



POLICY ISSUES

EU ELECTIONS: WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A MORE RIGHT-WING PARLIAMENT

Sustainability: After five years of European Green Deal legislative bonanza, the next mandate will be dominated by implementing a lot of the EU's new rules to boost the circular economy, slash packaging waste, rein in greenwashing and make products more sustainable. How ambitious this implementation will be and whether Brussels will even roll back some of those measures are central questions of the June election and will be influenced by the composition of the new Parliament.

The recent backlash against the EU's green policies has led to uncertainty over whether incoming lawmakers will take on some the unfinished business on the restoration of natural ecosystems, chemical pollution or forest resilience. New sustainability concerns are emerging across the bloc, notably around the long-lasting and widespread pollution of the so-called "forever chemicals," or PFAS, and Brussels is under increased pressure to address this issue after it dragged its feet to revise the bloc's framework chemicals regulation REACH. [Link to article here](#)

Source: Politico, 27/05/24

COUNCIL APPROVES 'ECODESIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS REGULATION'

On Monday 27 May, the Council of the EU approved the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), which was the subject of an interinstitutional agreement on 5 December (and had already been approved by the European Parliament on 23 April).

Following the Council's approval today, the legislative act has been adopted. After being signed by the President of the European Parliament and the President of the Council, the regulation will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union and will enter into force on the 20th day following that of its publication. It will apply from 24 months after the entry into force.

This regulation establishes a general framework for the introduction of environmental sustainability standards for most products sold in the EU. [Link to article here](#)

Last 22 May the European Commission organised an information session on new Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) – [link to webinar](#)

Source: Council of the EU Brussels, 28/05/2024

EUDR - COMMISSION REMAINS FIRM ON DEFORESTATION

Astrid Ladefoged, head of unit at the European Commission's environment department, confirmed that the new EU rules to combat global deforestation will be implemented as scheduled. Speaking at a palm oil industry event in Brussels, she stated that the legislation will apply to large companies by the end of the year, while small and medium-sized businesses will have an additional six months to comply. Despite pushback from several countries and industry associations calling for a delay, the Commission is moving forward with the rollout. In response to numerous queries from businesses about compliance, the Commission is updating its Frequently Asked Questions, which will be released in a few weeks. Guidelines on proving compliance are expected before July.

Source: Politico, 23/05/2024

Last 17 May an open letter on EUDR implementation has been sent to the European Commission President Von der Leyen [here](#) - letter co-signed by Eurocommerce, CEPI, Bioenergy Europe, CAOBISCO, EUSTAFOR, FEDIOL, FEFAC, FoodDrinkEurope dated from 17 May.

THIRD COUNTRIES' REACTION ON EUDR: COLOMBIAN PALM OIL COULD PROFIT

Colombian palm oil could emerge as the big winner from the EU's upcoming Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), as the world's fourth largest producer (3 percent of output) prepares to use its better technology and faster progress on implementation to steal market share from the sluggish giants of Indonesia (59 percent) and Malaysia (24 percent). Laundering of informal or illegally produced palm oil (say, from protected nature reserves) remains a concern in Colombia, with processing mills poorly equipped to root out the dirty stuff, according to an [investigation](#) last year from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), an NGO. That said, it is true that Colombian palm oil is a front runner "with 28 percent of its production volume certified as sustainable, surpassing major producers Indonesia and Malaysia."

Source Politico 30/05/24

DG SANTE UPDATES ON FCM REGULATION AND BPA RESTRICTIONS

The *European Commission's* working group on food contact materials (FCMs) [reconvened](#) to present the status of the FCM regulation revision and the ban on the use of bisphenol A (BPA) and other hazardous bisphenols in FCMs. DG SANTE officials indicated that a study to determine the definition of sustainable FCMs should be completed by February 2025. Preliminary results seem to agree that FCMs are unsustainable and that "plastics (a large share of which is used in food packaging) alone undermine all planetary boundaries," according to the presentation slides.

Concerning the BPA restriction: The restriction encompasses a "ban on use of BPA as a monomer or other starting substance in the manufacture of FCM and placing on market of FCMs made using BPA", as well as the use of other bisphenols that are carcinogenic, mutagenic, toxic to reproduction, or endocrine disrupting. Should the regulation be approved by Member States, it will be transmitted to the *European Parliament and Council* on July 10, 2024.

