WIRTSCHAFTSKAMMER ÖSTERREICH

Simplification of Administrative Burdens in Environmental Legislation "Environmental Omnibus"

WKO Position Paper

Austrian Federal Economic Chamber - Wirtschaftskammer Österreich (WKO)
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WKO updated Position on Environmental Omnibus

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Executive Summary

- **ESPR**: longer transition periods essential; economic feasibility and competitiveness must be safeguarded; current disproportionate focus on reporting obligations is critical
- **EUDR**: impractical in current form; supply chains at risk; introduction of "no risk" category and risk-based enforcement to be welcomed; compliance should be focused on first point of entry
- **NRR**: non-deterioration principle should be limited to Natura 2000 sites; current restoration targets overly ambitious and bureaucratic – flexibility required; fundamental rights of landowners must be respected
- **PPWR**: 100% reuse target for transport packaging unrealistic – exemptions needed (incl. pallet wrappings/straps); addressees of sustainability requirements unclear and therefore problematic; bans in Annex V risk hygiene/food safety may increase food waste; refill station obligations excessive → deletion necessary
- **WFD**: clear definition of waste/non-waste urgently needed; one-stop shop for EPR registrations across EU to be welcomed; very large online platforms (VLOPs) must contribute to EPR schemes – legal clarification essential
- **EUBR**: e.g., obligation to display separate recycling costs for consumers disproportionate – deletion or at least threshold exemption required
- **UWWTD**: extended producer responsibility contradicts polluter pays principle – broad cost-sharing across all dischargers needed; fourth stage treatment only where drinking water sources are at risk
- **IED**: permitting procedures too lengthy – initial authority check should focus on plausibility/completeness, only; EMS obligations overly burdensome – simplification needed; requirement for "strictest achievable emission limit values" (Art. 15(3)) must be removed; clear definition of "installation" required
- **EIA**: consolidation of permitting procedures necessary; acceleration for energy transition/security projects positive – "overriding public interest" and species protection flexibilities from RED III should be incorporated
- **Cross-cutting issues**: permitting timeframes across EU far too long – legally binding deadlines necessary; duplication of EIA/IED procedures should be avoided; environmental data reporting should be streamlined via single national platforms; shortage of experts prolongs permitting – qualified planners' documentation should be accepted as sufficient in a first step
- **Plastic pellets**: carrier thresholds and flexibility in requirements needed; equipment obligations too prescriptive – should be guidance, not law
- **SCIP**: obligations excessive – SME threshold or deletion in the light of DPP
- **BPR**: costs and delays disproportionate – SME support and predictable timelines essential; unjustified delays should trigger fee reimbursement
- **CLP**: thresholds for small volumes necessary; disproportionate burdens from Poison Centre Notifications for very small/custom mixtures; harmonized classifications (e.g., ethanol, lithium salts) carry the risk of unintended bans → proportionality check required.

The **Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKO)** welcomes the European Commission announcement for an Environmental Omnibus Regulation, recognizing its importance at a time when businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, are increasingly challenged by the growing complexity of environmental legislation. Reducing unnecessary administrative burden is essential not only to safeguard the competitiveness of European companies, but also to secure long-term prosperity within the EU.

This position paper sets out concrete recommendations drawn from the experiences of our members. It highlights specific challenges they face and identifies key EU legislative acts that should be prioritized within this Omnibus initiative, given their significant impact on the economic viability of affected sectors. In our view, the success of this process lies in striking the right balance: ensuring that Europe's ambitious environmental standards are maintained while introducing the necessary simplifications and flexibilities that enable effective implementation. By doing so, this Omnibus shall strengthen both sustainability and economic resilience across the Union.

To this end, we propose adaptations to the following pieces of legislation:

1. Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR)
2. Regulation on Deforestation-Free Products (EUDR)
3. Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR)
4. Waste and Water:
    a. Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)
    b. Waste Framework Directive (WFD)
    c. EU Battery Regulation (EUBR)
    d. Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD)
5. Industrial Emissions Directive (IED)
6. Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (EIA)
7. Proposals that are applicable to more than one regulation/directive addressing:
    - Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (EIA)
    - Industrial Emissions Directive (IED)
    - Waste Framework Directive (WFD)
    - Waste Shipment Regulation (WSR)
    - Industrial Emissions Portal Regulation (IEPR)
    - EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS)
8. Chemicals:
    a. Plastic Pellets Regulation
    b. Substances of Concern In articles as such or in complex objects (Products) Database (SCIP)
    c. Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR)
    d. Beyond improvements already proposed in Omnibus VI we suggest the following enhancements:
        - Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Chemicals Regulation (CLP)

Our Proposals

1. Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR):

OJ: Regulation (EU) 2024/1781 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for sustainable products

The ESPR is intended to be the cornerstone of the EU circular economy strategy, expanding the earlier Ecodesign Directive beyond energy efficiency to cover up to 16 product requirements. These requirements address both performance and information criteria, with the Digital Product Passport (DPP) as the key tool for data collection and transmission. The ESPR introduces a paradigm shift as it takes a life-cycle approach and consequently intends to cover the whole value chain.

To ensure a manageable transition, a step-by-step approach is recommended since the ESPR neither provides exemptions for SMEs nor for volumes (e.g. thresholds). We strongly recommend a gradual, proportionate rollout of ESPR measures. The effective implementation of the ESPR requires careful planning and coordination to fully unlock its potential and to deliver tangible benefits for European companies and – ultimately - sustainability goals. European companies successfully operate in a competitive environment both within the EU and internationally. As the ESPR introduces a life-cycle-approach to sustainability we recommend proportionate measures for imports that are in lockstep with the step-by-step approach so that raw materials and inputs from third countries are covered.

As whole sectors will have to adapt, we foresee a substantial increase in necessary investments (both capital and operating expenditures). These stem from adaptation of internal processes, IT-infrastructure, training, business models and, not least, a sufficient number of consultants. This poses a severe problem, especially for SMEs, for example, due to a high consulting demand in complex areas such as LCA and DPP management. Furthermore, the current processes lack a clear, sequential and fact-based approach as current implementation of the ESPR is very ambitious timewise. The existing and foreseeable delays in new ESPR regulations and studies are due to the complexity of the ESPR and further strengthen our demand for a step-by-step introduction.

