



# EU ACTION PLAN

## ‘Towards Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil’

### **Pathway to a Healthy Planet for All**

*CCIEP meeting - 06/07/2021*

# | We are encountering major ecological crises



**CLIMATE**



**BIODIVERSITY**



Photo by Julia Joppien on Unsplash

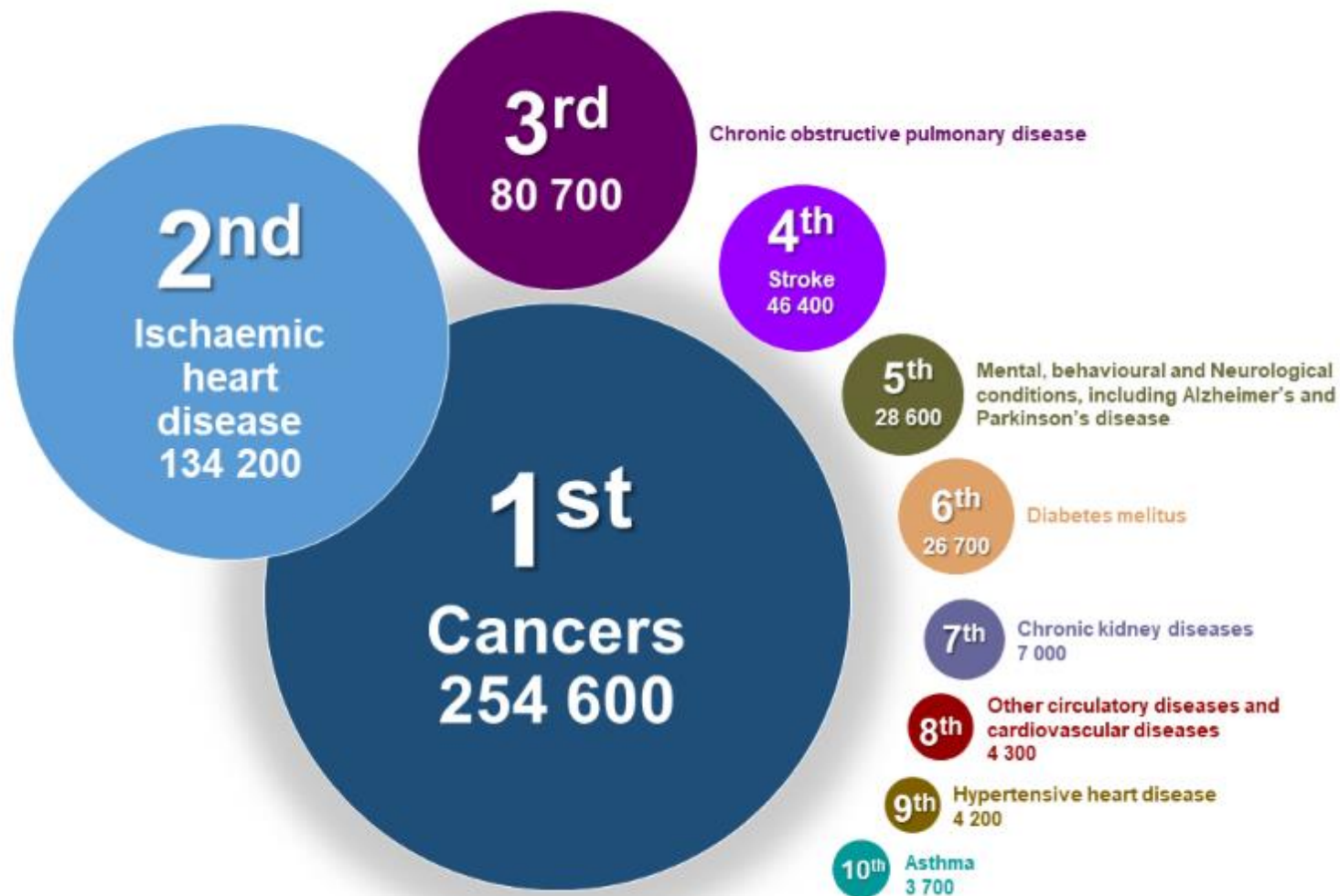
**RESOURCES**



**POLLUTION**



# | Urgency to act on pollution





“For the **health of our citizens**, our children and grandchildren, Europe needs to move towards a **zero pollution ambition**.