Source Food packaging Forum 17/05/24

CIRCULAR ECONOMY: COUNCIL APPROVES RIGHT-TO-REPAIR DIRECTIVE

The Council has today adopted a directive promoting the repair of broken or defective goods, also known as the right-to-repair (or R2R) directive. The adoption of the directive is the last step in the legislative decision-making process. Following the Council's approval today, the legislative act has been adopted. After being signed by the President of the European Parliament and the President of the Council, the directive will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union and will enter into force on the 20th day following its publication. Member states will have 24 months from the entry into force to transpose the directive into national law. [Link to Article](#)

Source Food packaging Forum 17/05/24

WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE: NGOS WANT FARM-TO-FORK TARGETS BACK

The European Commission wants to revise the Waste Framework Directive, which sets binding waste reduction targets of 10 percent for processing and manufacturing, and 30 percent for retail food services and households. The European Parliament wants both those figures upped by 10 percentage points. The agricultural sector, meanwhile, is exempt from these targets. The Council has not yet given its final say on the proposal, but some countries are pushing for lower targets, saying 40 percent is not feasible. A group of 65 NGOs including Feedback Europe, the European Environment Bureau and Too Good to Go are calling for a legally binding food waste reduction target of 50 percent by 2030 for

the entire food value chain — a concept known as farm-to-fork — in a letter sent to the European Council on 10 May. [Link to letter here](#)

Source: Politico, 10/05/2024

PLASTIC TREATY: FOURTH ROUND OF INC PLASTICS TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

Fourth round of negotiations for a new global instrument on plastic pollution took place in Ottawa, Canada from April 23 – 29, 2024; member states agree on intersessional work to be carried out on financial mechanisms and chemicals of concern ahead of upcoming final session; no agreement on reducing primary plastic production; concerns raised over industry lobbyists outnumbering scientists and many national delegations; final INC-5 meeting set to take place in Busan, Republic of Korea on November 25 – December 1, 2024 [link to article here](#)

Source Food packaging Forum 24/05/24

REDUCING MATERIAL FOOTPRINT IN POST-2024 EU ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

A new version of the conclusions prepared by the Belgian presidency on the 8th Environmental Action Programme (EAP) has been presented to state attachés on May 24. This document outlines priorities for the EU's environmental policies post-2024, focusing significantly on the circular economy. The latest draft emphasizes "decoupling growth from resource use" by introducing European targets to reduce resource demand at both production and consumption levels. It notes that the new eco-design regulation alone will not be enough to counterbalance high resource consumption, necessitating additional measures to address the current unsustainable levels.

Rather than explicitly calling for legislation on sustainable resource management, the document asks the European Commission to initiate a process to implement this "vision." This process should evaluate the need for new legislation or a comprehensive revision of existing regulations. The presidency aims to present the draft conclusions to deputy ambassadors (Coreper 1) on June 5 before seeking approval from Environment Ministers on June 17.

Source: Contexte France

COUNCIL ADOPTS CONCLUSIONS ON THE FUTURE OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY

The Council, on the initiative of the Belgian presidency, [has adopted conclusions on 'A competitive European industry driving our green, digital and resilient future'](#). Boosting the competitiveness of European industry should be high on the political agenda of the next European Commission and these conclusions provide the way forward towards a new European competitiveness deal.

The Conclusions highlights the need to create favourable conditions for demand for sustainable, net zero, low carbon and circular products and materials, develop a single market for waste, secondary raw materials and recycled products, promote advanced materials and circularity, and strive for a level playing field for companies pursuing high environmental and social ambitions; Additionally the Council urges the Commission to finalise the update of the bioeconomy strategy by the end of 2025. [Link to article here](#)

Source: Council of the EU, 24/05/24

NATURE RESTAURATION LAW: BUSINESSES URGE BELGIAN PRESIDENCY TO DELIVER ON NATURE RESTORATION LAW

Just a few weeks ahead of the next meeting of the EU's environment ministers, a [group of businesses has written to the Belgian presidency of the Council](#) of the EU to call for the contentious nature restoration regulation to be finalized as soon as possible. "To bend the curve of biodiversity decline, protecting remaining natural places will not be sufficient — we need to invest in large-scale restoration as well," the group argued in a letter sent today. The signatories, which include companies like Coca-

Cola, Exki, fashion brand H&M, speculoos maker Maison Dandoy and retailer Spar, warned that “failure to act will lead to costly disruptions across supply chains, lower productivity and higher operational costs.” Link [here](#)