New obligations must be pursued without creating a global competitive disadvantage for European businesses. Maintaining a strong local economy is an essential prerequisite for the implementation of sustainability objectives - only if the European economic base is preserved can sustainability measures be established and maintained in the long term. Equally important will be to source raw materials and product inputs from third countries under competitive conditions.

Problem description	Proposal for simplification/burden reduction
DPP (Digital Product Passport) The DPP is designed to provide a spectrum of information: handbooks, labels, health & safety, and all additional information. This very likely requires full digitalisation of company workflows, ideally whole value chains, which demands high upfront investment and specialist personnel, particularly for SMEs, and complex products as well as value chains. In essence these are change management processes. Feedback from companies (including SMEs) states that adaptations ideally require 2+ years (3-6m preparation, 6-12m implementation, 6-	We recommend extending the transition period for DPP implementation from 18 to at least 36 months, which would enable companies to adapt their business models to the necessary transformation while helping to achieve the ESPRs goals. When designing the DPP as a cornerstone to pursue European sustainability goals, it should be kept in mind to fully implement the principle of data sustainability, systematically avoiding unnecessary duplication in data creation and storage. Reporting and disclosure

9m stabilisation). As whole sectors will have to adapt, a foreseeable shortage of market consultants and specialist companies is very likely. Furthermore, the DPP is not only part of multiple legal acts and potential solutions addressing e.g. Level-Playing-Field issues, but also the designated vessel to carry all the "to-be-defined" data as well as provide options for data-changes along the entire supply chain – if modulations occur. Since neither the requirements by ESPR nor the application-process are at a concluding, final definition level, it does not make any sense to start with extended technical DPP-specifications, without the knowledge of the final product necessities.	obligations ought to be structured as a single, integrated data hub, underpinned by interoperable document management systems that ensure seamless data flows. Ensuring that data collection can be carried out with reasonable effort, particularly by SMEs, is non-negotiable. Such an approach enhances efficiency, prevents redundant reporting, and removes the need for storing identical information multiple times. The use of the Digital Product Passport (DPP) for the collection of the required data must be designed in such a way that it is also economically feasible (especially but not least) for SMEs and reliably protects confidential business information. We recommend a step-by-step introduction of the DPP under the ESPR before extending it to other areas. The DPP currently exists as a concept and is not yet productive. Special care must be taken to guarantee the protection of trade secrets and intellectual property rights when drawing up the collection of value-chain information. Procurement along the value chain regularly is a closely guarded trade secret.
Unsold Consumer Products To achieve a practical and legally compliant application, the provisions on "unsold consumer products" need to be clarified.	It is essential that only consumer products should be covered and that grey areas of distinction between consumer and non-consumer products are clearly addressed. Clear and timely guidance, such as FAQ documents and explanatory guidelines, are necessary to support this distinction. The decision regarding the potential destruction of products should take economic considerations into account.
Timeframe While the EU aims to lead the world in circular economy practices by 2030, the current ESPR implementation is ambitious in terms of time and complexity. New rules for key intermediate (iron, steel, aluminium) and final products (textiles, furniture, mattresses, tyres) will only start to take effect from 2028 onwards. The importance of preparatory studies is very high as these lay the foundations for product rules.	From a WKO perspective, we recommend that the process should include economic feasibility, taking international competitiveness fully into account, coverage of whole value chains and product life cycles, in-depth knowledge of the sector, both large and SME participants, and adequate time frames for proper regulation development and transition. For example, we recommend longer phasing-in periods of product rules as the currently communicated 18-months present an extremely tight deadline in which to adjust designing and production processes and the digitalisation of data management in companies. We believe

	that the minimum timeline should be 36-months of more.
Reporting Currently, we see a disproportionate focus on reporting requirements. First-movers report to us that markets are not yet prepared to pay the higher costs associated and, in addition, most of the required data is not yet available. The transition costs will ultimately have to be borne by the consumers. Here are two examples of the reporting requirements: ▪ SOCs: A major concern is the mandatory reporting of Substances of Concern (SOCs), where thousands of substances must be tracked and documented in detail, down to product components – even when the SOCs are fully integrated in a matrix and there remains a negligible risk of release. This level of granularity will require significant testing capacity, expert knowledge, and infrastructure which is currently unrealistic for many producers. ▪ Destruction of unsold goods: The proposed rules on the destruction of unsold consumer goods also pose challenges. Most companies already avoid destruction for economic reasons, yet, new provisions would impose complex reporting, including for "dual use" products such as workwear, depending on whether they are sold B2B or B2C. Further, at the time of collection service-providers often cannot tell in advance, if and in what manner products will be processed. This creates substantial difficulties for reporting.	Our recommendations for the two examples of reporting requirements are: ▪ SOCs: We recommend a pilot phase focusing on a very limited list of SOCs ▪ Destruction of unsold goods: We recommend revising the proposed rules and to understand that the costs of reporting and obligatory reuse or refurbishment will ultimately have to be borne by consumers resulting in extra costs. Feasibility and proportionality of new measures should be key.

2. Regulation on Deforestation-free Products (EUDR):

OJ: Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation

The EUDR is intended to ensure that EU consumption does not contribute to deforestation and forest degradation worldwide. It repeals the EU Timber Regulation and introduces extensive reporting obligations for any trader who place goods like wood, furniture, cattle or agricultural products on the EU market or exports from it. In December 2024, the applicability of the regulation was postponed by 12 months until December 2025.

The new proposal put forward by the Commission (COM(2025)652) to amend the EUDR does not ensure the workability of the regulation. It is unrealistic to expect that companies will be ready to comply right away with changes in the regulation that have been proposed only a few weeks

before entry into application. The simplifications are a good step into the right direction but still create bureaucratic burdens for downstream operators and traders, who will be faced with a much larger number of DDS (due diligence statement) reference numbers as these accumulate along the value chain.

