

CHAIR'S WELCOME



Dear all,
Happy new year to each of you!
As we are nearing towards the end of the mandate, ENVI is strongly committed to deliver until the very last minute to make 2024 a fruitful year for the environment, the public health of the food safety. We owe this to the European citizens.
The agenda of the next meetings of 24 and 29 January reflect the width and breadth of ENVI tasks: it ranges from

critical exchanges of views to scrutinizing the proper use of the European budget or more "traditional" legislative activities.

On 24 January, we will first exchange views with Ms Leena Ylä-Mononen, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency, and discuss the 2023 edition of the Agency monitoring annually report on progress towards the 8th Environment Action Programme objectives. This report highlights the challenges to meet most of the climate and environmental targets by 2030, including energy consumption, the rate of use of circular materials, and the share of land under organic farming. Given the overall increasing population of wolves in the EU, we will also have a presentation by the Commission on the sensitive adaptation of the protection status of the wolf in the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitat.

On 24 and 29 January, we will meet with three Belgian regional and federal ministers to discuss the priorities of the Belgian presidency during this key phase of the mandate. In particular, we will meet with Mr Alain Maron, Minister of the Brussels-Capital Region in charge of Climate Change and Environment, Mr. Frank Vandenbroucke, Federal Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health, and Mr. David Clarinval, Federal Minister of the Middle Class, SMEs, Self-employed, Agriculture, Social Integration and Urban Policy.

ENVI will then also play its important scrutiny role by voting the opinions on six discharges of the budget of the European Commission and Agencies that are within the remit of the ENVI Committee, such as for example the European Medicines Agency, the European Food Safety Authority or the European Chemicals Agency.

On the legislative front ENVI will, together with IMCO, hold a debate on the draft report on the substantiation of explicit environmental claims, a useful tool to combat greenwashing and lay down a fair and efficient level playing field on green communication. ENVI will consider the draft report on reporting requirements: its objective is to reduce reporting requirements without undermining the related policy objectives. We will also report back on the recently successfully concluded inter-institutional negotiations on new rules strengthening the CO₂ emission performance standards of heavy-duty vehicles.

Finally, ENVI will vote on 24 January on the draft report on the deliberate release and the placing on the market of plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their food and feed. As you can see, time for rest has not come yet. I wish you a pleasant reading.

As always, you can follow the ENVI Committee meeting live at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/envi/home.html>
You can also follow the activities of the ENVI Committee on its official Twitter account @EP_ENVIRONMENT

Pascal Canfin

MEETING ITEMS

Exchanges of views:

- Joint debate on the 8th Environment Action Programme
 - Exchange of views with Ms Leena Ylä-Mononen, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency (EEA) (24/01)
 - Exchange of views on the European Union 8th Environment Action Programme - European Environment Agency Monitoring report on progress towards the 8th EAP objectives 2023 edition (24/01)
- Exchange of views with the Commission on the proposal for a Council Decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union on submitting proposals for amendment of Appendices II and III of the Convention on the Conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats with a view to the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention (24/01)
- Exchange of views with Mr Alain Maron, Minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region, responsible for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Participatory Democracy, Belgian Presidency (24/01)
- Exchange of views with Mr Frank Vandenbroucke, Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health, Belgian Council Presidency (29/01)
- Exchange of views with David Clarinval, Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Middle Class, SMEs, Self-employed, Agriculture, Social Integration and Urban Policy, Belgian Presidency (29/01)
- Joint debate on progress towards climate objectives
 - Exchange of views on EU Climate Action Progress Report 2023 (29/01)
 - Exchange of views on EU wide assessment of the draft updated National Energy and Climate Plans An important step towards the more ambitious 2030 energy and climate objectives under the European Green Deal and RePowerEU (29/01)

Considerations:

- Consideration of draft reports as regards reporting requirements in the field of food and food ingredients, outdoor noise, patients' rights, radio equipment, as well as in the field of infrastructures for spatial information (SINCIN) (24/01)
- ENVI-IMCO consideration of amendments on substantiation and communication of explicit environmental claims (Green Claims Directive) (24/01)

Votes (24/01):

- Draft opinion on the guidelines for the 2025 Budget - Section III (CANFIN)
- Draft opinion on Amending Directives 2009/12/EC, 2009/33/EC and (EU) 2022/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Directive 96/67/EC as regards certain reporting requirements in the fields of road transport and aviation (Sinčić)
- Draft opinions on 2022 Discharges of European Commission and Agencies (CANFIN)
- Draft opinion on Safety of toys and repealing Directive 2009/48/EC (CERDAS)
- Draft report on Plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their food and feed, and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (POLFJÄRD)

ENVI IN THE NEXT PLENARY

Draft agenda of the Plenary available [here](#).

