
POLICY ISSUES

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING: COUNCIL SIGNS OFF ON NEW RULES FOR LESS WASTE AND MORE RE-USE IN THE EU

The Council presidency and the European Parliament's representatives reached a provisional political agreement on a proposal for a regulation on packaging and packaging waste.

- The regulation will be published in the EU's Official Journal and enter into force in early 2025.
- The regulation will be applied 18 months after entry into force. Link to press release [here](#).

Source: Council 16/12/2024

EU DEFORESTATION LAW: COUNCIL ADOPTS ITS ONE-YEAR POSTPONEMENT

Last 18 December the [Council of the EU formally adopted a one-year postponement for the application of the EU Deforestation Regulation \(EUDR\)](#), moving its enforcement from 30 December 2024 to 30 December 2025.

- This delay aims to provide sufficient time for third countries, Member States, operators, and traders to prepare for due diligence obligations and ensure that certain commodities and products sold or exported from the EU are deforestation-free.
- The Regulation will be published in the Official Journal in the coming days, to enter into force before the end of the year.

Source: Council 18/12/2024

ECODESIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS: JRC PUBLISHED A REPORT ON NEW PRODUCT PRIORITIES

A new JRC report has assessed the potential of various products to be regulated under the new EU Ecodesign regulation, aimed at making sustainable products the norm in Europe.

- report [Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation: Study on new product priorities](#)
- It identifies products based on their relevance in terms of environmental impacts, improvement potential, open strategic autonomy, and the extent to which such products are covered by other EU policies.

Source: JRC November 2024

POLAND'S PRIORITIES FOR THE EU COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

On December 10, [Poland unveiled its priorities for its presidency of the EU Council from January to June 2025](#). The semester will be focused on security, as indicated by the slogan chosen: "Security, Europe!" Environment is not mentioned in the seven security-related priorities. The term only appears once, in the chapter on "resilient and competitive agriculture."

- On the page dedicated to the various Council formations, Poland specifies that the focus of the Environment Council will be on "incentives" rather than "bans and excessive burdens."
- The two Environment Councils during the semester will take place on March 27 and June 17, with the informal meeting of Environment Ministers on April 28 and 29.

Source : Contexte, 10/12/2024

WASTE IMPORT DEADLINE IMMINENT

The deadline for non-OECD countries to apply to be on the European Union's list of preapproved countries eligible to receive EU waste is fast approaching. Applicants should get their paperwork in by Feb. 21, 2025.

- Requests can be submitted using the '[Request for Inclusion](#)' form and must include detailed evidence supporting the country's claims, structured according to the form's guidance note.

Source: Contexte 11/12/2024

GREEN CLAIMS AND WATER POLLUTANTS TRILOGUES BEGIN

The ENVI and IMCO committees in the European Parliament on Wednesday agreed to start inter-institutional negotiations on the [green claims directive](#). Sandro Gozi, French Renew MEP and IMCO committee rapporteur for the text called it an “important piece in the mosaic of green competitiveness strategy.”

Source: Politico December 2024

COMMISSION BANS BPA IN FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

The end is nigh for bisphenol A in food contact materials in the EU, following new rules [adopted](#) by the European Commission on Thursday.

- Most products have been given a phasing-out period of 18 months, with some exceptions where no alternatives exist, to give industry time to adapt and “avoid disruption to the food chain.
- The ban includes other bisphenols that are harmful to reproduction and the endocrine system.
- The chemical is used to coat metal food contact packaging like cans, tins and jar lids, and in some types of plastic food storage and processing equipment — but the substance can migrate into food, which could have negative repercussions for human health. More about the Commission’s original initiative [here](#).

Source: European Commission/ Politico 19/12/2024

THE COMMISSION IS AWAITING A STUDY ON THE COST OF PFAS POLLUTION

A consortium of three consultancy firms (WSP, Ricardo, and [Trinomics](#)) has been tasked with conducting this study and presenting its results by the end of 2025.

- The Directorate-General for the Environment [informed the members](#) (States, industry, civil society) of the expert group on chemicals (Caracal) during their meeting on December 18.
- The goal is to quantify, in monetary terms, the cost of pollution caused by these chemicals, known as “forever pollutants,” on the environment and human health. Based on four forward-looking scenarios for 2025, 2030, 2040, and 2050, the consultancy firms are expected to express the cost of inaction.