Postponing the applicability by another year is considered essential, as implementation is still not feasible. Fundamental concerns remain regarding the scope and obligations of the regulation – for SMEs as well as for non-SMEs across the entire supply chain – especially as a lot of process-information is just given via additional documents like FAQs and guidance. These are of help but still do not properly address all existing open questions and are not legally binding. This leads to high legal uncertainty for large companies as for SMEs.

Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Amendments to the EUDR From our point of view the current version of the EUDR therefore threatens the functioning of the supply chain. Different interpretations, paired with legally binding and non-legally binding texts, create further insecurities – especially for SMEs, which are already under pressure by large companies with finished set-ups and adequate legal teams. Without improvements, the EUDR risks unintended consequences for Europe's economic resilience and may undermine public confidence in its policymaking processes. To create a better balance between environmental protection and economic viability, in the right column we propose the following key principles for a revised approach. These proposals would retain the regulation's environmental integrity while significantly reducing red tape. To enable this, legislative amendments to the EUDR are essential. We therefore strongly emphasize the need to incorporate the EUDR into a seventh Omnibus initiative and recommend a thorough reassessment for this purpose.	In any case, a complete substantive alignment with other "supply chain regulations", such as the CSDDD and the CSRD, must be established. The documentation of the origin of the affected products and raw materials from unproblematic regions should be simplified - not only for micro and small primary producers as is now foreseen in the Commission proposal (COM(2025)652) in Article 4(a), which is currently under review). A "no risk" classification for countries with negligible deforestation risks is to be established. This category would streamline requirements, limiting them to basic documentation rather than requiring full due diligence. We also recommend integrating proofs into an EU-wide, effective and efficient proofing system covering all value chains, from sources of energy as well as primary and secondary raw materials to final consumer products and their end-of-life, aiming for legal certainty and credibility while avoiding additional efforts as well as multiple approaches or systems in parallel. A risk-based enforcement should be applied instead of a presumption of guilt, since deforestation is largely a concern outside Europe: In Europe, forest cover has grown by over 14 million hectares since 1990. The burden should not fall uniformly on all actors.

	The administrative burden of the EUDR should be reduced by limiting the number of DDS (Due Diligence Statements). The responsibility for EUDR compliance should lie primarily with the first party to place the raw material or product on the market within the EU ("first port" or "first point of entry principle"). From this point onwards, no further due diligence obligations should be transferred to downstream economic operators along the supply chain. Such clear accountability would also improve the overall efficiency of implementation. The competent control authorities would thus be able to use their resources more efficiently and focus primarily on the interface with the market without having to take action along complex supply chains. At the same time, the overarching objective of the regulation - combating deforestation and forest degradation - would be fully preserved.
	In addition, amendments are needed to provide a level playing field. For example, wooden furniture ordered B2C via third-country online platforms is not required to comply with the EUDR, while local B2C companies – even if local, certified wood is being used – have to provide proper due diligence. In consequence, local providers (especially SME) will be pushed out of the market, losing to possibly non-compliant third country providers. This will worsen the situation instead of improving it.
	We propose the introduction of a threshold above which the regulation applies, similar to the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) scheme.
	Furthermore, a practical EU information system that corresponds to modern IT tools, with accessible training and education offerings available in all EU languages is needed.
EUDR and the Arts & Crafts Sector From the perspective of the arts and crafts sector and musical instrument makers, the reporting obligations under the EUDR should provide for appropriate simplifications and exemptions. Such exemptions are necessary as the regulation in its current form is set to impose disproportionate compliance burdens on marginal or exceptional cases. It thereby fails to respect the particular characteristics of artistic creation.	Operators should report the quantities processed; however, where the determination of the origin would entail disproportionate effort and an annual threshold is not exceeded, reporting of the origin may be waived. Items that are clearly of long-standing age, for example, more than 50 years - should be considered as used. In cases of suspected non-compliance or abuse, the competent authority may require disclosure. Exemptions under the EUDR should explicitly cover two categories:

	▪ de minimis quantities, where operators would only be required to indicate the volume of products placed on the market, without being subject to the full scope of due diligence and reporting obligations; and ▪ handcrafted works of art made of wood, provided that such objects constitute the unique outcome of an individual artistic creation process, are produced without automated or industrial methods, and by their nature cannot be reproduced in unlimited numbers.
EUDR & the Finance Sector The following Article 34(4) of the EUDR poses a substantial challenge for EU financial institutions: "The impact assessment referred to in paragraph 2 shall also evaluate the role of financial institutions in preventing financial flows that contribute directly or indirectly to deforestation and forest degradation and assess the need to provide for any specific obligations for financial institutions in Union legal acts in that regard, taking into account any relevant existing horizontal and sectoral legislation." Such an impact assessment for financial institutes is not appropriate because they have no direct economic relation to the relevant products and because financial institutes do not have any rights to interfere in the supply chains of their clients.	Therefore, Article 34(4) of the European Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) should be deleted.

3. Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR):

OJ: Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 on nature restoration

The business community supports the Commission's efforts to restore degraded habitats to protect biodiversity – many economic and entrepreneurial activities use healthy ecosystems in their interconnected functionality. Ensuring competitiveness in Europe requires clearly defined objectives, economically sound measures, coherent instruments, and a reliable, long-term development of a regulatory framework for nature conservation – yet, much of that is missing in the NRR.

Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Principle of Non-Deterioration The principle of non-deterioration and the large-scale expansion of biodiversity protection reduces the potential uses of existing areas, makes economic activities in these areas impossible, and diminishes Europe's attractiveness as a business location. Such an objective requires a careful social, ecological, and economic balancing of the	Therefore, the regulation should limit the prohibition of deterioration to Natura 2000 areas.

various interests and competing uses. However, it is currently still completely unclear what “protection claim” should exist for the remediated and restored areas outside the Natura 2000 network. From an economic perspective, the principle of non-deterioration is extremely demanding, especially in areas outside Natura 2000 and in areas where no remediation measures are being conducted.	
Participation Fundamental rights in the regulation are only based on Article 37 (environmental protection) of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights – the fundamental rights to property or income are not mentioned. The implementation of the proposed large-scale targets and measures will interfere with the property rights of landowners and users.	In accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the rights of landowners and users should be taken into account. Therefore, achieving the large-scale targets requires more emphasis on voluntary participation, consultations, and stronger financial incentives or compensation.
Restoration Plans The timelines and general content requirements for the national restoration plans are very ambitious and difficult to fulfil given the high bureaucratic burden and limited government resources in terms of personnel and money. The Commission also recognizes that the preparation of the restoration plan requires comprehensive, quality-assured data. However, this data availability generally only applies to priority habitat types and species according to the Habitats Directive. This makes it impossible to prepare restoration plans in a timely and comprehensive manner, which form the basis for implementing measures.	More flexible schedules are needed.
Degree of Urbanization The improvements planned by the regulation, in particular regarding heat protection measures, are a problem for "cities" and not for "towns and suburbs." Furthermore, the areas of "towns and suburbs" are not unregulated but fall under the extensive provisions of the regulation regarding biodiversity restoration (Article 4 and Articles 10–13). Maintaining the current regulations would result in a massive impact on our living and economic areas, which was certainly not intended by the legislative bodies, such as: - Massive interference with existing land use regulations regarding permitted uses and utilization options for properties.	The scope of application of Article 8 of the Restoration Regulation should be restricted to the degree of urbanization (DEGURBA) 1: This means limiting the regulation to "cities," since the degree of urbanization (DEGURBA) 2 ("cities" with "towns and suburbs") predominantly addresses rural areas, which is likely not the regulatory intent of Article 8.

- Violation of important spatial planning principles, because the regulation would divert investments to areas outside of the central economic and living areas. - Damage to the location: Massive deterioration of investments by businesses due to compensatory area management.	

4. Waste and Water

a. Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR):
OJ: Regulation (EU) 2025/40 on packaging and packaging waste

Simplification and a reduction of bureaucracy in the recently adopted EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) are essential as several provisions of the regulation do not match with economic reality. Proof of conformity and the technical documentation of legal compliance (to be held ready for a possible authority inspection) of many provisions of the regulation as well as the detailed data reporting are way too burdensome for many market participants, especially for SMEs (e.g. Art. 28 and Art 31).

Overall implementation of the Regulation - including all specific entry into force dates - should be postponed by at least two years or more *(proposal: stop-the-clock after August 2026 for 2-3 years)*. During this time, the regulation should be thoroughly revised and adapted to ensure it is feasible for application.

Please see below some examples of requirements that cannot be implemented in this form:

Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Transport Packaging The rules for reusable transport packaging in Article 29 (2) and (3) are not feasible, because the 100% target in these subparagraphs is unrealistic. These requirements would mean repackaging/unpackaging products that are delivered in disposable packaging from third countries but also repackaging/unpackaging products in disposable packaging from Member States if these products are then passed on B2B within a Member State and cross-border in a group of companies. This would also mean that single-use transport packaging or sales packaging used for transport, such as intermediate bulk containers, pails, drums and canisters of all sizes and materials, must be repackaged if they are imported from another Member State or a third country and then passed on B2B, as the 100% reusable obligation will apply from 2030. It makes no sense to repackage/refill packaged products just to fulfil the 100% reusable obligation. This generates more packaging (namely the necessary required re-usable	An exemption is needed for goods imported in disposable packaging both from third countries and from Member States.

packaging), unnecessary labour and costs without any added value.	
Wrappings The 100% target in Article 29 (2) and (3) also means, that, by 2030, plastic pallet wrappings and straps would de facto be banned. However, there are no re-usable alternatives. Plastic pallet wrappings and straps play a vital role in supply chains given that automated process can quickly pack large quantities into stable load units. Additionally, they are easily scalable and make pallets light and secure during transport.	An exemption is thus also needed for plastic pallet wrappings and straps.
Annex V Special concerns regarding Annex V, point 2, 4 and 5: a general ban on packaging for unprocessed fresh fruit and vegetables or single portions (condiments, sauces, coffee cream, sugar, etc.) jeopardizes hygiene, increases food waste, and counteracts waste reduction goals. A ban on small single-use items (<50 ml / <100 g) would impair service levels and star criteria; alternative solutions must be hygienic and legally permissible.	Annex V must be exhaustive: the list of prohibited single-use items must be clearly formulated; current examples are misleading and could increase food waste and counteract waste reduction goals. Alternative solutions must be hygienic and legally permissible. An exemption is also needed for sensitive hygiene products (toothbrushes, razor blades, cotton swabs, etc.); miniature samples on request as well as flexibility in exceptional situations & reporting simplifications should be allowed: the Commission should allow single use for health/hygiene reasons (e.g., pandemics).
Refill Stations Article 28 (5) entails the target of allocating 10% of total sales areas to refill stations, including for non-food products. This requirement also appears excessive, since for hygiene reasons, cosmetics, for example, can in most cases hardly be sold “unpackaged”.	A deletion of this requirement is necessary.
Clarification of Addressee It must be clarified, who the addressee of the sustainability requirements for packaging is. In a division-of-labour economy, the roles of the packaging supplier, the party that designs and commissions it, and the packager often diverge. It also remains unclear what role the “own importer” plays in the PPWR, since this is not explicitly mentioned in the EU regulation.	A revision of the relevant definitions and alignment of actual responsibilities in Article 3 of the PPWR is needed.
PPWR in the Food Sector We would also like to highlight the very problematic situation in the food sector regarding the implementation of the PPWR: meat and sausage packaging, for example, requires highly functional barriers to ensure shelf life, hygiene, and food safety. The PPWR	We therefore call for industry-specific exemptions, transition periods, and targeted innovation support in order to continue to ensure supply security and hygiene.

