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[Press release](#) | 15.06.2011

Water pollution

MEPs vote to extend ban on use of phosphates in detergents under EU legislation

The European Parliament environment committee today voted on a proposal to revise EU rules on the use of phosphates in detergents (1). Green MEPs welcomed the outcome, which would extend the proposed ban on phosphates in laundry detergents to dishwashing detergents. After the vote, Green MEP and shadow for the legislation **Carl Schlyter** said:

"Banning the use of phosphates in all household detergents is an important step to preventing their release, and the negative impact this can have on freshwater sources and the wider environment due to eutrophication. We welcome today's vote by MEPs to extend the proposed ban on the use of phosphates in laundry detergents to automatic dishwashing detergents, which would stem pollution from another important source of phosphates. This is good news for the Baltic Sea since it is especially sensitive to phosphates. Hopefully, this will convince EU governments to adopt the same approach."

Green MEP and shadow for the legislation **Bas Eickhout** added:

"There are viable phosphate-free alternatives both for laundry and for automatic dishwashing detergents and it is high time that their use was ended, given the damage caused by their release into the environment. The ban is a win-win solution, with other positive knock-on effects including reduced dependence on dwindling supplies of phosphorous and reduced costs for waste water treatment. The sooner this ban is fully implemented, the better for all involved."

(1) The original Commission proposal would have only banned the use of phosphates in laundry detergent from January 2013. The EP environment committee agreed with that date for laundry detergents, and voted to extend the ban to automatic dishwashing detergent as of January 2015.

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Bas Eickhout

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