

Making sustainable products the norm

Ecodesign as a tool for change



In March, the European Commission presented an ambitious package of regulatory proposals to implement its Circular Economy Action Plan. The proposal for a Regulation on Ecodesign for Sustainable Products (ESPR) extends ecodesign to a broad range of sectors, including textiles and construction products, finally addressing negative environmental impacts embedded in products by design. However, work needs to be done so that the package lives up to its full potential.



What we like

- ✓ Large scope of products targeted.
- ✓ Lifecycle approach covering the whole value chain of the product.
- ✓ Ecodesign requirements to enhance sustainability.
- ✓ Information requirements - and the resulting product passport.
- ✓ Consultative process for the development of specific measures, inclusive of environmental civil society.



What needs improvement

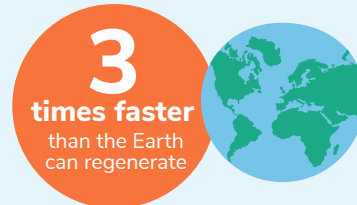
- ✓ Weak measures on destruction of unsold goods.
- ✓ Industrial voluntary agreements are still allowed.
- ✓ Social aspects were left outside the scope.
- ✓ Banning the presence of chemicals based on safety concerns is not possible.
- ✓ No guarantee that measures will be introduced on sectors such as packaging or construction products.

Without policy intervention, by 2050 the world's population is expected to be consuming resources at a rate three times higher than the Earth can regenerate. Global consumption of materials such as biomass, fossil fuels, metals and minerals is expected to double by 2060.

Up to 80% of the environmental impact of products is determined at the design phase, yet the linear pattern of 'take-make-use-dispose' does not provide producers with sufficient incentives to make their products more circular. Many products break down too quickly, cannot be easily reused, repaired or recycled, or, worse still, are made for a single use only.

The ESPR is set to be a game-changer. In contrast to traditional circular economy measures that focus on the end-of-life phase - such as returning products to the supply chain instead of landfill - the ESPR aims at building in sustainability throughout the entire product lifecycle, starting at the design phase. By doing so, it also seeks to unlock the potential of circular business models and more sustainable consumption.

In 2050 we will be consuming resources



We need products that are



We need to make sustainable
products the norm



Would you like to know more?

- Sustainable Product Initiative for construction products | [Discussion paper](#)
- Durable, repairable and mainstream. How ecodesign can make our textiles circular | [Report](#)
- Digital Product Passport | [Factsheet](#)
- Tackling chemicals in products | [Factsheet](#)
- Delays in ecodesign implementation threaten 55% climate target and cost citizens billions | [Report](#)
- Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Working Plan 2022-2024 | [Article](#)