Dear All,

The next ENVI meeting will take place on 17 and 18 February. With the withdrawal of the UK and the departure of British Members, Parliament and Committees have changed size and composition. This is also the case for ENVI. Yet, despite the overall reduction in the number of MEPs (from 751 to 705), ENVI increased the number of full members from 76 to 81, reflecting the saliency of ENVI issues among MEPs. ENVI also remains the biggest committee in the European Parliament.

Brexit has also affected the composition of the ENVI Bureau. With the departure of Seb Dance, ENVI will elect a new second Vice-Chair. We will also elect a third Vice-Chair to replace Cristian Buşoi after his election as Chair of the ITRE committee.

During the meeting, we will have the opportunity to hear from Health and Food Safety Commissioner Stella Kyriakides about her ambition, priorities and plans in her portfolio. Europe’s role in fighting the novel Coronavirus and prevent future pandemics, Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, the Farm to Fork Strategy will have centre-stage during the exchange.

EU water policy will also be under the spotlight during the meeting. Water and Climate Change is the timely theme of this year’s World Water Day. On 10 February, the European Environment Agency (EEA) published a compilation of several existing maps illustrating the worsening impacts of climate change over the next decades on Europe’s regions. The way we treat, save, consume and reuse water must be an integral part of our response to climate change and in the prevention of the worst effects of droughts, heavy rains and flooding. During the next meeting we will be looking at whether key water legislation, such as the Water Framework, Groundwater, Environmental Quality Standards, Floods and Urban Waste-water Treatment directives are all fit for purpose or whether additional work is needed. We will also vote to confirm the provisional agreement reached with Council in December 2019 on the Drinking Water Directive.

Likewise, ENVI Members will also scrutinise whether the existing Ambient Air Quality directives continue to be the most valid framework to set and implement high air quality standards across the Union. Despite some improvements, air quality in the Union still falls short of acceptable levels, especially in urban areas and with marked differences among Member States. For several air pollutants, especially particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and benz(a)pyrene, widespread and persistent exceedances above EU air quality standards continue. The 2019 Air Quality Report published by the EEA estimated that in 2016 long-term exposure to air pollution has been responsible for more than 506 000 premature deaths across the Union.

On Tuesday, Members will also exchange with the Commission on whether e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products are a source of health concerns. The use of e-cigarettes has seen a dramatic increase during the last decade, especially among young users. In the United States, as of 4 February 2020, a total of 2,758 hospitalised EVALI (e-cigarette, or vaping, product use-associated lung injury) cases, of which 64 deaths, have been reported to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). ENVI Members will look at the state of play in the EU and whether further action is needed to safeguard the health of European consumers.

You can follow the ENVI Committee meeting live at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/commission/en/envi/home.html

You can also follow the activities of the ENVI Committee on its official Twitter account @EP_Environment

Pascal Canfin - 14 February 2020

MEETING ITEMS

Results of the votes of the last ENVI meeting are available here.

Election of the second Vice-Chair and the third Vice-Chair

Votes:
• Report - Quality of water intended for human consumption (recast)

Considerations:
• Report - Global data collection system for ship fuel consumption data
• Opinion - Guidelines for the 2021 Budget - Section III

Exchanges of views:
• with Mrs Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, on cancer, the coronavirus, Farm to Fork Strategy
• with the Commission on e-cigarettes and heated tobacco
• with the Commission on lead gunshot
• with Mr Pierre Larrouturou, rapporteur for the 2021 budget
• with the Commission on the Fitness Check of the Ambient Air Quality Directives Directive
• with the Commission on food safety risks related to imports of horse meat
• with the European Court of Auditors on Special Report No 16/2019 on European Environmental Accounts : usefulness for policy makers can be improved
• with the European Court of Auditors on Special Report No 18/2019 on EU greenhouse gas emissions: well reported, but better insight needed into future reductions

Workshop:
• Health Working Group - Cancer prevention - Modifiable risk factors

Draft agenda of the Plenary available here.