Source Politico 29/09/24

INDUSTRIAL POLICY: COUNCIL GIVES APPROVES THE NET-ZERO INDUSTRY ACT

The Council has today adopted a regulation on establishing a framework of measures for strengthening Europe's net-zero technology manufacturing ecosystem, better known as the 'net-zero industry act'. This is the last step in the decision-making process. The regulation aims to boost the industrial deployment of net-zero technologies that are needed to achieve the EU's climate goals, using the strength of the single market to reinforce Europe's position as a leader in industrial green technologies. [Link to article](#)

Source: Council of EU 27/05/2024

FRANCE AND GERMANY ADVOCATE FOR GREEN DEAL AS GROWTH STRATEGY

On May 23, French Minister Bruno Le Maire and German Minister Robert Habeck launched a joint initiative to transform the EU's Green Deal into a "growth agenda" aimed at revitalizing Europe's industrial base with climate-neutral technologies. This initiative, to be presented at the Competitiveness Council on May 24, emphasizes the importance of recycling and the circular economy in achieving sustainable growth. To boost productivity, Le Maire and Habeck highlight the need for substantial investments, estimating that €620 billion will be required to meet the Green Deal and RepowerEU goals. They advocate for leveraging private financing by deepening capital markets while also calling for increased European funding for public goods essential for the transition.

Source: Contexte 23/05/24

EU GREEN DEAL FACES CHALLENGES POST-EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

A recent report by the Institute for European Environmental Policy, published on May 21, reveals that while the EU Green Deal is expected to survive the upcoming European elections, its implementation may be weakened. The report, based on expert surveys conducted between January 4 and February 26, indicates that 67% of experts foresee a negative impact on the Green Deal, with 20% predicting a very negative outcome. The primary obstacle identified is the "insufficient commitment" from national governments. Despite these concerns, over half of the experts (55%) believe that the European institutions will successfully convert the Green Deal's objectives into approved legislation.

Source: Contexte 23/05/24

COMMISSION PRESENTS GUIDANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACCELERATE RENEWABLE ENERGY ROLL-OUT AHEAD OF REPOWEREU ANNIVERSARY

In the [updated Recommendation](#) on speeding up permit-granting procedures and its accompanying guidance adopted, the Commission highlights ways to improve planning and permitting procedures for renewable energy and related infrastructure projects in the EU. [Link to article here](#)

Source: European Commission 13/05/24

COMMISSION PUBLISHES REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF EU CLIMATE POLICY

On Wednesday 15 May, the European Commission published four reports required by the legislation to analyse the way in which elements of the EU's climate policy are being implemented. They concern the

European Climate Law, the Emissions Trading System (ETS) Directive, the Effort Sharing Regulation and the Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) Regulation.

Link to [article](#)

Source: European Commission 15/05/2024

SCHOLZ, MACRON ADOPT ‘COMPETITIVENESS’ GUIDELINES TO SET EU AGENDA

With the EU set for a new five-year term, the bloc’s powerhouses France and Germany insist that their economic priorities – featuring a heftier EU budget and less regulated industries – be considered first and foremost. To conclude the first official state visit of a French President to Germany since Jacques Chirac in 2000, Emmanuel Macron joined the German government north of Berlin to deliberate on EU affairs – and sign an agenda-setting joint declaration. The declaration, titled “A New Agenda to Boost Competitiveness and Growth in the European Union,” is the culmination of months of transnational ministerial work on tackling red tape and boosting the economy. With EU leaders set to decide their five-year strategic agenda in late June, this joint declaration by the bloc’s two largest member states is expected to frame the discussions in Brussels. [Link to article here](#)

Source: Euractiv May /2024

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION LAUNCHED NEW ENV INFRINGEMENT PROCEDURES

The European Commission launched new infringement procedures against Portugal, Italy, Hungary and Malta for failures to correctly implement EU environmental law. The Commission has reprimanded Italy for not correctly transposing its rules on single-use plastics and for breaching the single market when it decided to adopt a law on single-use plastics without giving the Commission enough time to review it. Hungarian law does not protect people’s right to challenge the government’s actions on topics like nature protection, water, waste management and industrial emissions. As for Malta, the Commission says that it doesn’t give enough access to public organizations like NGOs to court actions on nature, waste and water policy.