jeopardizes this with blanket recycling requirements that exclude complex multilayer materials, even though there is often no technological alternative to them. Particularly critical is the PFAS restriction under Article 5.5, which also affects non-intentionally added PFAS - for example, through contaminated recycled materials, production residues, or environmental sources. Liability lies with the food business operator, even though he cannot control the entry of PFAS. This represents an insurmountable obstacle and thus threatens the existence of food-producing companies.	

b. Waste Framework Directive (WFD): OJ: Directive (EU) 2025/1892 amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste	
Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Definition of Waste and Non-waste In our view, the distinction between waste and non-waste should be clarified. In practice, many measures to promote the circular economy actually fail due to waste legislation ("waste exchanges", reuse enterprises classified as waste operators, etc.).	The definition of waste, end-of-waste criteria and regulations on by-products, as well as exemptions from the definition of waste must be formulated more precisely so that they are applied uniformly in all Member States and support the promotion of a circular economy model instead of preventing it.
The problem of VLOPs VLOPs, "very large online platforms", create a problem for the local retail trade sector all over Europe as well as for EPR schemes (EPR = "extended producer responsibility"). Products and packaging are imported into the EU without contributing financially to the EPR schemes which organise the collection and treatment of waste streams (such as packaging, electrical and electronic equipment and batteries). In the future, such EPR schemes are planned for textiles, too. The lack of financial contribution to EPR schemes (so called "free riding") through these producers from third countries undermines EPR schemes since they have to deal with waste streams from third countries which are not financed in advance (contrary to EU packaging and products which are financed in advance through payments from producers/importers to EPR schemes).	A legal clarification in the WFD is needed to hold VLOPs, i.e. "very large online platforms" (such as Temu or Shein from China) accountable for ensuring that producers from third countries, who contract directly with consumers to import products from third countries via the platform, contribute financially to EPR schemes (or the VLOPs pay for the producers).
Article 8a (5): Waste Collection System registration in other EU Member States For example, online antiquarian bookshops, even if they only sell and send a few books to another EU Member State, must register with the respective national waste collection system in the recipient countries, even if they only	The creation of a "one-stop shop" for EU-wide registration of companies to the waste collection systems (similar to the VAT system) would reduce administrative burden significantly. The retailer should only have to register once. They should also be given the opportunity to specify which collection system

send books once. The fees for this vary, but in the case of only a few cross-border shipments, they are hardly pay back, if at all. In addition, if books are sent to several EU Member States, the online book antiquarian must also register in the relevant waste collection system, which is time-consuming (especially if books are only occasionally sold/shipped to the respective EU Member State). This prevents SMEs in particular from engaging in cross-border online trade as it is often not clear from the outset if it is worthwhile in terms of the cost-benefit ratio. More generally, the 'bureaucratic effort' of multiple registrations and the cost-benefit problemdo not necessarily support the Single Market either.	they actually want to use in which Member State.

c. EU Battery Regulation (BR): OJ: Regulation (EU) 2025/1561 amending Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 as regards obligations of economic operators concerning battery due diligence policies	
Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Article 74 (5) The EU Battery Regulation requires more simplification and less bureaucracy. One example is Article 74 (5) of the EU Battery Regulation. It stipulates that the costs borne by the manufacturer for collection/sorting/recycling must be shown separately for the end user at the point of sale of a new battery. The necessity of labelling the visible fee makes no sense, nor does it have any added value for consumers. Additionally, this requirement creates unnecessary work for manufacturers and retailers. An average retailer in Austria has at least 2 brands and possibly his own house brand. This means that they would have to calculate the disposal costs per item every year and display them on their price tags. Assuming an average battery shelf, that's between 20 and 100 items, depending on the retailer and size. It also should be borne in mind that there is no generally applicable disposal tariff for batteries; prices vary. Retailers have to calculate the costs themselves for batteries they import themselves. The organisational effort is immense, with no discernible added value. Multiplied by all EU countries, which all have their own disposal systems and tariffs, this leads to exactly the opposite of the intention of this legislative act, namely a reduction in bureaucracy and uniform rules.	Therefore, **this requirement** in Article 74 (5) should be **removed from the EU Battery Regulation**, or **at least a minimum provision should be added,** e.g. that disposal costs below 1 euro do not have to be advertised (example: the disposal costs for a button cell are approx. 0.002 Euro). Accordingly, we propose the following amendment regarding Article 74 (5): **Article 74** Information on prevention and management of waste batteries We propose to delete the following text: ***~~"5. The costs covered by the producer under Article 56(4), points (a) to (d), shall be shown separately to the end-user at the point of sale of a new battery."~~***

d. Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD)

OJ: Directive (EU) 2024/3019 concerning urban wastewater treatment

On January 1st, 2025, the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive 2024/3019 (UWWTD) came into force. The aim of the UWWTD is to protect the environment from the harmful effects of municipal wastewater and wastewater from certain industrial sectors. The European Commission has identified deficiencies in the old directive, which are to be addressed with the new directive while also implementing the goals of the Green Deal. However, the UWWTD poses substantial challenges for the European industry.

Problem description	Proposal for simplification/burden reduction
Amendments to the UWWTD The newly adopted EU Urban Wastewater Directive stipulates that all larger wastewater treatment plants be gradually equipped with fourth-stage treatment to remove "micropollutants". A controversial preparatory impact assessment by the EU Commission identified pharmaceutical and cosmetic active ingredients as the main components of these micropollutants, a finding that is, however, definitely incorrect because of the flawed underlying data basis of the assessment. According to Article 9 of the Directive (extended producer responsibility), the pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries would have to bear a large share of costs of constructing and operating the fourth stage treatment plants. The European Commission estimates an annual cost of EUR 1.2 billion; new estimates are four times that. However, extended producer responsibility does not comply with the EU's polluter pays principle (the polluter pays, not the producer). Moreover, due to price fixing for medicines, the costs would have to be borne completely by the manufacturers/distributors; there is currently no room for negotiation. Asian or other non-EU suppliers would therefore simply stop deliveries, which would lead to drug shortages. At the same time, the total costs incurred would be spread among fewer manufacturers in the EU, placing further strain on EU producers. Subsequently, in order to increase drug availability, social security systems would have to cover the high costs, which would place a further massive burden on the sector.	▪ Reduce costs: Limit the fourth stage of purification to certain scenarios, i.e., only where, for example, drinking water reserves are at risk from micropollutants. ▪ We propose a broader distribution of costs as in the previous three cleaning stages, so that all dischargers (households, hospitals, businesses) bear the additional costs according to the polluter pays principle. Special information: Several European associations of the pharmaceutical and cosmetics and Polish industries have filed a lawsuit with the European Court of Justice. In early May 2025, the European Parliament submitted an amendment related to the UWWTD, calling for a new impact assessment. The European Commission has announced a re-assessment of the forecast impact of the UWWTD on the pharmaceutical industry.

