

WECOOP NEWS BULLETIN

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1. INTRODUCTION

European Union – Central Asia Water, Environment and Climate Change Cooperation (WECOOP)

The EU renewed the project “**European Union – Central Asia Water, Environment and Climate Change Cooperation (WECOOP)**” in October 2019 to run for three years. The project will continue strengthening the policy dialogue on sustainable development between the CA partner countries, and to facilitate their cooperation with the EU on environment and climate change. Specifically, the project efforts will be focused on improving and rationalising policies and enhancing the capacities of national ministries and government agencies working in the relevant fields.

The WECOOP project aims to enhance environment, climate change and water policies in Central Asia through **approximation to EU standards** and **to promote green investments** in relevant sectors with the aim of contributing to measurable reductions in man-made pollution, including CO₂ emissions.

Priority areas for consultations and cooperation include **environmental governance, circular economy** and **sustainable consumption and production, climate change adaptation and mitigation** and **water resources management**.

The WECOOP News Bulletin provides brief information on the recent developments in EU policies and legislation, as well as on new relevant reports and studies published by the European Environment Agency, OECD or other specialized agencies (UNEP, UNECE, WHO).

The present issue of WECOOP News Bulletin is mainly focused on the follow up activities to the European Green Deal.

Detailed information on the WECOOP project is available at the project website <https://wecoop.eu>.

2. EU POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

2.1. NEW EU POLICIES

A NEW EU ADAPTATION STRATEGY

On 24 February 2021, the European Commission adopted the Communication '**Forging a climate-resilient Europe – the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change**'. The Strategy outlines a long-term vision for the EU to become a climate-resilient society, fully adapted to the unavoidable impacts of climate change by 2050. This strategy aims to reinforce the adaptive capacity of the EU and the world and minimise vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, in line with the Paris Agreement and the proposal for the European Climate Law.

The Strategy aims to build a climate resilient society by improving knowledge of climate impacts and adaptation solutions; by stepping up adaptation planning and climate risk assessments; by accelerating adaptation action; and by helping to strengthen climate resilience globally. It pursues three objectives and proposes a range of actions in order to meet them:

- Smarter adaptation: Improving knowledge and manage uncertainty; including:
 - o Pushing the frontiers of adaptation knowledge;
 - o More and better climate loss data; and
 - o Enhancing and expanding Climate-ADAPT as the European platform for adaptation knowledge.
- More systemic adaptation: Supporting policy development at all levels and all relevant policy fields; including three cross-cutting priorities to integrate adaptation into:
 - o Macro-fiscal policy;
 - o Nature-based solutions; and
 - o Local adaptation actions.
- Faster adaptation: Speed up adaptation implementation across the board.

Link: <https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/eu-adaptation-policy/strategy>

ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIC PRODUCTION

The European Commission has set out a comprehensive organic action plan for the European Union. Through the action plan, the Commission will aim to achieve the European Green Deal **target of 25% of agricultural land under organic farming by 2030**. The new organic action plan builds upon the achievements of the 2014-2020 action plan and takes into account the outcome of a public consultation on organics, held between September and November 2020.

The action plan is broken into three interlinked axes that reflect the structure of the food supply chain and ambitions of the Green Deal sustainability objectives:

- o Axis 1: stimulate demand and ensure consumer trust
- o Axis 2: stimulate conversion and reinforce the entire value chain
- o Axis 3: organics leading by example: improve the contribution of organic farming to environmental sustainability

The three axes will be supported by 23 actions, continuing some of the successful 2014-2020 actions, as well as putting forward an array of new actions and mobilising different sources of funding.

Link:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/farming/documents/com2021_141_act_organic-action-plan_en.pdf

2.2. NEW EU LEGISLATION IN PROGRESS

CARBON BORDER ADJUSTMENT MECHANISM (CBAM)

The European Parliament adopted by 444 votes to 70, with 181 abstentions, a **resolution towards a WTO-compatible EU border carbon adjustment mechanism**.

Members noted that while greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the EU have fallen by 24%, GHG emissions embedded in imports into the EU have continued to rise, undermining the EU's efforts to reduce its global carbon footprint. Net imports of goods and services into the EU account for over 20% of the EU's CO₂ emissions. GHG emissions from imports should therefore be better monitored to identify possible measures to reduce the EU's global carbon footprint.



Photo by Vladislav Ushakov

Parliament supported the establishment of a European carbon border adjustment mechanism, provided it is compatible with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules and the EU's free trade agreements (FTAs) and is exclusively designed to advance climate objectives and not be misused as a tool to enhance protectionism.

According to Members, the introduction of a carbon border adjustment mechanism should be:

- part of a package of legislative measures to ensure the rapid reduction of GHG emissions from EU production and consumption, notably by boosting energy efficiency and the deployment of renewable energies;
- combined with policies to promote investment in low-carbon industrial processes, including through innovative financing tools and an environmentally ambitious and socially fair European industrial policy to steer Europe's decarbonised reindustrialisation.

