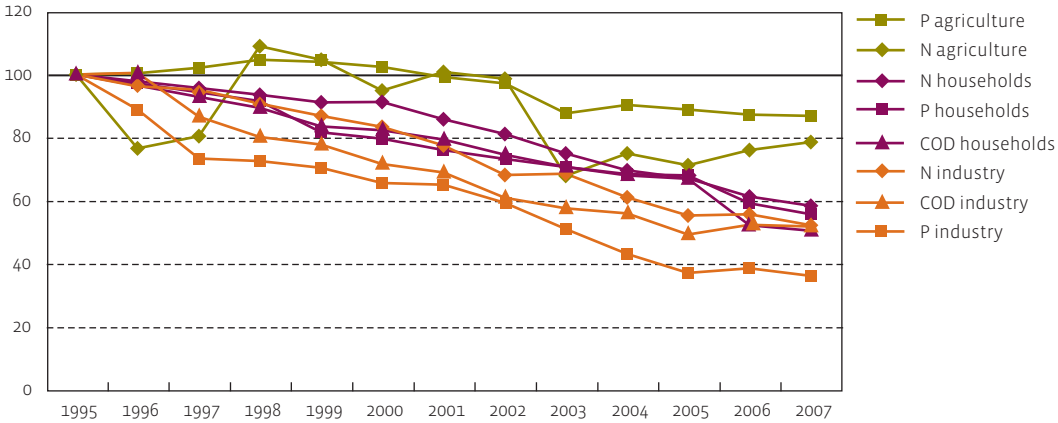




Pressure on the surface water from oxygen-binding substances and nutrients

pressure on surface water (1995=100)



Source: VMM

Pollutant loads to the surface water from households decreasing steadily

The pollutant load with a domestic origin that the Flemish surface waters have to deal with has steadily decreased in the period 1995-2007 due to the systematic expansion and improvement of the public waste water treatment network. Thus the pollutant load from chemical oxygen demand (COD), nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) decreased by 50, 42 and 44 % respectively. Yet households still have the largest share in the load on the surface water from COD and P.

Pollutant loads to the surface water from companies decreased considerably until 2005

Companies (companies sampled from the industry, energy and trade & services sectors) achieved a major reduction in the period 1995-2005, since then there has been no clear trend. Compared to 1995 their pollution load had decreased in 2007 by 48 % for COD and N and by 64 % for P. The small share of the industry, energy and trade & services sectors in the load on the surface water from COD, N and P is striking.

Agriculture remains the most important source of nitrogen

The N losses from agriculture have been at a lower level since 2003 than previously, but in recent years they have been increasing again. Via fertilisation, agriculture is responsible for the largest share of the total N load that gets into the surface water. Since 1998 there appears to have been a steady fall in the calculated P losses, although the tempo of recent years is decreasing.