VOTES

Drinking Water Directive

Vote on the provisional agreement resulting from interinstitutional negotiations (see meeting documents)

On 18 December 2019, after 5 trilogues and several technical meetings, the Parliament and the Council have reached a political agreement on the recast of the Drinking Water Directive (Directive 98/83/EC), one of the pillars of the EU legislation in the field of water that, however, has been in force for twenty years without having undergone any major overhaul since that date.
Global data collection system for ship fuel oil consumption data

Consideration of draft report (see [meeting documents](#))

Due to the considerable consumption of fossil fuels, global shipping activity emits significant amounts of GHG emissions, estimated to be around 2-3% of total global GHG emissions. However, maritime transport is the only sector not expressly addressed by a EU emission reduction objective or specific mitigation measures. According to forecasts from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), depending on future economic and energy developments, global shipping emissions could grow between 50% and 250% by 2050. At EU level, CO2 emissions from maritime transport increased by 48% between 1990 and 2008, and are expected to increase by 86% above 1990 levels by 2050 despite the adoption of minimum ship efficiency standards for new ships by the IMO in 2011. If nothing is done to tackle these emissions, this risks undermining the goals of the Paris Agreement and the efforts deployed by other sectors. The main objective of this proposal is therefore to amend the EU MRV Regulation in order to take appropriate account of the new global IMO DCS, with a view to allow for streamlining and reducing administrative effort for companies and administrations as possible, while preserving the objectives of the EU MRV Regulation.

In her draft report, the rapporteur proposes 34 amendments improving the Commission proposal as well as bringing new elements, inter alia, to: reduce the administrative effort for companies and administrations as far as possible; diminish shipping emissions within the EEA; broaden the scope of the EU Emissions trading scheme (ETS) to shipping; establish a maritime transport decarbonisation fund to foster research and development in the energy efficiency of ships and support investments in innovative technologies and infrastructure to decarbonise maritime transport, including short sea shipping and ports, and the deployment of sustainable fuels, and extend the scope to all greenhouse gases, not only CO2.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

The provisional agreement, confirmed in Coreper on 5 February 2020, provides, inter alia, for the introduction of the so-called risk-based-approach, for the improvement of access to water (also following the first European Citizens Initiative on “Right2water”) and for the access to information about the quality and supply of drinking water in their living area. It also tackles leakages, emerging pollutants such as micro-plastics, endocrine disruptors as well as new types of chemicals (PFAs). Stricter limits will be set for lead and new provisions are introduced on hygienic requirements for materials in contact with drinking water. Should ENVI confirm in the upcoming vote the provisional agreement, Council will adopt it as its first reading position. The file will then return to Parliament for the final adoption in second reading.

Rapporteur: **HANSEN (EPP)**
Shadows: **PAULUS (GREENS/EFA), MÜLLER (Renew), GIEGOLD (Greens/EFA), SALUSSARE (ID), ROOKEN (FCD), VILLANUEVA RUIZ (GUE/NGL).**

**EXCHANGES OF VIEWS**

**EoV with Mrs Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, on cancer, the coronavirus, Farm to Fork Strategy**

Health and Food Safety Commissioner Stella Kyriakides will be in ENVI on Tuesday 18 February for her first exchange with ENVI Members in this legislature. The exchange will be an opportunity to hear from the Commissioner about her priorities in the key health and food safety portfolio. The Commissioner will present to MEPs how the Commission is confronting, together with Member States, the deadly coronavirus Covid-19. Commissioner Kyriakides has also been invited to exchange with ENVI Members on two other major topics: the Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan and the Farm to Fork Strategy. On 4 February 2020, on the occasion of World Cancer Day, the Commission initiated a stakeholder debate on the proposed Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, to be rolled out by the end of the year. The plan would focus on several areas: health in all policies; prevention; screening and early diagnosis; access to optimal treatment; quality of life in survivorship; palliative care; better data and e-health. In the European Green Deal, the Commission announced that it would present a Farm to Fork Strategy in spring 2020 and launch a broad stakeholder debate covering all stages of the food chain, and paving way to formulating a more sustainable food policy. Farm to Fork will play a crucial role in the wider success of the European Green Deal.

**E-cigarettes and heated tobacco**

At their meetings of 2 December 2019, ENVI Coordinators decided to invite the Commission for an exchange of views on the topic of e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products. Following from its obligation under Article 20 of the Tobacco Products Directive (TBD), the Commission produced a report on the potential risks to public health associated with the use of refillable electronic cigarettes. In the report, the Commission identified four potential risks to public health: (1) poisoning from ingesting e-liquids containing nicotine (especially for young children), (2) skin reactions related to dermal contact with e-liquids containing nicotine and other skin irritants, (3) risks associated with home blending and (4) risks due to using untested combinations of e-liquid and device or hardware customisation. The Report concluded that the context of current scientific knowledge, the measures relating to refillable e-cigarettes provided for in the TPD and secondary legislation, combined with national regulation, provide an adequate and proportionate framework for the mitigation of such risks, however that does not preclude the need for further study of these products and their safety for consumers (in particular concerning poisoning from accidental ingestion of e-liquid and the hazard profile of flavours). With respect to “heated tobacco products”, the general view is that while those products are not mentioned as such by the Tobacco Products Directive, they fall into the general category of “novel tobacco products” (see Article 2 (14) and Article 19) and, for that reason, once placed on the market, they need to respect the requirements of this directive.
**ENVI**

Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

**Evolution of Water (EoV) with the Commission on Lead Gunshots**

As waterbirds migrate across Europe, they are exposed to vast quantities of lead shot, with 5,000 tonnes of lead gunshot estimated to be released into EU wetlands each year through hunting and sports shooting. This was estimated by ECHA to result in the unintentional deaths, through lead poisoning, of approximately one million waterbirds each year throughout the EU. The negative impacts could be entirely ameliorated by a transition to readily available and comparably priced non-toxic gunshot (most typically steel), as used by countries such as the Netherlands and Denmark since the 1990s with no change to their numbers of hunters. On the basis of the initial request, the coordinators decided to broaden the topic for the exchange of views to lead gunshots (not only in wetlands). In November this year, the Commission presented a draft implementing act under the regulatory procedure with scrutiny (RPS) on this topic. In the RPS measure the Commission explains that as Contracting Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, EU and Member States are required to endeavour to phase out the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands as soon as possible in accordance with self-imposed and published timetables. Furthermore, Member States are required to pay particular attention to the protection of wetlands, and particularly to wetlands of international importance, in the taking of conservation measures with regard to regularly occurring migratory species, according to Directive 2009/147/EC. The Commission considers that there is an unacceptable risk to the environment and a potential risk to human health stemming from the discharge of lead gunshot in or around wetlands, which needs to be addressed on a Union-wide basis. They consider it therefore appropriate to introduce a restriction on the act of discharging lead gunshot in or around wetlands. Given the difficulty for enforcement authorities in catching hunters in the act of actually discharging gunshot, the Commission proposes, in line with the Agency, that the restriction should also include the act of being in possession of lead gunshot. When the RPS measure receives a positive opinion in the comitology committee and has been translated to all official languages, it will be sent to the EP for scrutiny. The scrutiny period will be three months from the official transmission. EP has a right to veto the draft measure.

**EoV on Water REFiTs**

The first fitness check is a comprehensive policy evaluation of the following directives: 1. the Water Framework Directive (WFD); 2. the Environmental Quality Standards Directive (EQSD); 3. the Groundwater Directive (GWDD); 4. the Floods Directive (FD). It assesses whether the Directives are fit for purpose by examining their performance against five criteria set out in the Commission’s Better Regulation agenda: effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance and EU added value. The results of the fitness check show that the Directives are fit for purpose, with some scope for improvement. In particular, the Directives have led to a higher level of protection for water bodies and flood risk management. The fact that the WFD’s objectives have not been reached fully yet is largely due to insufficient funding, slow implementation and insufficient integration of environmental objectives in sectoral policies, and not due to a deficiency in the legislation. On 13 December 2019, the Commission also published an evaluation of the Council Directive 91/271/EC concerning urban waste-water treatment. The evaluation is based on a comprehensive literature review, including European Court of Auditors reports, implementation reports, the European Environment Agency's work, scientific studies and grey literature. The assessment of the Directive’s effectiveness shows that it has been successful in reducing loads of the targeted pollutants from urban point sources (domestic/urban waste water and similar industrial pollution). The main barriers to implementation include Member States not prioritising the necessary investments in time to meet the deadlines with problems often stemming from governance arrangements at central, regional and local level and, in particular, lack of resources and administrative capacity.

**Evolution of Water (EoV) with the Commission on the Fitness Check of the Ambient Air Quality Directives**

This fitness check assesses the performance of the two complementary EU Ambient Air Quality (AAQ) Directives. These Directives set air quality standards not to be exceeded throughout the EU, and requirements to ensure that Member States adequately monitor and/or assess air quality in a harmonised and comparable manner. The report concludes that the AAQ Directives have been partially effective in achieving their overall objectives of reducing air pollution and curbing its adverse effects. While they have guided the monitoring of air quality, set clear air quality standards, and facilitated the exchange of information on air quality, they have not fully ensured that sufficient action is taken throughout the EU to meet air quality standards and keep exceedances as short as possible, resulting in an overall mixed picture. The number and magnitude of exceedances has decreased for most pollutants throughout the EU between 2008 and 2017. However, despite this overall improvement, the air quality challenge is far from solved. For several air pollutants, especially particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and benz(a)pyrene, widespread and persistent exceedances above EU air quality standards continue, and still lead to significant impacts on human health and the environment as a whole. Air pollution is still the number one environmental health risk in the EU.