I will put forward a cross-cutting **strategy to protect citizens’ health from environmental degradation and pollution**, addressing air and water quality, hazardous chemicals, industrial emissions, pesticides and endocrine disruptors.”

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission



# The European Green Deal

## zero pollution actions

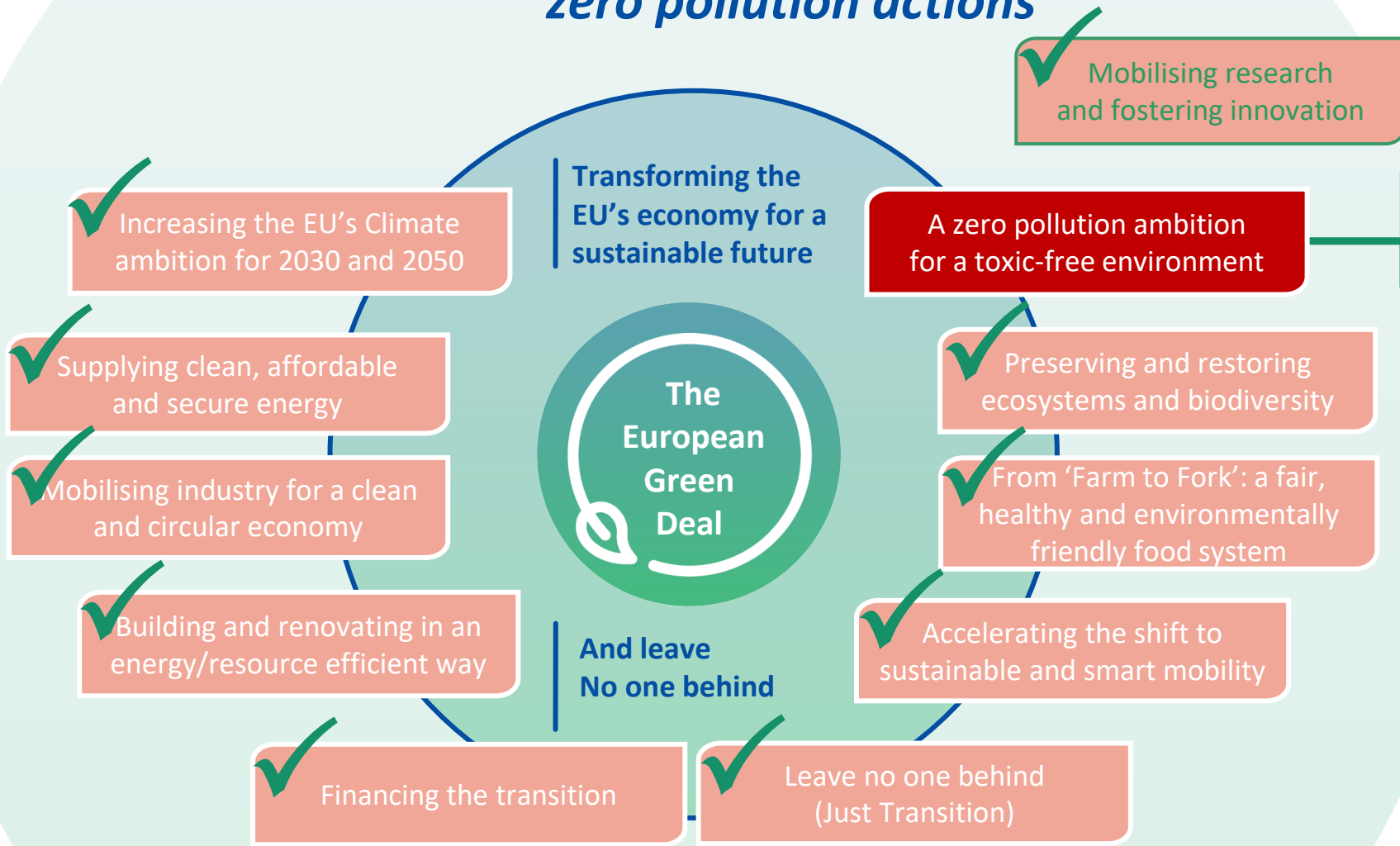


### Many Green Deal actions already contribute to the Zero Pollution ambition

- **Circular Economy** (e.g. microplastics)
- **Biodiversity and Farm to Fork** (e.g. nutrients, pesticides)
- **CAP** (e.g. pesticides and fertilisers)
- **Climate & Energy initiatives** including Adaptation
- **Cancer Plan** (e.g. air pollution)
- **Mobility Strategy**
- **Renovation Wave & Bauhaus**
- **Industrial Strategy**
- **Pharmaceuticals Strategy**
- **Trade Policy Review & Multilateralism**
- etc.

# The European Green Deal

## zero pollution actions



**Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability**

**Zero Pollution Action Plan for Air, Water & Soil**

**Many Green Deal actions already contribute to the Zero Pollution ambition**

- Circular Economy (e.g. microplastics)
- Biodiversity (e.g. Farm to Fork (e.g. nutrition, CAP (e.g. pesticides/fertilisers))
- Climate & Energy initiatives (including Air Quality)
- Cancer Plan (e.g. air pollution)
- Mobility Strategy
- Renovation Wave
- Industrial Strategy
- Pharmaceuticals
- Trade Policy Review & Multilateralism