As a complement to the introduction of such a mechanism, the Commission should propose a more ambitious and binding norms and standards on products placed on the EU market in terms of GHG emission reduction and savings on resources and energy.

Document: European Parliament resolution of 10 March 2021 towards a WTO-compatible EU carbon border adjustment mechanism.

Link: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0071_EN.html

2.2. NEW EU LEGISLATION IN FORCE

REGULATION ON THE INVESTEU PROGRAMME

Regulation (EU) 2021/523 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 March 2021 establishing the InvestEU Programme and amending Regulation (EU) 2015/1017

The InvestEU Programme builds on the successful model of the Investment Plan for Europe, the Juncker Plan. It will bring together, under one roof, the European Fund for Strategic Investments and 13 other EU financial instruments. Triggering more than €372 billion in additional investment over the period 2021-2027, the InvestEU Programme aims to give an additional boost to sustainable investment, innovation and job creation in Europe. Programme consists of:

- **InvestEU Fund**

The InvestEU Fund aims to mobilise more than €372 billion of public and private investment through an EU budget guarantee of €26.2 billion that backs the investment of implementing partners such as the European Investment Bank (EIB) Group and other financial institutions.

- **InvestEU Advisory Hub**

The InvestEU Advisory Hub provides technical support and assistance to help with the preparation, development, structuring and implementation of investment projects, including capacity building.

- **InvestEU Portal**

The InvestEU Portal brings together investors and project promoters on a single EU-wide platform, by providing an easily-accessible and user-friendly database of investment opportunities available within the EU.

Link (general information): https://europa.eu/investeu/about-investeu_en

Link (Regulation): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/523/oj>



3. REPORTS AND STUDIES

3.1. EUROPEAN COMMISSION

- **The Second Clean Air Outlook**

This report presents an analysis of the prospects for the air pollution situation in the EU up to 2030 and beyond. It updates the analysis presented in the First Clean Air Outlook published in 2018, in particular by including the measures put forward by Member States in their National Air Pollution Control Programmes and by taking into account the increased ambition level for fighting climate change.

Link (English): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0003&from=EN>

3.2. EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AGENCY (EEA)

- **Measures to reduce emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases: the potential for synergies.** EEA Briefing

Link: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/measures-to-reduce-emissions-of>

- **Transport and environment report 2020. Train or Plane?** EEA Report No 19/2020

Link: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/transport-and-environment-report-2020>

- **Water and agriculture: towards sustainable solutions.** EEA Report No 17/2020

Link: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/water-and-agriculture-towards-sustainable-solutions>

- **Plastics, the circular economy and Europe's environment – A priority for action.** EEA Report No 18/2020
Link: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/plastics-the-circular-economy-and>
- **EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook 2019.** EEA Report No 13/2019
Link (Russian): <https://www.eea.europa.eu/ru/publications/rukovodstvo-emep-eaos-po-inventarizacii-vybrosov-2019>



3.3. ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)

A growing number of governments seek to adopt an approach based on Best Available Techniques (BAT) as part of the regulatory framework to prevent and control industrial emissions. These guidance documents aim to provide the governments with relevant steps, tools and best practices on how to identify and establish BAT, BAT-associated emission levels (BAT-AELs) and other environmental performance levels (BAT-AEPLs), as well as BAT-based permit conditions, including emission limit values:

- **Best Available Techniques (BAT) for Preventing and Controlling Industrial Pollution. Activity 2: Approaches to Establishing BAT Around the World**
Link (English): <https://www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety/risk-management/approaches-to-establishing-best-available-techniques-around-the-world.pdf>
Link (Russian): <https://www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety/risk-management/approaches-to-establishing-best-available-techniques-around-the-world-russian.pdf>
- **Best Available Techniques (BAT) for Preventing and Controlling Industrial Pollution. Activity 3: Measuring the Effectiveness of BAT Policies**
Link (English): <https://www.oecd.org/chemical-safety/risk-management/measuring-the-effectiveness-of-best-available-techniques-policies.pdf>

Link (Russian): <https://www.oecd.org/chemical-safety/risk-management/measuring-the-effectiveness-of-best-available-techniques-policies-russian.pdf>

- **Best Available Techniques (BAT) for Preventing and Controlling Industrial Pollution Activity 4: Guidance Document on Determining BAT, BAT-Associated Environmental Performance Levels and BAT-Based Permit Conditions**

Link (English): <https://www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety/risk-management/guidance-document-on-determining-best-available-techniques.pdf>

Link (Russian): <https://www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety/risk-management/guidance-document-on-determining-best-available-techniques-russian.pdf>

3.4 UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

GEO-6 for Youth. Fully interactive e-publication for Youth, written by youth for youth to inform, engage, educate, and lead youth towards environmental action.

Link (English): <https://www.unep.org/resources/geo-6-youth>

4. CONTACTS

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