EXCHANGES OF VIEWS

Exchange of views with Ms Leena Ylä-Mononen, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency (EEA)



On 24 January, ENVI will exchange views with Ms Leena Ylä-Mononen, Executive Director of the European Environment Agency (EEA). EEA main goal is to deliver knowledge and data to support Europe's environment and climate goals. During this exchange, Members will have the opportunity to discuss the 2023 edition of the European Environment Agency monitoring annually report on progress towards the 8th Environment Action Programme (EAP) objectives. The latter, based on the European Green Deal, set the framework for EU environmental policy until 2030. The report - which aims to review progress toward Europe's key environmental and climate goals objectives - highlights the challenges for the EU to meet most of the targets by 2030, including energy consumption, the rate of use of circular materials, and the share of land under organic farming. However, the report stresses the likelihood of meeting targets related to the green economy and the decrease in premature deaths caused by pollution. Finally, the analysis shows that achieving the 2030 EU targets requires greater implementation of existing and additional legislation by Member States

Presentation of the proposal to adapt the protection status of the wolf in the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats



On the 24th of January, the Commission will present to the ENVI Members a Proposal for a Council decision on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Bern convention. If adopted by the Standing Committee, which is the decision making organ of the convention, it would lower the

protection status of the wolf by moving it from Appendix II (strictly protected fauna species) to Appendix III (protected fauna species) of the Convention.

The wolf's protection status under the Convention was established in 1979. After being persecuted until its extinction in most European countries, the wolf survived and underwent a rapid population recovery at the end of the 20th century and in particular in the past ten to twenty years. According to a 2022 study developed by the Large Carnivore Initiative for Europe (LCIE) for the Bern Convention, and referred to by the Commission in its proposal, 19 out of 34 countries reported increasing wolf numbers. As for the EU, in 17 of the 24 EU Member States with wolves, their populations were increasing, and for the other 7 they were either stable or fluctuating. LCIE therefore considered that wolves were not declining in any EU Member State.

In case the amendment moving the wolf species from Appendix II to Appendix III of the Bern Convention enters into force, the Union would be allowed to modify the corresponding Annexes of the Habitats Directive in order to reflect the lower protection level for the wolf species in its internal legal order.

Exchange of views with Mr Alain Maron, Minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital region, responsible for climate change, environment, energy and participatory democracy



ENVI invited Mr Alain Maron, Minister of the Government of the Brussels-Capital region, responsible for climate change, environment, energy and participatory democracy to inform members on the priorities of the Belgian presidency regarding the environment, climate change, and biodiversity. The Belgian Presidency aims to continue the ongoing work on Green Deal policies, pursuing a green and just transition and ensuring that each policy is in line with environmental and climate goals. Additionally, the new Presidency is committed to strengthen the circular economy and the Union's capacity to adapt to climate change.

Exchange of views with Mr. Frank Vandenbroucke, Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health



ENVI will hold an exchange of views with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health, Mr. Frank Vandenbroucke, to discuss the priorities of the Belgian Council Presidency that are part of his portfolio. A key priority of the Belgian Presidency is to reinforce the social and health agenda. The Presidency proposes to strengthen social dialogue at all levels, promote fair labour mobility, mental health at work as well as access to sustainable social protection. On health, the Presidency aims to support the evaluation of the EU's crisis preparedness, strengthen the security of medicines supply, improve citizens' access to affordable medicines and develop a strategy to boost the EU's health and care workforce.

Exchange of views with Mr David Clarinval, Minister of the Middle Class, SMEs, Self-employed, Agriculture, Social Integration and Urban Policy



ENVI will hold an exchange of views with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Middle Class, SMEs, Self-employed, Agriculture, Social Integration and Urban Policy, Mr. David Clarinval, to discuss the priorities of the Belgian Council Presidency that are part of his portfolio. In particular, the debate is expected to focus on the willingness of the Presidency to promote sustainable water management. On Agriculture, ensuring food security and autonomy, and enhancing the sustainability of food production and consumption, are at the core of the Presidency's objectives.