5. Industrial Emissions Directive (IED):

OJ: Directive (EU) 2024/1785 amending Directive 2010/75/EU on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) and Council Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste

Problem description	Proposal for simplification/burden reduction
Effort and Costs of IED To give a halt to the growing overall effort and costs of the IED, selective improvements have become necessary.	To speed up authorisation and assessing compliance, competent authorities should – in a first step – just check completeness and plausibility of submission documents if these documents were elaborated by qualified planning offices or experts. An in-depth-examination by authorities should only be made necessary if considerable objections to these proceedings are raised by authorised parties. Concerning national implementation and transitional provisions, it should be clarified that the new provisions are not to be applied to installations with existing permits and to those sectors that do not have new BAT (Best Available Techniques) conclusions. This could be implemented via guidance documents for competent authorities.
Environmental Management Systems There is general consent that environmental management systems (EMS) should be available and audited. However, making them part of the permitting requirements offers no advantage. This would only create unnecessary additional administrative burdens, since all the EMS aspects would have to be taken into account in the permitting procedures of the Member States anyway. Therefore, this measure would not lead to greater environmental protection but merely to a higher administrative workload and longer permitting procedures – at a time when permitting periods across Europe urgently need to be shortened to maintain international competitiveness.	The legal requirements with regard to environmental management systems (EMS) should be profoundly simplified (e.g., chemicals inventory and transformation plans as well as proper deadlines for audits). Companies running a qualified EMS (e.g., ISO 14001) should be able to continue to operate it without further adjustments. It must also be clarified under which conditions and when the EMS is to be updated (e.g. do new BAT conclusions for a sector automatically "trigger" the need for a renewed EMS). The EMS builds on existing systems outside the IED (e.g. ETS), so it must be possible to make full use of the components already in place (ISO 14001 EMS, ISO 50001 energy management system, elements from EMAS, etc.) without having to rewrite them in a different form. The latter would only cause unnecessary administrative burden, particularly for SMEs. The requirement to include the chemicals inventory in the EMS should be reassessed in terms of its added value. The current provisions target not only potential industrial emissions, but also the presence of hazardous substances at the site (including, for example, hand soaps and cleaning products). However, this is already covered by REACH and existing occupational health and safety regulations. Companies maintain their own chemicals inventories, linked to their safety management systems. Setting up a parallel system tied to

	the IED for listing hazardous substances and assessing the risks of SVHCs and authorized and restricted substances under REACH for human health and the environment amounts to a comprehensive data collection exercise. In practice, this duplicate regulation would simply consist of copying existing data into a new system, probably in a different format, leading only to additional administrative burden without improving environmental or health protection, since these issues are already addressed by REACH and occupational health and safety regulations.
Emission Limit Values (ELVs) and Environmental Performance of Installations (BAT-AEPLs) The provision to set "the strictest achievable emission limit values" (Art. 15 (3)) must be revised. The new IED requires Member States to start from the lowest achievable emission limit value within the range specified in the BREF. If this lowest value cannot be achieved for technical and/or economic reasons, they may consider a higher value, provided it remains within the range and is supported by solid technical documentation justifying the proposed value. The emission limit values at the lower end of the intervals do not represent BAT but are values that can only be achieved under special conditions. The reason for expressing BAT with a range of emission limit values is the mutual case-by-case dependency of environmental performances. Not every measure that leads to an emission reduction of a certain pollutant also reduces the emission of another, resulting in potential trade-offs. These trade-offs, especially with regards to environmental performance limit values, but also e.g. with stricter conditions due to environmental quality standards, have to be considered comprehensively. This results in a massive increase in effort and complexity for authorities and companies. Furthermore, the concept of environmental performance of installations (BAT-AEPLs - Best Available Technique-Associated Environmental Performance Level) should be reconsidered due to practical issues.	We propose the deletion of the requirement in terms of lowest possible emission values (Article 15 (3)). To better reflect the local and site-specific conditions of each installation, IED Article 15 (3) should only require competent authorities to set emission limit values (ELVs) within the relevant BAT-AEL range in permits. Binding ranges for the environmental performance of installations (BAT-AEPLs) shall not be automatically derived in BAT-conclusions. BAT-AEPLs shall remain indicative for all consumption levels (including energy and water consumption) and resource efficiency. Resource efficiency and consumption is dependent on many production and product-specific factors, as well as additional factors often falling outside of the operator's control (e.g. geographical location, seasonality etc.), which cannot be considered for the determination of binding ranges.

6. Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (EIA) OJ: Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment	
Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Consolidated Permitting Procedures In the EIA directive, it should be ensured to reduce repetition and accelerate decision-making.	The EU should therefore provide for consolidated permitting procedures in the EIA Directive.
Overriding Public Interest Acceleration of procedures for energy transition projects and ideally also for projects relating to security of supply is needed.	Therefore, the rebuttable presumption of overriding public interest under Article 16f of the RED III Directive should be incorporated into the EIA Directive.
Species Protection Provisions To accelerate procedures, the provision of Article 16b (2) on species protection should also be incorporated into the EIA Directive.	Art 16 b (2) RED III […] "Where a renewable energy project has adopted necessary mitigation measures, any killing or disturbance of the species protected under Article 12(1) of Directive 92/43/EEC and Article 5 of Directive 2009/147/EC shall not be considered to be deliberate. Where novel mitigation measures to prevent as much as possible the killing or disturbance of species protected under Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC, or any other environmental impact, have not been widely tested as regards their effectiveness, Member States may allow their use for one or several pilot projects for a limited time period, provided that the effectiveness of such mitigation measures is closely monitored and appropriate steps are taken immediately if they do not prove to be effective." ▪ This should also apply to species protected under national law.

