



Make-or-break aspects of the EU's Sustainable Products Initiative



Regulating substances of concern

Hazardous substances have been found even in the most remote areas of the world, from [mountain tops to the depths of the oceans](#). Hazardous substances are in the products we use, the food we consume and the air we breathe. Scientists are now certain that [chemical pollution has crossed a planetary boundary](#) — the environmental limit within which the Earth can survive. To make circular economy a reality and ensure truly sustainable products become the norm, we need to take on chemicals embedded in products and detoxify global value chains.



The SPI will be successful if...

With the Sustainable Products Initiative (SPI), the EU could take a stride in the right direction.

To do so, it must fulfil the mandate given by the [EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability](#), and:

- ✓ **Eliminate substances which hamper circularity and sustainability.** This means that hazardous or problematic chemicals are removed based on their properties alone, not on a substance by substance basis as it is the case today.
- ✓ **Introduce horizontal, cross-product restrictions and additional product-specific requirements to remove substances of concern** from all products and materials – closing the gap between current EU chemicals legislation and product legislation.

Concretely, the SPI proposal needs to:

- ✓ Instil **toxic-free design** as an overarching principle for sustainable products and materials, ending the use of substances of concern.
- ✓ Provide **comprehensive information** about chemicals in products and materials, ensuring transparency and traceability.
- ✓ Develop **new requirements** focusing on the use and presence of chemicals, **taking into account wider societal concerns**. This could help, for example, drive innovation towards safer alternatives, and eliminate the use of hazardous chemicals as part of global value chains.

Products and materials need to be clean from the start, with hazardous chemicals eliminated at the design stage.



84%
of Europeans are
worried about health
impacts of chemicals
present in everyday products



90%
are concerned about
their impact on the
environment*

*EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability Towards a Toxic-Free Environment



The SPI will be too weak if...

Unless the SPI establishes a way to regulate substances of concern during product and material lifecycles, it will become a weak instrument. Not addressing hazardous chemicals as part of this cornerstone legislation will perpetuate chemical pollution and harm humans and the environment.

Efforts to introduce a circular economy will not succeed if toxic material cycles are created by reusing and recycling products and materials that contain hazardous chemicals.



A strong SPI is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to make sustainable products the norm!

Environmental Coalition on Standards

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