

An Overview of US Hydropower Viewed Through the Lens of EU Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities

Dr. Brenda Pracheil, Fisheries Biologist, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Governing Board Chair, Low Impact Hydropower Institute (United States)

Email corresponding author: brenda.pracheil@pnnl.gov

ABSTRACT: This talk will provide an overview of US hydropower regulation including current trends and future forecasts of how environmental impacts of hydropower are being assessed and mitigated in the US and how these solutions map to the EU Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities. The United States has regulatory requirements explicitly addressing Taxonomy objectives on the sustainable use and protection of water, pollution prevention and control, and protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems but does not yet name climate change mitigation or adaptation and transition to a circular economy as in regulatory requirements. However, voluntary participation in meeting enhanced environmental standards that are driven by market incentives in some areas may help some US facilities address additional objectives. Hydropower regulation in the United States is driven by individuals and governmental and non-governmental organizations that provide input on what and how environmental impacts should be assessed and mitigated. Participants in the regulatory process are beginning to drive US regulations closer to meeting EU Taxonomy objectives, particularly those related to climate change.