



EU Waste Frameworks

Highlights for the review of the Waste Framework

Directive and the WEEE Directive

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The waste issue magnitude

Despite efforts to decrease waste production, the quantity of waste has increased: between 2010 and 2018, the total amount of generated waste increased by 5% in Europe, reaching the amount of 114 million tonnes. This means that the European Union is not on track to meet its policy goal of reducing waste generation.

We need **more waste prevention** as we cannot recycle our way out of EU's waste generation:

- The total amount of waste generated in the EU has continued to increase: + 1,4% in 2010-2020. Annual waste generation from all economic activities in the EU amounts to 2.5 billion tonnes, or 5 tonnes per capita a year, and each citizen produces on average nearly half a tonne of municipal waste.
- Even if the 60% recycling target is met, the residual waste target would be missed by 44% in 2030.
- In 2021, the domestic material consumption of the EU economy stood at around 14.1 tonnes per person, up 4% compared with 2020 (13.6 tonnes per person).

- Construction and demolition is the largest waste stream by weight waste accounting for more than 35% of EU's total waste generation annually.
- E-waste is amongst the EU's fastest growing waste stream: + 2% per year.

Waste Framework Directive review

The revision of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD) is key to shape and implement effective waste prevention plans, which, at the moment, are not properly achieving their objectives (see further details in [this joint paper](#)).

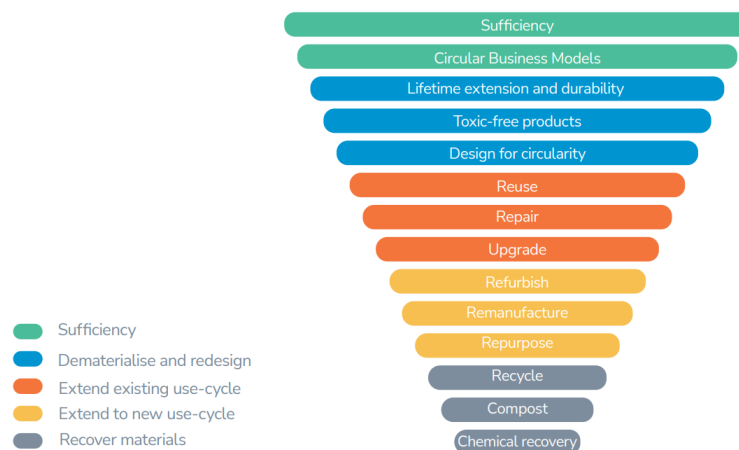
So far, EU member states' waste prevention plans do not adequately **implement waste prevention or sustainable resource management targets**. On one hand, the definition of waste prevention is confusing, as it is often associated with waste management measures – such as recycling – and not linked to reduction of primary resource consumption. On the other hand, many waste prevention measures focus on consumer initiatives, especially through awareness raising and campaigns. While these soft measures are useful, the priority should be on stronger and more binding measures. Moreover, targets should also focus on ensuring manufacturers are held accountable for placing an overwhelming flow of materials, goods, and substances on the market.

The planned WFD review is a great opportunity to ensure the Best Environmental Outcome and Sustainable Resource Management.

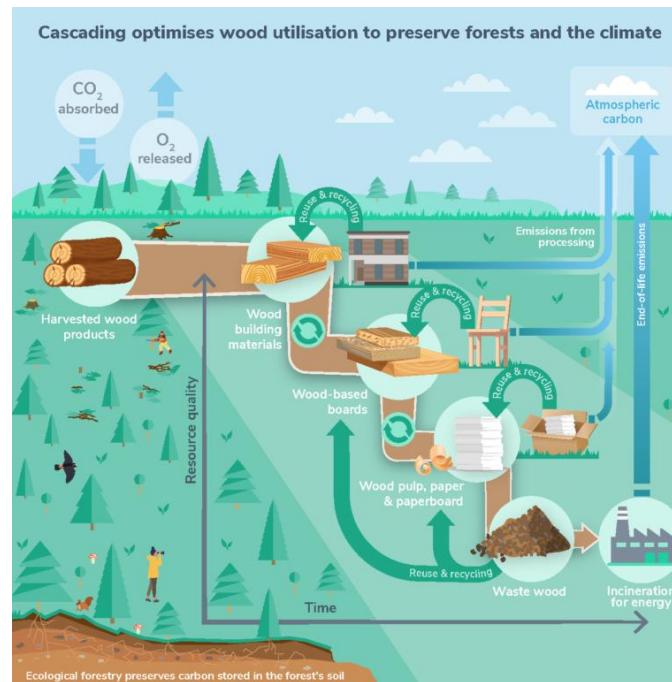
Towards the Best Environmental Outcome

- **Set waste prevention targets** (art. 9) (see further details in [this paper](#)):
 - 20% EU waste prevention target by 2030, 30% by 2035.
 - 120 kgs/pp residual waste by 2030.
 - Break down into sector-specific waste prevention targets for key waste streams, such as for food and beverages, large and small household appliances, IT and telecommunications equipment, toys, leisure and sports equipment, electrical and electronic equipment, textiles, vehicles, furniture and furnishing.
- Complete and clarify the EU waste hierarchy to prioritise product recovery, over component recovery, over material recovery (art. 4), by also splitting the preparing for reuse and recycling targets (art. 11):

