

## **Nitrates Directive - Czech experience with its implementation and application**

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### **Summary**

The focus of the paper is on more than ten year history of Council Directive 676/1991 (known as a Nitrates Directive). The directive addresses the protection of waters against pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources. It is one of the main tools of sustainable agriculture within the Czech environment with taking into account the experience of neighbouring countries. The main part of this paper devotes to environmental problems which have occurred during its implementation, including the economic aspects. Despite the initial improvement of the environment which occurred after the implementation this Directive to Czech legal systems the situation is nowadays getting worse. The main reason seems to be the initiative of gaining higher yields by increasing fertilizer application, which in comparison to other European countries has been significantly higher. This has resulted, in comparison to the previous years, to degradation of soil quality, quality of water sources as well as biodiversity. In addition to environmental aspects, nitrate directive contains also an economic aspect i.e. financial charge of a farmer as well as a state. This contribution will also deal with this correlation which seems to be problem not only in Czech Republic.

**Key words:** Nitrate Directive, water pollution, fertilisers