodiversity. In 2024, a broad political agreement on a Green Denmark was reached between all main parties and it has a strong support from environmental, agricultural and other stakeholders.

Highlights



The overall condition of the Danish air quality, groundwater and bathing water is good and urban wastewater treatment complies with the legal requirements.

Main Challenges



Nature and biodiversity

Danish habitats and species are in poor condition. The share of habitats in good condition is the second lowest in the EU. The main causes are agriculture and mixed sources of pollution but also other pressures. The share of the Natura 2000 land area out of the total national territory is the smallest in the EU.



Pollution

Surface water bodies are in a fragile condition. Nutrient pollution from the intensive agriculture sector causes eutrophication. The provenance and the size of the pollution caused by mercury and other hazardous substances is unclear, but a small sample suggests a worsening tendency.



Circular Economy

Denmark's municipal waste per capita is one of the highest in the EU and it incinerates the largest amount of municipal waste per capita in the EU. Denmark must make significant efforts to move towards greener solutions for its district heating.

Governance and investment



The investment gap to meet Denmark's environmental objectives is an estimated €1.451 million per year, representing around 0.39% of national GDP, below the EU-average (0.77%).

Using the national portal "Høringsportalen" in all public consultations in the environmental decision-making procedures to facilitate data collation at national level on participation rates.

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