Source: European Commission/ CARACAL 19/12/2024

REGULATION ON CYBER RESILIENCE OFFICIALLY COMES INTO FORCE

The Cyber Resilience Act entered into force on 10 December 2024. The main obligations introduced by the CRA will apply from 11 December 2027. Additionally, the [Cyber Resilience Act Expert Group \(CRA Expert Group\)](#) is being set up. The expert group will assist and advise the Commission on issues relevant to the implementation of the Cyber Resilience Act (CRA).

Source: European Commission, 11/12/2024

AT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, MEPS’ AMENDMENTS TO ‘ONE SUBSTANCE-ONE ASSESSMENT’ PACKAGE SWING BETWEEN SIMPLIFICATION AND PROTECTION

Hostilities have begun in the European Parliament over the ‘One substance - one assessment’ package. On 3 December, MEPs on the Environment Committee tabled their amendments to three texts relating to the restructuring of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), the collaboration between European agencies and the creation of a common data platform for chemicals.

Source: Agence Europe, 11/12/2024

BUDAPEST DECLARATION ON EU COMPETITIVENESS

EU Leaders adopted the [Budapest Declaration](#), which lays out a new European Competitiveness Deal to address the current geopolitical, economic, and demographic challenges and ensure Europe’s continued prosperity.

- The basis for the discussion was the [recent report](#) prepared by professor Mario Draghi,

- President von der Leyen particularly highlighted the need for innovation, investment, and the urgent need to reduce the regulatory barriers to innovation by cutting red tape. She presented her idea to propose a common 28th regulatory regime with a single rule book for innovative start-ups in the whole European Union. [Link here](#)

Source: Council and European Commission November /2024

CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING: GERMAN MINISTERS GO AFTER CSRD

In an ongoing campaign against the EU's corporate sustainability disclosure rules, which ask companies to report on their environmental footprint and exposure to climate risk, four ministers in the German government are asking for "a significant reduction in the content of CSRD" according to [a leaked letter](#) dated December 17th.

- The Commission is currently in the process of determining the scope of its planned 'omnibus' - a regulation to review the laws passed in the previous mandate that are affecting businesses by imposing reporting requirements. That includes the CSRD and the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive as well as the EU taxonomy.

Source: Politico 19/12/2024

FOREST MONITORING IN EUROPE: SEVERAL STATES BELIEVE THAT A REGULATION IS NOT THE RIGHT TOOL TO HARMONISE

[during a discussion](#) on the proposed regulation on forest monitoring at the Agriculture Ministers' Council on December 9, the French (resigning) minister expressed concerns about the "implementation cost," the "risk of disrupting the continuity of data" collected by national forest inventories, and the "transfer of competencies from Member States [to the Commission] that the proposed provisions would entail.

- Ministers, including from Sweden, Slovenia, and Finland, questioned the use of a regulation.
- The examination of this text, presented more than a year ago and still stalled in Parliament, will resume at the technical level under the Polish presidency of the EU Council

Source: Contexte December 2024

MERCOSUR FTA INCLUDES A COMMITMENT TO END DEFORESTATION BY 2030

"The agreement between the EU and Mercosur reflects our strong commitment to the Paris Agreement and the fight against deforestation," said Ursula von der Leyen on December 6.

- The President of the European Commission [announced](#) from Uruguay the conclusion of the free trade agreement after twenty-five years of negotiations.
- This agreement will ensure "concrete commitments to end deforestation by 2030," [documents published online on December 6](#).
- The free trade agreement is still far from coming into effect: it must be approved by a qualified majority of States and the European Parliament, as well as by national parliaments.

Source: Contexte/ European Commission, 9/12/2024

DEFORESTATION REGULATION: A TEXT ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE INFORMATION SYSTEM PUBLISHED IN THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL

An [implementing regulation](#) detailing the functioning of the information system was published in the EU Official Journal on December 6.