7. Proposals that are applicable to more than one regulation/directive

Permitting Timeframes (EIA, IED):	
Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Conflicting Obligations Another challenge of permitting lies in the separate obligations for environmental review and improvement in different environmental areas. If one of these obligations is not met, the permit currently cannot be granted. Yet, an improvement in one area (e.g. air quality) may lead to a temporary or limited setback in another (e.g. soil quality).	There is therefore a clear need for an integrated environmental review, i.e. the assessment of the net effects of a plan or programme across several environmental components.

Overly lengthy Timeframes There is an urgent need for an appropriate timeframe for granting permits. Permitting times are currently far too long, both at the national level and in other Member States.	Authorities must, of course, be given sufficient time to review permit applications, and in the context of EIA procedures, broad stakeholder consultation is essential. However, deadlines should be set to prevent unnecessary delays. For example, the Commission could take measures to ensure that a decision on an initial application may not take longer than one calendar year. The experience with shortened permitting timeframes under the NZIA has been positive. Companies submitting strategic "net-zero" projects can now benefit from shorter permitting periods, which vary between 9 and 18 months depending on the case. However, these advantages are granted exclusively to promoters of "strategic" net-zero projects. This should be extended so that all permit applications can benefit. The rollout of electronic permitting systems must be accelerated.
Experts Frequently, the cause of excessively long procedures is the involvement of external experts. The problem lies in the limited available human resources of expert services on the one hand, and in the increased time required for assessments in view of potential liability risks on the other. The limited availability of experts and the time needed for preparing expert reports significantly delay project approvals.	The situation could be improved through a qualified planning arrangement: If the applicant submits documents prepared by a qualified planner (engineering firms, master builders, court-sworn experts, chartered engineers), the authority should initially restrict itself to verifying the completeness and plausibility of the information provided. In such cases, experts engaged by the authority would not have to conduct direct evidence-gathering through their own investigations but would only perform a cursory review of the submitted documents. Only if objections are subsequently raised by the parties against the accuracy of the submitted documents should the authorities order a more in-depth review.

Coordination of Procedures for Installations Covered by Both the EIA and the IED Directives (EIA, IED):	
Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Administrative Burden Avoidance of duplication and a reduction of the administrative burden is necessary.	Therefore, procedures under the IED and the EIA Directive should be better coordinated.

Data Reporting (IED, WFD, WSR, IEPR, EU ETS):	
Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**

Varying Data Reporting Instruments At present, Member States have several instruments for reporting environmental data. This leads to duplicated reporting and excessive administrative burdens. This affects several pieces of legislation, including the IED, the WFD, the WSR, the IEPR, and the EU ETS, in addition to any further environmental reporting obligations from national, regional, and local authorities.	By requiring Member States to establish a single online platform for reporting all environmental data (air emissions, water emissions, waste, compliance with permits) to the competent authorities at all levels, duplicated reporting can be avoided, administrative burdens reduced, and errors minimized. Since the same data for the mentioned pieces of legislation are relevant across all these areas, their reporting should be consolidated on a single platform in each Member State. Once implemented, this would significantly simplify administration for both, Member States and operators.

8. Chemicals

a. Plastic Pellets Regulation: COM (2023)645: Proposal for a regulation on preventing plastic pellet losses to reduce microplastic pollution	
Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Threshold The Plastic Pellets Regulation (compromise text) reduces the burden for SMEs that handle plastic pellets in quantities below the threshold of 1500 tons per year. However, there is no comparable threshold for carriers and EU carriers, who transport plastic pellets. We therefore suggest a comparable simplification for carriers and EU carriers and propose the following amendment in Article 2 Definitions (highlighted in ***cursive***):	f) 'EU carrier' means any natural or legal person established in a Member State, engaged in the transport of plastic pellets ***in quantities above the threshold of 1500 tonnes*** as part of its economic activity by using road vehicles, rail wagons or inland waterway vessels. (g) 'non-EU carrier' means any natural or legal person established in a third country, engaged in the transport of plastic pellets ***in quantities above the threshold of 1500 tonnes*** as part of its economic activity in the Union by using road vehicles, rail wagons or inland waterway vessels.
Annex III EU carriers and non-EU carriers shall ensure that the actions set out in Annex III are implemented. Inter alia, Annex III lists in its paragraph 3 a very prescriptive list of equipment that needs to be on board. Paragraph 3 is too prescriptive and it does not reflect the practical needs of a transporter. For example, in a larger/serious accident, a broom, dustpan and a bucket or collection bag are usually of no help, but other, more serious measures are necessary. However, a carrier not having the prescribed equipment according to para. 3 will be fined if checked by authorities.	This requirement needs to become more flexible. We suggest deleting para. 3 and regulating this aspect e.g. via a guidance document: ~~***(3) Equipment on board: at least one portable lighting device, hand tools (e.g. brooms, dustpan and brush, buckets, repair tapes, etc.); closed collection containers/reinforced collection bags***~~

Notification Obligation Article 3 Paragraph 2 foresees the following obligation for carriers: " …. Before carriers transport plastic pellets in the Union for the first time, EU carriers and authorised representatives referred to in Article 3a, as applicable, shall notify the competent authorities of the Member State in which, respectively, the EU carrier or the authorised representative is established, about their involvement in the transport of plastic pellets within the Union. …" This paragraph stipulates that the transport of plastic pellets must be notified to the authorities. While we understand that in the event of accidents involving pellet leaks the authorities must be notified, we consider a general notification obligation as unnecessary and a bureaucratic burden.	This requirement should therefore be either deleted or it should be clarified that a notification is only necessary once and before the first transport, also for carriers that are based in more than one Member State. Furthermore, it should be foreseen that for organizationally connected carriers only one "group" notification is possible.