**Joined up**

**Holistic**

**Integrated**

# Preparation

2020

**1-29 October**

Roadmap  
published

**14 October**

Chemicals  
Strategy

**October-February**

Outreach / stakeholder  
consultation

**11 Nov-10 Feb**

Open online public  
consultation

2021

**12 May 2021**

Adoption of  
Zero Pollution  
Action Plan

**31 May – 4 June**

Green Week 2021  
– zero pollution

**Synthesis report**  
now [online!](#)

**Over 700 replies**



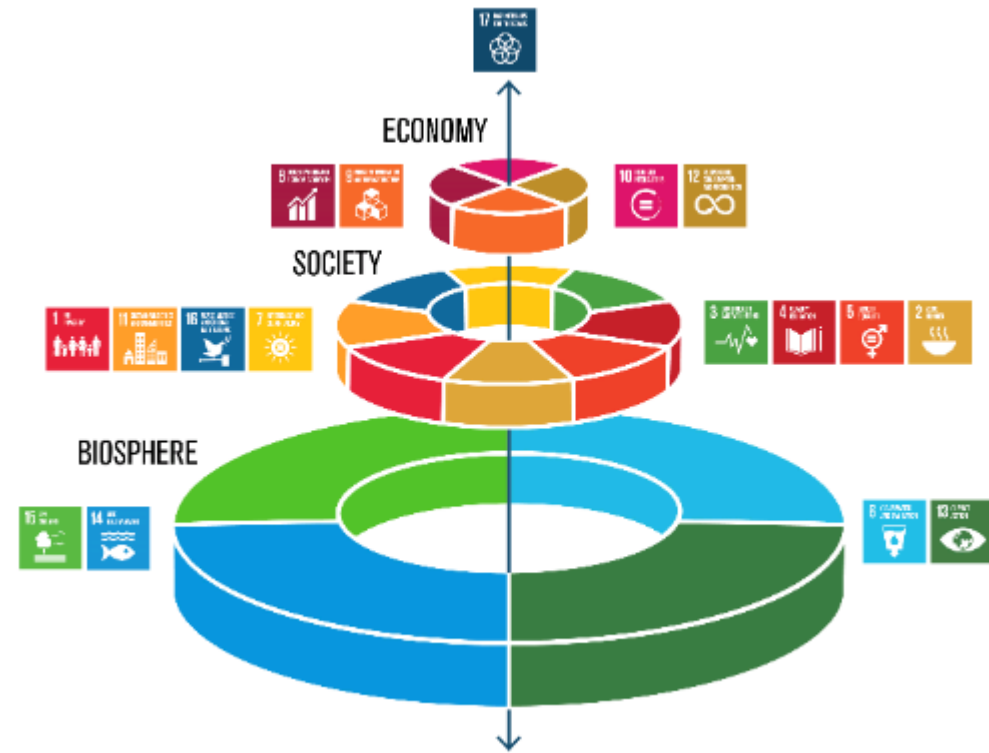
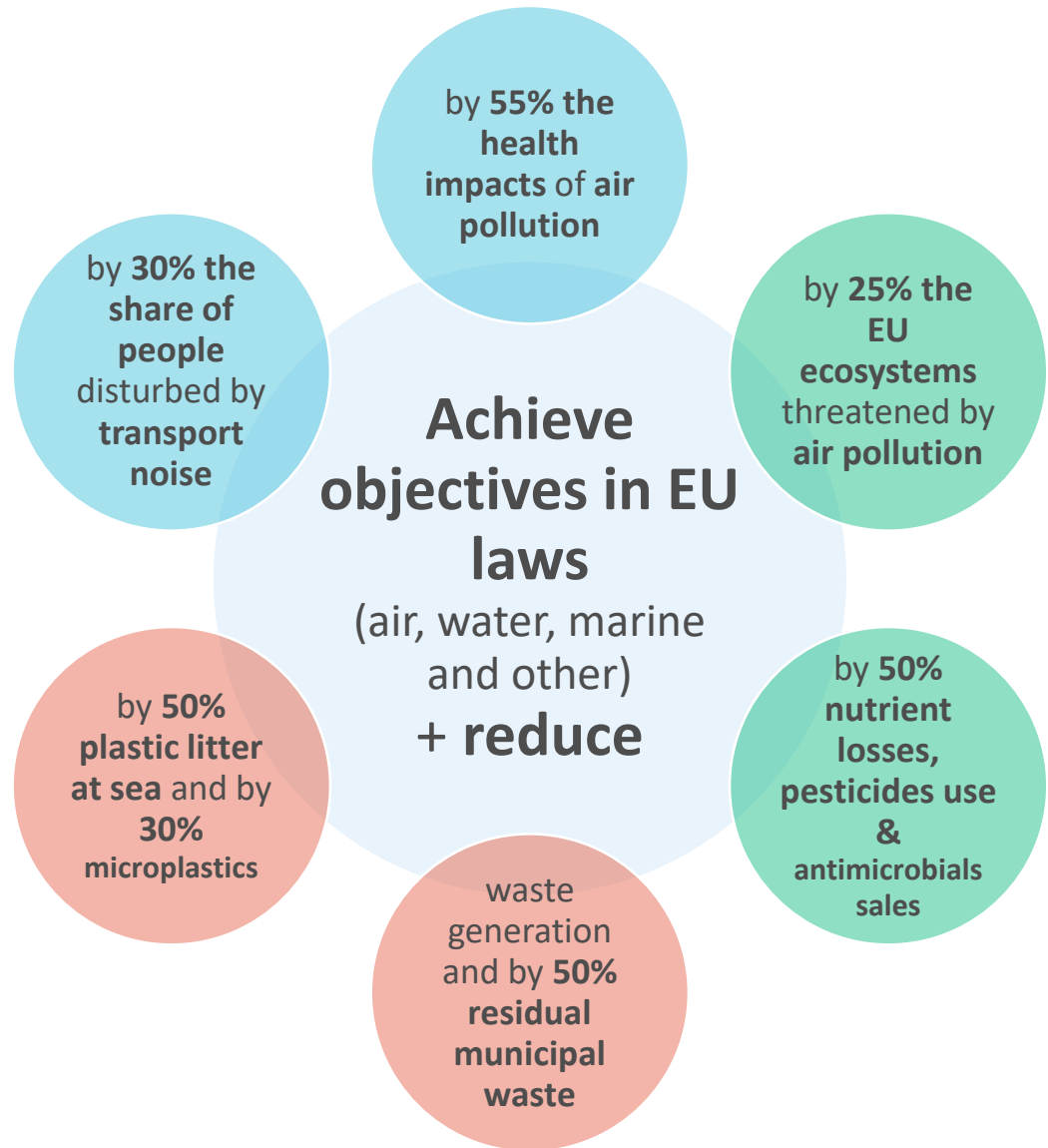


# The zero pollution vision for 2050

“Air, water and soil pollution is reduced to **levels no longer considered harmful to health and natural ecosystems** and that **respect the boundaries our planet can cope with,** thus creating a toxic-free environment.”