- The digital platform, opened in early December, requires operators and traders selling goods affected by the regulation in the European market to submit their "due diligence" declarations.
- The delegated regulation outlines rules regarding the protection of personal data. It also stipulates that the European Commission must ensure users of the information system can submit their declarations in an automated manner.

A pilot version of the information system, presented to stakeholders earlier this year, faced strong criticism as the data entry had to be done manually (see [here](#), for example).

Source : European Commission/ Contexte, December 2024

INC-5 – PLASTIC TREATY NEGOTIATIONS

After seven days of talks, the international community left South Korea on December 2 without the agreement it had committed to concluding by the end of 2024. While the majority in favor of a binding and ambitious treaty has grown stronger, it faces firm opposition from a minority of plastic-producing countries. The issue is postponed until 2025. Link to [more information](#)

Source: Contexte 3/12/2024

TAXONOMY OF SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS: THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION PUBLISHES A NEW GUIDE TO "SIMPLIFY" ITS USE EUROPEAN PACT FOR THE FUTURE

"This publication is part of the Commission's simplification program and its efforts to reduce the administrative burden on businesses," explains the European executive in a statement on November 29. The [document](#) aims to "provide technical clarifications," particularly regarding the selection of activities included in this so-called "green" taxonomy, and its [delegated acts](#) from 2021 and 2022 on climate, and from 2023 on the environment. This document has no legal value of its own.

Source: Contexte, 03/12/2024

REVISION OF REACH

By placing the topic on the agenda of the Environment Council on December 17, Sweden aimed to send "basic messages and highlight several principles that the revision of REACH should include," directed at Commissioner Jessika Roswall, who promises a proposal in 2025.

- Sweden calls for banning hazardous substances in consumer products, "detoxifying production processes," and making REACH "simpler and more predictable without compromising the protection of human health and the environment.
- Support expressed by Austria, Luxembourg, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, and had already been heard two months earlier
- Jessika Roswall reiterated her intention to ban PFAS use in consumer goods while stating she was "open" to retaining them for industrial applications, under conditions.

Source: Contexte, 18/12/2024

EU - 2040 CLIMATE GOAL- INCREASING SUPPORT FROM STATES FOR A 90% NET EMISSIONS REDUCTION (COMPARED TO 1990); TIMELINE REMAINS UNCLEAR

On December 17, eight Member States clearly expressed their support for the level of ambition recommended by the European Commission during a discussion among European Environment Ministers on the post-2030 climate legislative framework. Other states, including France, prefer to wait and see what conditions will be put in place to facilitate achieving this goal. Paris, however, joined the countries advocating for a -90% target (Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Luxembourg, Austria, Finland, the Netherlands, and Spain), calling on the Commission to quickly present the legislative proposal to enshrine the 2040 goal into climate law.

Source Contexte 19/12/2024

MEASURING THE QUALITY OF RECYCLING

This briefing offers a practical definition of recycling quality as an approach to improving waste management operations and increasing circularity in Europe. It is published in support of the EU's circular economy action plan. More information [here](#)

Source European Environment Agency 5 Dec

POSITION PAPERS

UNWRAPPING PPWR... TO THE FINISHING LINE!

The Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation corrigendum was formally validated by the EU Parliament during its plenary session on 27 November and was rubber-stamped on 16 December by the Council. Updated version of European PPWR Survival Guide Link [here](#)

Source: Europen 18/12/2024

NEW PACKAGING AND PACKAGING WASTE REGULATION

On 27 November, the European Parliament has given its [formal approval](#) to the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR), replacing the long-standing Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive (PPWD). This new legislation marks a significant shift in how packaging is designed, used, and recycled across the EU, aiming to improve environmental performance while preserving the free movement of goods in the Internal Market. Link [here](#)

Source: CLECAT 6 December

THE E-COMMERCE SECTOR READY TO EMBRACE THE DIGITAL PRODUCT PASSPORT

With the entry into force of the so-called Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), now also known as Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 on 18 July 2024, the Digital Product Passport (DPP) is one step further to become reality.

Source: Ecommerce Europe October 2024

EFFECTIVE EPR SCHEMES AND A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD IN WFD REVISION

Position Paper by EuRIC Textiles, FEAD & DECATHLON urge effective EPR schemes and a level playing field in WFD revision.