Source: Politico 23/05/2024

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

- [Safe and Sustainable by Design chemicals and materials - 2nd TESTING PHASE](#) - Joint Research Centre, EU - deadline August 30, 2024
- [Health & safety at work – template to collect data on machinery or related products](#)- deadline 31 May 2024
- [Single Market Programme – interim evaluation](#) deadline 31 May 2024
- [Reusable packaging system design standard: Container washing, inspection, and packing for distribution](#)

STUDIES/REPORTS/ARTICLES

EUROBAROMETER: EUROPEANS FEEL DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND POLICY-FROM RISK TO RESILIENCE: NAVIGATING TOWARDS A TOXIC-FREE FUTURE

Europeans continue to express **high levels of concern about the environment**, which they see as an issue affecting them personally, according to a [new Eurobarometer survey on ‘Attitudes of Europeans towards the environment’](#) published on 29 May 2024.

The Report highlights support for circular economy and nature restoration. Citizens consider promoting the circular economy as the most effective way of tackling environmental problems in 11 Member States, followed closely by restoring nature. As part of a more circular economy, citizens support reducing the amount of waste by sorting their waste for recycling correctly and using reusable packaging. In addition, in order to reduce waste, almost half of the respondents would primarily buy products that do not have more packaging than necessary and over 40% would primarily buy products in recycled packages. At the EU level as a whole, plastic and chemical waste are viewed as the most problematic, cited by 35% and 34% of respondents respectively.

JRC TECHNICAL REPORT MELAMINE AND FORMALDEHYDE (FA) IN FC MIGRATION SOLUTIONS

Determination of melamine and formaldehyde (FA) in food contact material migration solutions. [Link to Report here](#)

PFAS TOPPINGS ON YOUR PIZZA? RENEW EUROPE SUCCEEDS IN BANNING FOREVER CHEMICALS FROM CONTACT – SENSITIVE FOOD PACKAGING

While setting ambitious reduction targets and mandatory recycling targets for packaging and packaging waste, our Renew Rapporteur Mrs. Frédérique Ries has achieved safer packaging rules for contact-sensitive food packaging. As a result, banning PFAS chemicals, infamous for their persistent harmful effects, from contact-sensitive food packaging by 2026 will be a real win for consumer health protection. In addition to banning 'eternal' pollutants in food packaging, the new packaging regulation contains the following main elements :

- packaging waste reduction for all packaging materials: 5% by 2030, 10% by 2035 and 15% by 2040.
- Mandatory recyclability of packaging by 2030.
- ban on single-use plastics in HORECA for retail sales by 2030, to promote reusable alternatives.
- maximise the efficiency of packaging and minimise waste, a maximum empty space rate of 50%
- By the end of 2027, the Commission will have to assess the proposed sustainability targets and criteria for bio-based plastics. [Link to article here](#)

NGOS ACCUSE SPAIN OF INFLATING PLASTIC COLLECTION FIGURES

NGOs are accusing Spain's waste management industry of manipulating plastic collection figures, according to a [report by Zero Waste Europe](#), the Zero Waste Alliance, and British consultancy firm Eunomia. The report claims that over 70% of single-use PET plastic bottles are currently collected for recycling, but the real figure is closer to 36%. The NGOs argue that data transparency issues mean Ecoembes is underestimating the number of plastic bottles not accounted for by producers and relies too heavily on estimates for PET bottles collected privately from large venues. The target is to get the Spanish government to implement a deposit refund scheme, argued to ensure high collection rates.

THE CHEMICAL AND WASTE FOOTPRINT OF FOOD DELIVERY IN CHINA

Study uses online food delivery sales data from nearly 200 Chinese cities, combined with packaging samples from 18 of those cities to model packaging waste generation and chemical exposure from waste incineration; some degradation products with higher concentrations than intentionally added parent product; over 50 tons of the targeted additives likely released into the atmosphere from Chinese waste incinerators. [Link to article here](#)

Source: Food packaging Forum 1 May 2024

STAKEHOLDERS' STATEMENT AND REACTIONS TO PPWR

- [ECMA - ECMA & Pro Carton - Packaging Recyclability Certifications Statement](#)
- [Drupa 2024 live: 4evergreen alliance on achieving 90% circularity for fiber-based packaging](#)
- [ENDSEurope - Recyclable plastic exports down while imports see major increase.](#)