**News from the Policy Department**

**Recent Publications:**
- Study on EU public health policies - state of play, current and future challenges (also its At a glance version)
- Study on EU environment and climate change policies - state of play, current and future challenges (also its At a glance version)
- Briefing on the Commitments made at the hearing of Stella KYRIAKIDES, Commissioner-Designate on Health
- Briefing on the Commitments made at the hearing of Virginijus SINKEVICIUS, Commissioner-Designate on Environment and Oceans
- Briefing on the Commitments made at the hearing of Frans TIMMERMANS, Executive Vice President-Designate on European Green Deal
- Study on international climate negotiations in view of the COP25 UN Climate Change Conference in Madrid
- Study on Sampling points for air quality – Representativeness and comparability of measurement in accordance with Directive 2008/50/EC (also available in DE)
- Briefing on European energy and climate policies towards 2020, 2030 and 2050.
- Workshop proceedings on Robots in Healthcare: A Solution or a Problem?

**Upcoming Publications:**
- Briefing on the key issues at stake in the 75th session of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC75)
- In-depth analysis on “Strengthening Europe in the fight against cancer”.

**Upcoming events:**
- Workshop for the Health Working Group on the preventable risk factors of cancer; scheduled for 18 February, 12h30-14h.
**European Environment Agency (EEA)**

EU launches new Forest Information System to improve knowledge on forests and woodlands. Amid a need for more accurate, up-to-date and harmonised data and monitoring on Europe’s valuable woodlands, the European Environment Agency and the European Commission launched a new Forest Information System for Europe (FISE) which aims to become Europe’s knowledge hub to monitor the state, health and sustainability of Europe’s many forests. [More here.](#)

**European Medicines Agency (EMA)**

On 29 January, EMA, the Heads of Medicines Agencies (HMA) of EU Member States and the European Commission (EC) published key principles outlining a harmonised approach to develop and use electronic product information (ePI) for human medicines across the European Union. The product information (PI) of a medicine includes the package leaflet for patients and the summary of product characteristics (SmPC) for healthcare professionals. These documents accompany every single medicine authorised in the EU and explain how it should be prescribed and used.

The ePI initiative was launched to support the digital transformation of healthcare across the EU, and the commitment laid out by the European Commission to prioritise innovations that will empower citizens and build a healthier society. It is also in line with EMA’s current digitalisation efforts aiming to make best use of available resources and prepare for future challenges. [More here.](#)

**European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)**

EFSA has expanded its food consumption database with a new batch of data collected under the EU Menu project. The new release includes nine additional dietary surveys carried out in six countries – Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, the Netherlands and Slovenia. The surveys provide new information in all age groups covered by the EU Menu – infants, toddlers, children, adolescents, adults, the elderly, and special groups. For the first time, the statistics are broken down by gender. The aim of the EU Menu project is to gather high-quality, harmonised data from Member States, covering all age groups from three months to 74 years. Standardising the way data is collected makes the information easier to compare and improves the quality of the risk assessments carried out by EFSA that rely on dietary information. [More here.](#)

**European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)**

Substances of concern in products: the prototype of the database is ready.

The SCIP database, foreseen in the Waste Framework Directive, will contain information on Substances of Concern in articles as such as or in complex objects (Products). Companies supplying articles containing substances of very high concern will have to submit information on these articles to ECHA, as from 5 January 2021. ECHA is now launching a prototype of this database, to allow companies to get familiar with it and test how to submit their SCIP notifications. Users can submit test data and provide feedback to ECHA to help the Agency further improve the final version, which will be launched later in 2020. [More here.](#)

**European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)**

Coronavirus (COVID-19). Situation update – worldwide

Since 31 December 2019 and as of 12 February 2020, 45 179 laboratory-confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2 infection have been reported, including 1 115 deaths.

**Prevention:** hand washing and disinfection is the key to preventing infection. You should wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, you can also use alcohol-based hand sanitiser with at least 60% alcohol. The virus enters your body via your eyes, nose and mouth, so avoid touching them with unwashed hands.

Follow the latest updates from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, [More here.](#)