



## FINLAND

Two draft RBMPs were assessed in April 2021 for [Kemijoki RBD<sup>22</sup>](#) and the [Vuoksi RBD<sup>23</sup>](#) focussing on the transboundary Rakkolanjoki river. Overall, the draft RBMPs apply a very limited number of exemptions and none under article 4(7). Regarding the status of implementation of the second RBMP PoMs, less than 80% of the measures have been implemented, due to a lack of funding, insufficient or poorly directed measures as well as forestry and agriculture management practices. No relevant assessment of the effectiveness of the previous RBMP's measures is provided. Three topics are considered as main challenges in the RBDs, and the main findings of the assessment are detailed below:

**Removal and adaptation of barriers:** The Kemijoki draft RBMP identifies 377 dams with 160 of them hampering fish migration, and 130 dams whose impacts still need to be assessed. Under the previous RBMP, the removal of small obstacles was the priority and is set to continue into the third round, but there are no explicit numbers or allocations in the draft RBMP. These actions will support the Finnish national fisheries strategy, and the priority has now moved to major hydropower dams and their bypass solutions. Implementation is yet unclear and relies on

upcoming funding opportunities. The level of ambition remains disputed and depends heavily on construction. The original rapid riverbeds (with environmental flow), which have been bypassed for damming, are needed to achieve a high level of success. Beyond the dammed area, there is a 300 km Ounasjoki tributary which is strictly protected. Putting four dam crossings with down passages in place to reach these pristine breeding areas holds high ecological potential. In the Rakkolanjoki river, all the dams and barriers have been removed during the previous implementation periods on both sides of the Finnish/Russian border.

**Hydropower:** In the Kemijoki and Vuoksi draft RBMPs, hydropower is recognised as a major pressure especially for hydromorphology and fish. The Kemijoki river's hydropower heavily modified water bodies (HMWBs) have updated status assessments: for the first time they are recognised as currently not achieving good ecological potential and in need of measures including fish by-passes and ecological flows during the 2022-2027 RBMPs.

**River and wetland restoration:** The Kemijoki and Vuoksi draft RBMPs provide an overall description of the status of protected freshwater ecosystems and define the specific water qualities required for achieving good status. Fish migration is the key criteria used to establish restoration

22. Reference: FIVHA5

23. Reference: FIVHA1

	Topic	FI	
		Kemijoki	Vuoksi
<b>1</b>	<b>Removal and adaptation of barriers</b>		
	1. Identification of the problem		
	2. Prioritisation		
	3. Cost-benefit analysis and monitoring plan		
	4. Ambition		
<b>2</b>	<b>Hydropower</b>		
	1. Pressures and sectors		
	2. Inventory of planned projects		
	3. Justification and exemptions		
	4. Criteria and thresholds		
	5. Plans for refurbishment and decommissioning		
<b>3</b>	<b>Inland navigation</b>		
	1. Pressures and sectors		
	2. Inventory of planned projects		
	3. Justification and exemptions		
	4. Criteria and thresholds		
	5. 'Working with nature'		
<b>4</b>	<b>Freshwater ecosystem protection and restoration and NBS</b>		
	1. Protected areas and their status		
	2. Prioritisation		
	3. Restoration targets		
	4. Nature-based solutions (NBS)		
	5. Natural Water Retention Measures (NWRM)		
	6. Sound financial mechanism		
<b>5</b>	<b>Water allocation and abstraction control</b>		
	1. Identification of significant water abstractions		
	2. Prospects of new water abstractions, related infrastructure and land uses		
	3. Review of abstraction permits		
	4. Abstraction control		
<b>6a</b>	<b>Drought management</b>		
	1. PoM "climate checks"		
	2. Drought management plans		
<b>6b</b>	<b>Flood management</b>		
	1. PoM "climate checks"		
	3. Link with the Floods Directive		
	4. Land use and flood management		
<b>7</b>	<b>Agriculture</b>		
	1. Assessment of pressures		
	2. Gap analysis and measures		
	3. Diffuse pollution		
<b>8</b>	<b>Coal mines (and combustion)</b>		
	1. Assessment of the problem		
	2. Priority hazardous substances		
	3. Climate change		
	4. Justification and exemptions		
	5. Cost recovery		
	6. Liabilities		
<b>9</b>	<b>Economic instruments and adequacy of budget</b>		
	1. Cost recovery calculation for sectors		
	2. Cost recovery rates and exemptions		
	3. Budget		
<b>10</b>	<b>Exemptions</b>		
	1. Number of exemptions		
	2. Gap analysis		
	3. Art. 4(4) and 4(5) exemption justifications		
	4. Article 4(6) exemption justifications		
	5. Article 4(7) exemption justifications		
<b>11</b>	<b>Review and update on the implementation of the previous RBMP</b>		
	1. Implementation of measures		
	2. Effectiveness of measures		

priorities and it also addresses nature-based solutions, agricultural and, more recently, forestry management practices. The Natura 2000 sites, the Upper Rakkolanjoki tributary and Lake Haapajärvi, are the Vuoksi draft RBMP's priorities for 2022-2027, including removing wastewater treatment plants runoff water outlets from the river and improving agricultural practices to reduce the nutrient load, as well as re-meandering and the establishment of gravel beds. However, restoration measures beyond the removal of wastewater treatment discharge are based on voluntary action, and their impact remains unclear.

### Economic instruments and budget

**adequacy:** In the Kemijoki and Vuoksi draft RBMPs, the cost recovery rate (including environmental and resource costs) for the different sectors is generally 50-70% of the full costs of water services. Cost recovery exemptions are not considered in the draft RBMP. The Kemijoki draft RBMP budget is €36 million, with €30 million for the improvement of urban wastewater treatment and €6 million for voluntary measures. Out of the €242 million budget allocated to the Vuoksi draft RBMP, €77.5 million is for voluntary measures. It is unclear to what extent the budgets will be implemented by the government.

	RELEVANCE	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE				
		high	good	moderate	poor	N/A
	Not applicable or relevant for the RBD					
	This problem/ challenge has already been solved in the second RBMP					
	One of the many problems/challenges in this RBD					
	One of the Significant Water Management Issues (SWMI)					
	The main problem/challenge in this RBD					

**Table 16:** Overview of the performance of the draft 2022-2027 RBMPs Vuoksi and Kemijoki (Finland) on key topics by indicator.