

## Water quality improvement through international cooperation on the Rhine

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### Biographical Sketch of Author

From January 1, 2003 Peter Stoks is director of the Rhine Water utility association RIWA in the Netherlands, and acting director of the International Association of Waterworks along the Rhine IAWR. Until 2003 he was Head of the Water Quality Division and Member of the Directory Board of the Dutch WRK Water works. His main interests in Water management include policy development, monitoring and assessment, and early warning strategies.

### Abstract

Historically, the water utilities along the Rhine river have had to deal with serious pollution of their source water. This forced them to spend energy and resources on the improvement of treatment techniques. In addition, however, these utilities have effectively struggled to reduce this pollution, by addressing water authorities, governments and industry as well as by confrontation of polluters with the results of joint utility monitoring and research programs. For this reason an international cooperation among these utilities was started as early as 1970, leading to the formation of the IAWR, the International Association of Waterworks along the Rhine. The IAWR is, today, considered an NGO representing well over 25 million consumers and is recognized as a serious player in the field of water management along the entire river. One very effective instrument is the periodic publication of a Rhine Memorandum stating water quality demands in order to ensure the production of good drinking water using only simple treatment.

Such Memoranda are presented to the Governments of the riparian states as well as to industry and are brought to the attention of the general public.

Even though the current water quality of the Rhine is fairly good, the drinking water utilities still need highly advanced treatment techniques, such as ozone, and activated carbon to assure an acceptable drinking water quality. The ultimate goal of both RIWA and IAWR is to achieve such a water quality that the Rhine river may be used as the source for drinking water production using only simple techniques such as bank filtration.