Hierarchy for Sustainable Product Policy



- **Apply the cascading use principle** (art. 4): take account of a material's expected lifetime in a specific application, especially for biogenic materials.



- **Ensure Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) fees truly cover environmental costs** (art. 8a) to cover all costs for collection, transport, sorting, preparing for re-use, repair, re-use, recycling and treatment of residual waste textiles that cannot be prepared for re-use, data gathering, communication to consumers, administrative costs.
 - Modulate EPR fees to incentivise more sustainable and circular design and production and reduce the total volumes placed on the market (volume criterion).
 - Ensure an inclusive governance framework of EPR so that all actors, including social enterprises, municipalities, waste managers, and NGOs, are included in the decision-making around the design, functioning, and governance of EPR schemes, instead of only having an observing role.
 - Adopt waste prevention and management targets.
 - Include online marketplaces in the scope of the EPR scheme.
 - Global redistribute EPR fees based on trade of used products and waste destination.
- **Revise measures on construction and demolition waste** (art. 11) (see further details in [this joint paper](#)):
 - Prioritise waste prevention measures, such as through mandatory pre-demolition audits.
 - Introduce material specific reuse and recycling targets including high target for steel, cement and concrete to support targets for recycled content (ESPR),
 - Set harmonised accounting methods waste targets per material.
 - Disincentivise backfilling.
- More comprehensive and coordinated approach with other EU legislation, e.g. with the ESPR:
 - Integrate sustainable product design, use and end-of-life policies in each sector,
 - Set product information flow from producers to EPR schemes through DPPs.

Towards a Sustainable Resource Management

A new Sustainable Resource Management Directive helps transform Europe into a fair, autonomous, resilient, and sustainable economy to set the EU within planetary boundaries (see further details in [this joint paper](#)).

How to reshape our relationship with natural resources across material lifecycle to be more efficient in material consumption and meet planetary boundaries:

- Set EU's legal objective to reach **sustainable levels of resource consumption** in relation to its biocapacity, including concrete EU material footprint reduction targets:
 - 66% reduction target by 2050 (compared to 2022 levels of 14.8 tonnes per capita), with mid-term reduction targets of at least 20% by 2030 (11.8 tonnes per capita per year) and at least 50% by 2040 (7.4 tonnes per capita per year),
 - binding EU material footprint reduction target to 5 tonnes per capita by 2050, with incremental targets to monitor and ensure progress.
- Commit **Member States to develop sufficiency strategies** and legal requirements to support the achievement of the targets with a focus on key sectors, including a just transition: implement national strategies at Member States' level emphasising reductions in high-consumption sectors and mandating sector-specific roadmaps with binding sub-targets.
- Guarantee **social equity and just transition**: incentivise the redistribution of resources and the redressal of inequality in Europe through measures such as redistributive taxes and social programmes.
- Establish a monitoring framework through a **new EU Scientific Advisory Board on Sustainable Resource Management**, working in cooperation with the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change, as well as close engagement on the global level with the UN International Resources Panel towards a Global Resource Treaty.

WEEE Directive review

The number of electronic devices on the EU market nearly doubled, soaring by over 98% between 2013 and 2022. This sharp increase is driving an e-waste crisis. The EU should take bold and immediate action to mitigate the environmental damage caused by Europe's growing dependence on electronics. However, the WEEE Directive main focus on end-of-life is no longer appropriate. It needs to be quickly and fundamentally revised, expanded, and updated (see further details in [this joint statement](#)).

Since the entry into force of the WEEE directive in 2012, the challenges in dealing with EEEs have grown and considerable technical developments have taken place so that the current WEEE Directive is no longer fit for purpose. In particular, the main focus on end-of-life throughout the directive is no longer appropriate. It is therefore urgently necessary that the WEEE Directive is quickly and fundamentally revised, expanded and updated. Furthermore, it is recommended to consider a conversion of the WEEE directive into a WEEE Regulation, since a regulation comes into force immediately, is more legally binding and ensures more harmonised rules throughout Europe.

