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Environmental Omnibus: Commission slashing environmental legislation to please polluters

Today, the European Commission has just published its environmental omnibus package, which seeks to deregulate EU laws relating to the environment, such as the industrial emissions directive. The Greens/EFA Group are against the deregulation agenda of the Commission and emphasise the need to retain strong environmental standards for Europe to meet its environmental targets and for industry to have stability for a competitive advantage in a changing world.

Jutta Paulus MEP, Greens/EFA Group shadow rapporteur industrial emission directive, comments:

“The proposals presented today represent an absolute step backwards. On the very day the European Environment Agency confirms that the EU will miss its biodiversity, environmental and climate targets for 2030, the Commission is weakening important environmental protection standards. The Commission is effectively slamming into reverse. This is deregulation under the guise of cutting red tape — utterly irresponsible and in clear disregard of scientific recommendations. These proposals are not efficient; they are short-sighted. Europe needs stable, reliable rules so that companies can invest, citizens are protected, and we finally make progress in safeguarding our livelihoods. It is also absurd that the European Commission has not carried out an impact assessment.

"The European Ombudswoman recently issued a sharp critique of this approach. At its core, it means that the supposed billions in savings are completely unfounded. The Commission is entirely ignoring the follow-on costs for our environment and for us as citizens. Transparency on hazardous substances is also being curtailed: The SCIP database, which records all particularly harmful chemicals in products so they can be handled safely during recycling, is set to be abolished. For citizens, this concretely means they will no longer be able to know whether electronic devices or furniture contain harmful substances, and that more pollutants will be released into the environment during recycling.”

Sara Matthieu MEP, Greens/EFA coordinator in the ENVI Committee, comments:

"The European Commission is tone-deaf and out of touch. While more and more people are worried about chemical substances such as PFAS in their food, drinking water and swimming areas, this is yet another proposal that weakens health and environmental protection. Deleting information about the most harmful substances in articles is nothing less than wanting to keep pollution out of sight. This directly counteracts the objective of a clean circular economy and it punishes the companies that are doing the right thing. No problem gets solved by looking away. Our group will fight back to build a majority to stop covering up pollution."

"Faster permits for electricity networks are fine, but this proposal goes much further and opens the door also for future 'strategic projects', which could entail for instance new roads linked to housing projects. We have spent months negotiating the Nature Restoration law — that work must not be undermined by a blank check for accelerated procedures without investigating the environmental impact."

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Responsible MEPs



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