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[Press release](#) | 11.12.2014

## EU Commission work programme

### Axing key environmental legislation is not 'better regulation'

According to unconfirmed reports, the European Commission has already decided not to proceed with crucial legislative proposals on the circular economy and resource use and will not propose a badly-needed update of EU air quality rules. Eleven EU governments have written to the Commission urging it not to drop these plans (1). Commenting on the development, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** said:

*"It would be scandalous if the first major act of the new Juncker Commission on sustainability, health and the environment would be to scrap these flagship proposals on air quality and the 'circular economy'. Axing crucial environmental legislation is not 'better regulation' it is an ideologically-biased sop to polluting industry lobbies, which is totally at odds with the public interest.*

*"Far from damaging the economy, the proposals on the circular economy would stimulate innovation in resource efficiency and saving, which would create durable domestic jobs in Europe. The Commission itself has estimated the job-creating potential of the circular economy as very high. Scrapping these plans would clearly undermine moves to sustainably transform our economy.*

*"With air pollution still a major problem in Europe, accounting for 100,000s of premature deaths per year, EU rules are urgently in need of an update. Beyond this human tragedy, for those preoccupied with mere economics, addressing the health problems linked to air pollution would also seriously reduce costs borne by public health services.*

*"Scrapping the proposed rules on air quality and the circular economy would be a very worrying precedent for the EU's environmental credentials at the start of this Commission's term. Jean-Claude Juncker has played 'good cop' in his public utterances on sustainability and the environment but it seems he is letting deputy Frans Timmermans have free rein to be 'bad cop' when it comes to actual action by the Commission."*

(1) <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/01/us-eu-environment-idUSKCN0JF2OH20141201>

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Rebecca Harms

Member

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