- **Set quantitative targets to reduce environmental footprint from EEE**, e.g. in relation to the use of material-specific primary resources or the volume of electronics put on the market (art. 1):
 - To reduce the overconsumption of electrical appliances, the more efficient use of resources in EEE, durability and reparability of EEE as well as the use of recycled content.
- Introduce horizontal ecodesign and information requirements and phase out all substances of concern, including those that hinder an effective end-of-life treatment of EEE (art. 4):



- Introduce a new **horizontal Ecodesign Regulation on EEEs**, within the ESPR, and ensure its complementarity with the **WEEE Regulation** so that all EEEs are designed to ensure their longevity and reparability, spare parts (particularly batteries, displays, lamps and other wear parts) are easily removed and replaced, thus enhancing general reparability and durability, products are better designed for non-destructive disassembly helping to recover EEE components and materials, especially CRMs.
- Set design requirements to ensure **toxic-free EEEs**, by banning flame retardants (as in most uses they do not provide any meaningful fire safety benefit), persistent organic pollutants, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in EEE by design from a precautionary perspective. Where essential, substances of concern should be minimised and full transparency on chemical content and safe use and disposal should be required and passed on to the end-of-life stage of WEEE.
- Introduce a mandatory **digital product passport (DPP)**, in line with the ESPR, to enhance consumer information and workers' health, as well as to facilitate the preparation for reuse, preparation for repurposing, repurposing or remanufacturing of EEE, as well as recovery of components and valuable materials, such as CRMs.
- Promote reuse and repair by setting clear targets, improving collection, raising awareness, and strengthening the fundamental 'right to repair' (art. 11, art. 6):
 - Set separate targets for reuse, repair and preparation for reuse, as already established in several Member States (e.g. Spain, France) and European regions (e.g. Wallonia, Flanders).
 - Reinforce WEEE separate collection and transport rules by making it absolutely clear that reusable products should be collected in a way that safeguards their reusability, for example by making their storage in weatherproof facilities mandatory and avoiding dropping.
 - Ensure priority access to collected devices for accredited (preparation for) reuse operators to conduct waste prevention and management activities.
 - Ensure open access to repair information (typical defects, disassembly instruction etc.) and spare parts for both independent repairers and consumers
 - Secure spare parts and software updates for the expected lifetime of EEEs at a reasonable price or for free, respectively.
 - Provide for easy maintenance work as well as exchange of wearing and spare parts without damaging the device and without requiring special tools.
- Increase and enforce producer and seller responsibility, including for online platforms (art. 23):
 - Ensure producers bear more financial responsibility to collect e-waste through obligatory participation in nation-wide networks for WEEE return for which collection and (preparation for) reuse targets should become legally binding.
 - Introduce modulated EPR fees, prioritising circular design and waste prevention in accordance with the EU waste hierarchy (as in France), earmarking funds to support activities like repair that contribute to overall waste reduction.
 - Forbid online platforms selling EEEs from unregistered producers in the EU (as in Germany).
 - Increase transparency of producers' collection reports to increase accountability.



- **Improve WEEE collection and end illegal exports** by ensuring better consumer information, consumer-friendly collection systems, more realistic calculation methods for targets, and better differentiation between reusable and functional equipment (art. 7, art. 8, art. 10):
 - Oblige all producers to join a producer responsibility organisation (PRO), which must ensure comprehensive and nationwide networks for WEEE return, fulfil individual collection targets and ensure effective and continuous activities to enhance consumer awareness.
 - Provide that all distributors with a total sales area of more than 100 m² are responsible to accept small WEEE.
 - Ensure all distributors who place EEE on the market regardless of their size are required to take back WEEE if consumers buy a new EEE.
 - Set deposit refund systems for smartphones, tablets and other small EEEs.
 - Improve the regulatory differentiation between reusable and functional EEE/WEEE to avoid illegal exports of e-waste, e.g. through minimum functional requirements and precise test procedures.
- Set modern rules for WEEE treatment, collection, logistics, and preparation for reuse:
 - Integrate provisions from CENELEC standards (EN 50625 and 50614 series) into the WEEE Regulation, as already implemented in some Member states, ensuring that the relevant provisions are freely accessible and available in all the official languages of the EU.
 - Modernise these rules, especially for more effective protection of WEEE against damage during collection, transport, and storage, especially to safeguard reusability and recover CRMs, as well as better dismantling and logistics practices (see CEWASTE project Deliverable).
 - Set separate recycling quota for plastics as well as prospectively for CRMs and other metals contained in EEE.
- Ban the destruction of unsold EEE and ensure their reuse:
 - Set an immediate legal ban on the deliberate destruction or disposal of unsold EEE. Disposal should only be allowed for electronics that are not compliant with legal requirements.
 - Introduce a legally binding “duty of care” for producers and retailers.