CONSIDERATIONS

Consideration of draft reports on reporting requirements



On 24 January, the ENVI Committee will consider two draft reports on the reporting requirements regarding amendments to directives on food and food ingredients, outdoor noise, patients' rights, radio equipment (2023/0369(COD)), and to the directive on infrastructures for spatial information

(2023/0356(COD). The legislative proposals - based on the Commission "Long-term competitiveness of the EU: looking beyond 2030" Communication - aim to promote a regulatory system that ensures objectives at minimum cost by reducing reporting requirements by 25%, without undermining the related policy objectives. Indeed, while reporting requirements are necessary to ensure proper implementation and monitoring of legislation, they can impose redundant or obsolete obligations and inadequate timelines, especially for SMEs. The legislative proposals would rationalise the reporting obligations and reduce the administrative burden, removing unnecessary reporting requirements or reducing their frequency, thus benefiting both public authorities and businesses

VOTES

Plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques and their food and feed, and amending Regulation (EU) 2017/625



On 24 January, ENVI will vote on the draft report on the proposal for a regulation on plants obtained by certain new genomic techniques (NGTs) and their food and feed. The proposed regulation - in line with the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork strategy - lays down specific rules for the deliberate release and placing on the market of NGT plant and related food and feed. Currently, plants obtained by NGTs are subject to the same rules as GMOs. To better reflect the different risk profiles of NGT plants, the proposal creates two distinct pathways for NGT plants to be placed on the market. In the draft report, the rapporteur has called for a common EU register for Category 1 NGT plant(s) to ensure traceability. The draft report to be voted on covers 10 compromise amendments covering part of the amendments and 10 alternative compromise amendments covering part of the amendments. There were close to 1200 amendments submitted covering all of the Commission proposal. The rapporteur has also included provisions that exclude NGT plants from patentability.

Rapporteur ENVI: [POLFJÄRD \(PPE\)](#)

Shadows ENVI: [CLERGEAU\(S&D\)](#), [HUITEMA \(Renew\)](#), [HÄUSLING \(Greens/EFA\)](#), [SARDONE \(ID\)](#), [FIOCCHI \(ECR\)](#), [HAZEKAMP\(LEFT\)](#)

Discharges of the European Commission and Agencies



At the ENVI meeting on the 24th of January, Members will adopt several draft opinions under the discharge procedure. The discharges are decisions which reflect the conclusions of the European Parliament on the way the Commission and other bodies and institutions, have carried out their task

of implementation of EU budget. In this case, the discharges concern not only the Commission but also the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, the European Chemicals Agency, the European Environment Agency, European Food Safety Authority, and European Medicines Agency.

The discharge procedure is a process of parliamentary scrutiny aimed at ensuring that the Commission's implementation of the budget complied with the relevant legal and regulatory framework requirements, and use in accordance the principle of sound financial management.

Chair ENVI: [CANFIN \(Renew\)](#)

Shadows ENVI: [POLFJÄRD \(PPE\)](#), [WOELKEN\(S&D\)](#), [ȘTEFĂNUȚĂ \(Greens/EFA\)](#), [VONDRA \(ECR\)](#),

Rapporteur CONT: [SARVAMAA \(PPE\)](#)

NEXT ENVI MEETING ON 1 FEBRUARY (TBC)

NEWS FROM THE POLICY DEPARTMENT

Recent publications:

- Briefing on [progress on implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#)
- Study on [the COP28 climate change conference: status of climate negotiations and issues at stake, Dubai \(UAE\), 30 Nov - 12 Dec 2023](#)
- Briefing on the [commitments made at the hearing of MAROŠ ŠEFČOVIČ Executive Vice-President of the Commission on the European Green Deal](#)
- Briefing on the [commitments made at the hearing of WOPKE HOEKSTRA, Commissioner-designate on Climate Action](#)
- Briefing on [the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development Goals, New-York, 17-19 July 2023](#)
- Briefing on [Raising ambition levels at the IMO for 2050 - An overview of the key issues at stake at the MEPC 80, 3-7 July 2023, London, UK](#)
- Briefing on the [76th World Health Assembly, Geneva - Switzerland - 21-30 May 2023](#)
- Study on [the Independence and transparency policies of the European Food Safety Authority \(EFSA\)](#)
- Study on [potential measures to facilitate active pharmaceutical ingredients \(APIs\) production in Member States](#)
- In-depth analysis on [Issues at stake at the COP15 Conference to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Montréal, Canada, December 2022](#)
- Briefing on [Tracking the EU Commissioners' commitments - Von der Leven Commission, 2019 - 2024: Stella Kyriakides](#)
- Briefing on [Tracking the EU Commissioners' commitments - Von der Leven Commission, 2019 - 2024: Virginijus Sinkevičius](#)
- Study on [the Access to medicinal products](#)
- In depth analysis on [the link between biodiversity loss and the increasing spread of zoonotic diseases](#) (also available in [DE](#))
- Briefing on [the Farm to Fork strategy - An overview of Parliament's positions](#)