b. Substances of Concern In articles as such or in complex objects (Products) Database (SCIP):

SCIP notification according to Art. 9 Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC in combination with Art. 33 REACH Regulation (EC) 1907/2006:

Problem description	Proposal for simplification/burden reduction
Information Obligation This obligation requires every supplier of a product to make certain information available to ECHA. Consequently, there is an enormous duplication of this duty in individual supply chains. The usefulness of the data in the SCIP database is negligible, especially when compared to the burden it represents.	REACH Art. 33: A threshold should be introduced below which an enterprise is exempted from this information obligation. We suggest the annual turnover for a medium-sized enterprise (50 million EUR) as defined in the SME-recommendation. Alternatively - and considering the developments related to the digital product passport (DPP) - the SCIP system could be deleted.

c. Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR):

OJ: Regulation (EU) 528/2012 concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products

The BPR is a highly complex and opaque legislation. Authorising a biocidal product usually costs around several ten thousand Euro, often even more than 100.000 Euro. Even nitrogen from air, honey, lavendulan leaves and similar products need to go through a simplified authorisation process, which still causes a relevant burden, especially, if put into perspective that these are practically safe products extracted from natural sources.

Problem description	Proposal for simplification/burden reduction
SMEs Urgently Need More Substantial Support Even though some relevant support was realised (e.g. specific SME guidelines), the biocidal product legislation is a very potent SME killer. Therefore, all possible options need	The instrument of the biocidal-product-family authorisation needs to be implemented as flexible and cost-effective as possible in practice. Furthermore, the data- and cost sharing process should be improved and follow

to be exploited to the utmost to make this legal area SME-fairThese include national and EU fees that are anything but SME-friendly right now.	the example of the process under REACH. Finally, the BPR should enshrine the principle that national fee schemes should also be based on a comparable reduction policy similar to the one set out in the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 564/2013.
More Stable and Predictable Rules Needed It is common that the BPR's authorisation or approval procedures are not processed within the legal deadlines. Consequently, such delays often cause a relevant economic damage, because a product can only enter the market later. Furthermore, for an average SME, it is not possible to keep track of the intense changes of guidance documents; for large companies this is difficult as well.	If a delay is legally unjustified and caused by an authority, fees should be reimbursed adequately. This would compensate some of the economic damage caused by such a delay. More visibility and searchability is needed for the guidance documents. Also, the adaptation processes need to become more transparent and easier to track. Finally, all guidance relevant to SME needs to be translated into all other official EU languages.

9. Beyond improvements already proposed in Omnibus VI we suggest the following enhancements:

Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Chemicals Regulation (CLP): OJ: Regulation (EU) 2024/2865 amending Regulation (EC) No 1272/2008 on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures The CLP Regulation regulates the classification, labelling and packaging of chemical substances and mixtures of substances. Even for a single bottle the same rules need to be applied as for a large-scale industrial production. This is not proportional, and SMEs are often unable to comply. Costs and organisational efforts are simply too high.	
Problem description	**Proposal for simplification/burden reduction**
Classification and Labelling Inventory Notification (CLI) according to Art. 40 CLP-Regulation This notification has no threshold and, consequently, every substance placed on the market needs to be notified to ECHA. This includes very small quantities of few grams, e.g. for R&D, analytical standards, test material.	CLP-Regulation, Art. 40: We suggest setting a threshold of 50 kg below which a substance does not have to be notified.
Poison Centre Notification (PCN) according to Art. 45 CLP-Regulation - General Simplification This notification has no threshold and, consequently, every mixture placed on the market needs to be notified. This includes very small quantities, e.g. for R&D, analytical standards, test material.	CLP-Regulation, Art. 45: we suggest setting a threshold of 50 kg below which a mixture does not have to be notified.
Poison Centre Notification (PCN) according to Art. 45 CLP-Regulation - Targeted Simplification Especially for one-person- and micro-enterprises, a practical implementation of the provisions of the CLP-regulation is particularly	A fundamental simplification would be to create a comparable regime for such mixtures based on the experience of the special scheme for bespoke paints.

challenging and, in some respects, not fully feasible. In particular, the mixture notification (PCN) for customized on-site formulated mixtures in small containers holding less than 10 ml represents a clearly avoidable administrative and cost burden without compromising the protection objectives of CLP. There is a significant number of mixtures where an effective application of the existing Interchangeable Component Group (ICG) concept is not possible (e.g. fragrance compositions). This is because of a relatively high variety of constituents and concentrations. However, according to current CLP-rules, a separate PC notification must be created for most individual and unique compositions. In addition, such compositions require their own UFI, which must be included on the label.	
Harmonised Classifications Triggering Disproportional Regulatory Consequences There are several examples of substances which have received or are in the process of receiving a harmonised classification as SVHC (substance of very high concern). Current examples are: ▪ Ethanol, with a proposed classification as carcinogenic and reprotoxic substance. This could trigger massive bans for consumer uses for this substance, which has integral functions for our society as e.g. disinfectant or in the food sector. ▪ Lithium salts, with a proposed classification as reprotoxic substances. This could trigger bans and would exclude these substances from definitions like “safe and sustainable”, although being basic resources for e-mobility. ▪ Dinitrogen oxide, with a proposed classification as reprotoxic substance. This could trigger bans for proven safe uses in the food sector.	In numerous legislations, a harmonised classification triggers an automatic ban or significant restriction. The described cases show that such an automatism is not always justified and should be avoided. For this purpose, the European Commission shall be required to assess the consequences - especially the impacts on users, industrial sectors and society - of the downstream legislation and whether a specific risk to human health, occupational health and safety or the environment is reduced by setting a harmonised classification. Based on this assessment, appropriate measures should be implemented to avoid unwanted effects of a harmonised classification before such a classification is published.

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