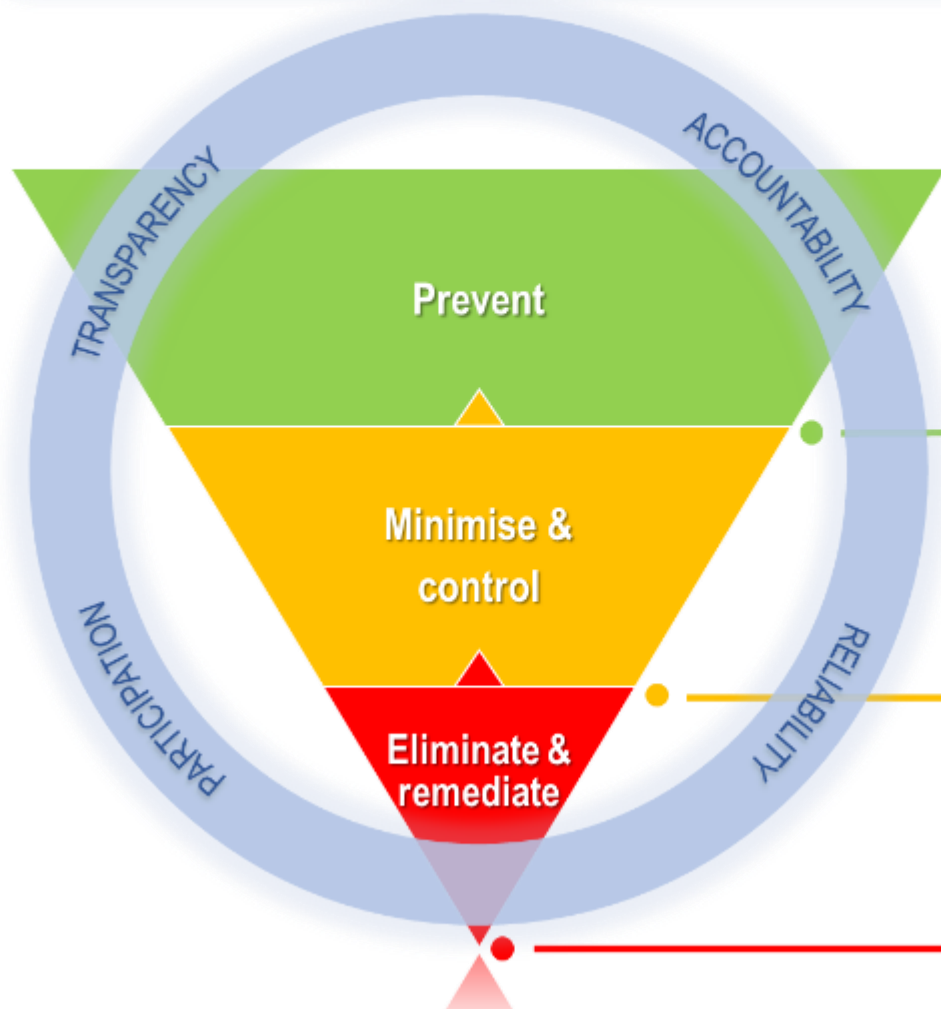


# 2030 targets complementing SDGs



# Hierarchy of action on pollution

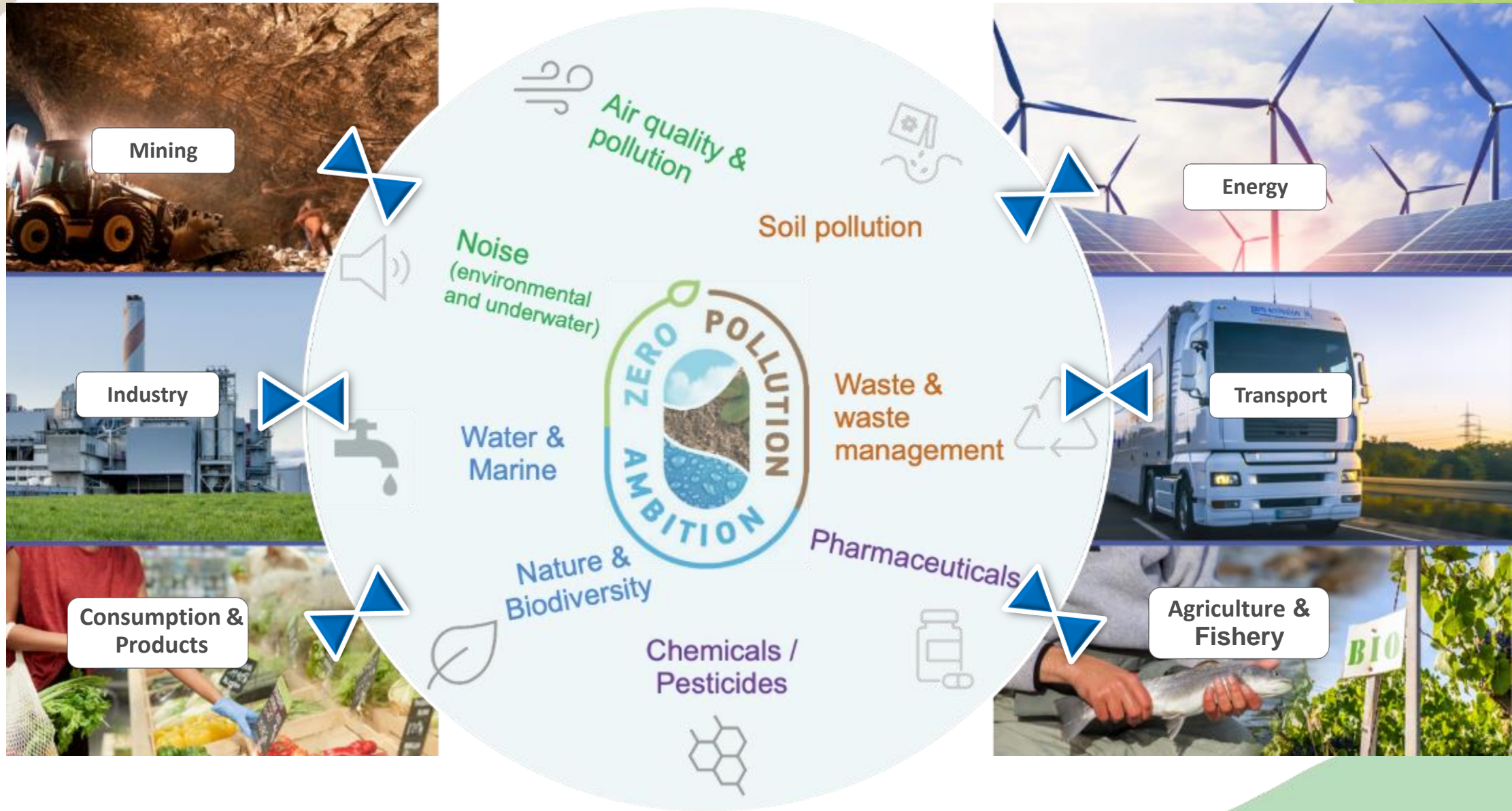
Union policy on the environment shall be based on the **precautionary principle** and on the principles that **preventive action** should be taken, that environmental damage should as a priority be **rectified at source** and on the **polluter pays principle**.