NEWS FROM THE AGENCIES

European Environment Agency (EEA)

Meeting EU environment policy targets by 2030 will be challenging



The EU 8th Environment Action Programme (EAP) builds on the European Green Deal and sets the framework for EU environmental policy until 2030. EEA's first

monitoring report on the progress towards the 8th EAP objectives takes stock of progress towards Europe's key environment and climate goals, based on 28 indicators and monitoring targets. The report shows that the EU may not meet most of the monitoring targets: stronger implementation by the Member States of existing laws, additional measures, and mainstreaming climate and environment in other policy domains are needed for faster progress. It is the first of the series to be published annually until 2030. More details can be found in the recently published [Monitoring report on progress towards the 8th EAP objectives 2023 edition](#)

European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)



EFSA's latest risk assessment concluded that inorganic arsenic in food raises health concerns. The finding confirms the outcome of EFSA's previous assessment of the risks linked to the presence of inorganic arsenic

in food from 2009. Food is the main source of exposure to inorganic arsenic for the general population in Europe. The main contributors to dietary exposure are rice, rice-based products, and grains and grain-based products. Drinking water also contributes to exposure, although levels are usually low in Europe. The results of the assessment were published on 18 January 2024 and more information is available [here](#).

European Medicines Agency (EMA)

Human medicines: EMA highlights of 2023



EMA published its overview report 'Human medicines highlights 2023' that includes figures on the authorisation of medicines and a selection of new treatments that represent significant progress in their therapeutic areas.

In 2023, EMA recommended 77 medicines for marketing authorisation. Of these, 39 had a new active substance which had never been authorised in the European Union (EU) before. The Agency recommended two vaccines to protect against lower respiratory tract disease caused by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and the first advanced therapy medicinal product using a ground-breaking gene-editing technology known as CRISPR/Cas9 to treat two rare blood disorders. EMA also adopted two positive opinions for medicines for use in countries outside the EU.

Once a medicine is authorised by the European Commission and prescribed to patients, EMA and the EU Member States continuously monitor its quality and benefit-risk balance and take regulatory action when needed. More information is available [here](#).

European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)

Register now for ECHA's Shaping Tomorrow Conference –28 Feb 2024



The conference will be an important platform for dialogue among key stakeholders in the chemicals sector. It aims to facilitate sharing insights and foster discussions on the challenges associated with the implementation of current EU chemicals regulation. While the 300 places

for physical participation have already been filled, interested Members, assistants, secretariat colleagues and stakeholders are encouraged to register and reserve their place for online participation. For the programme, speakers and registration, go to <https://shaping-tomorrow.echa.europa.eu/>

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

About RespiCast: the new European Respiratory Diseases Forecasting Hub



Launched at the end of 2023, the European Respiratory Diseases Forecasting Hub (RespiCast) serves as a platform for real-time forecasts of respiratory disease activity and burden. Its aim is to provide decision-makers, public health bodies and the public with reliable and timely

information on the short-term epidemiological trajectory of respiratory illnesses across Europe. RespiCast is open for weekly submission of several respiratory disease indicators such as influenza-like-illness, acute respiratory infection and COVID-19. Visit respicast.ecdc.europa.eu for more information and to participate in this initiative.

Next meetings of the ENVI Committee: 29 January 2024.

Future meetings: ENVI Committee meetings 2024.pdf

Watch online the Committee meeting on the [EP website](#) or on [Europarl TV](#).

Past meetings are available: [EP Live multimedia library](#) and you can also download the extracts of speeches.

More information: envi-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu or [website](#) of the ENVI Committee.

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About the editor: European Parliament, Directorate General for Internal Policies of the Union, Secretariat of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety - Responsible administrators: Natasa Hoffmann, Valentina Papa, François-Régis Babinet. Responsible assistants: Despina Abatzis, Teresa Mejia, Cristina Sanchez Villa

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