- welcome the negotiations, particularly on the establishment of EPR schemes for waste textiles.
- Call for consistency and avoidance unnecessary administrative burdens for companies and Member States and to maximise the effectiveness of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes in delivering the intended environmental benefits. [link](#)

Source: By EuRIC & others

THE REVISION OF THE WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

SMEUnited [position](#) on the Waste framework Directive identifies three main points:

- Include micro-enterprises in Extended Producer Responsibility Schemes
- Define 'SME friendly' tools and avoid disproportionate reporting requirements.
- Adopt End-of-Waste legislation.

Source: SMEUnited 17/10/2024

3 WAYS TO IMPROVE THE DIRECTIVE ON GREEN CLAIMS

SMEUnited [position](#) on the upcoming trilogues on Green Claims Directive,

- Avoid disproportionate verification costs for micro-enterprises.
- Provide tools to comply with the rules.
- Penalties must be both effective and proportionate.

Source: SMEUnited 17/10/2024

FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS: 20 YEARS OF INACTION ON EU'S BASIC RULES

In this open letter issued to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Zero Waste Europe and 50+ organisations call for immediate revision of the Food Contact Materials (FCM) Regulation. [link](#)

- The letter highlights critical health risks from harmful chemicals in food packaging, including over 70 carcinogens and endocrine disruptors, and demands a comprehensive update to EU regulations within the current legislative term.

source Zero Waste Europe & others 4 Dec

STUDIES/REPORTS/ARTICLES

JRC SCIENCE FOR POLICY REPORT: SETTING THE SCENE FOR HARMONISED WASTE-SORTING LABELS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

This report outlines a potential conceptual structure for a harmonised labelling scheme accommodating various separate waste collection schemes and dynamic changes in the granularity of separate waste collection, materials and receptacles over time. According to the provisionally agreed regulation, labels identifying materials instead of waste destinations appear more suitable as a prototype for harmonised EU labels. Contextual information, caveats about the data used and a list of open questions to be answered in future work are presented. The insights gathered in this report will benefit ongoing and future work conducted to develop harmonised EU waste-sorting labels. Link to [report](#)

Source: Joint research Center 3/12/2024

IMPROVING RECYCLING QUALITY WILL SUPPORT CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Europe has set ambitious goals to create a competitive circular economy that can be key in supporting innovation, decarbonisation and security. The transition is also needed to halt biodiversity loss and wasteful use of natural resources. Published today, two briefings from the European Environment Agency show the status of circular economy and highlight the need for improving recycling quality. More information [here](#)

Source European Environment Agency 5/12/2024

EUROPE'S CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN FACTS AND FIGURES

This briefing presents key facts and figures around Europe's effort to forge a circular economy. It uses key indicators for acknowledging progress made and identifying areas of improvement. The briefing supports the implementation of the [circular economy action plan](#) and builds on metrics from the [Circularity Metrics Lab](#). More information [here](#)

Source European Environment Agency 5/12/2024

EVENTS

Event: Clean Industrial Deal: a conversation with EVP Teresa Ribera (Online) - 16 Jan 2025

President von der Leyen has committed to stay the course on the goals of the European Green Deal, putting forward a Clean Industrial Deal to help unlock clean investments, boost clean tech and putting in place conditions for companies to compete globally, turning EU decarbonisation strategy into a source of growth. Ahead of the launch of this new flagship initiative, Bruegel is pleased to host a conversation with Teresa Ribera, Executive Vice-President for a Clean, Just and Competitive Transition, on the matter. Bruegel [Link](#)

OPEN CONSULTATIONS

Deadline - Public Consultation: Application for the authorisation of the recycling process EREMA_ EREMA Advanced to produce recycled plastic for food contact uses.

[Open for feedback from 4 - 25 December 2024.](#)

EU emissions trading system (ETS) – update ETS revision/Fit For 55

Type of act Delegated regulation

[Feedback period 13 December 2024 - 10 January 2025](#)

Call for evidence: Open Public consultation: Public procurement directives – evaluation

Type of act Report

[Feedback period 13 December 2024 - 07 March 2025](#)