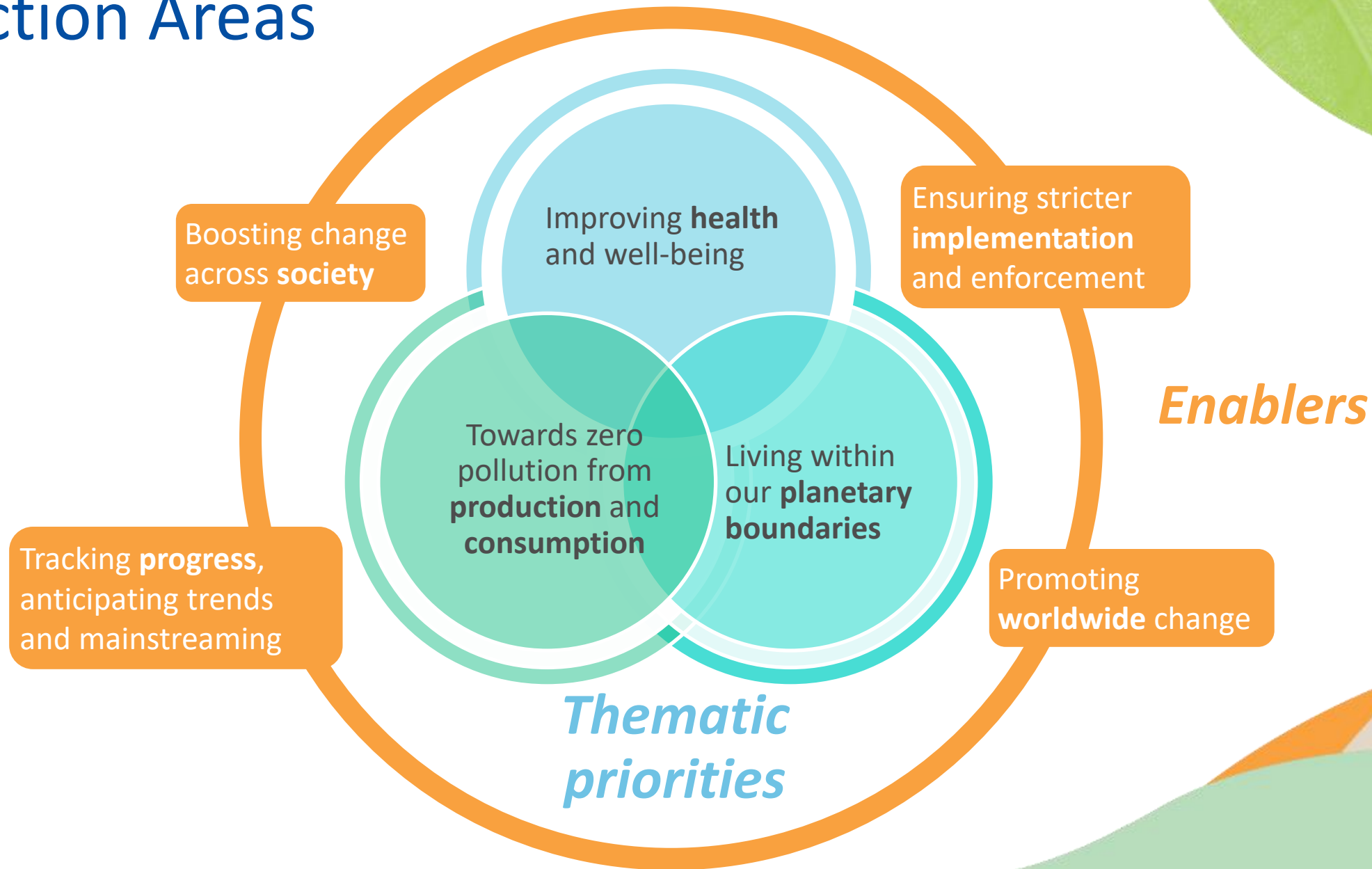
PROTECT HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT	ENCOURAGE INNOVATION
Prevent pollution in all stages of a clean and circular economy from extraction of natural resources, to production, service provision and consumption as at end-of-life.	Promote clean, 'zero pollution' production processes, safe and sustainable products and services by design as well as innovative tools, technologies, and behavioral change.
Minimise releases and exposure of humans and the environment to pollution through management, technological measures and information about releases.	Promote modern and smart production processes, safe and sustainable product uses, services and business models, and digital solutions for tracking and reducing pollution.
Eliminate and remediate, as far as possible, existing pollution of water and soils and apply measures to return to a 'good status'.	Promote zero pollution recycling, waste management, decontamination and remediation.



# Zero Pollution policies – towards an integrated approach




# Action Areas



# Flagships – integrated initiatives



1. Reducing health inequalities through zero pollution




2. Supporting urban zero pollution action



3. Promoting zero pollution across regions



4. Facilitating zero pollution choices




5. Enforcing zero pollution together



6. Showcasing zero pollution solutions for buildings



7. Living Labs for green digital solutions and smart zero pollution



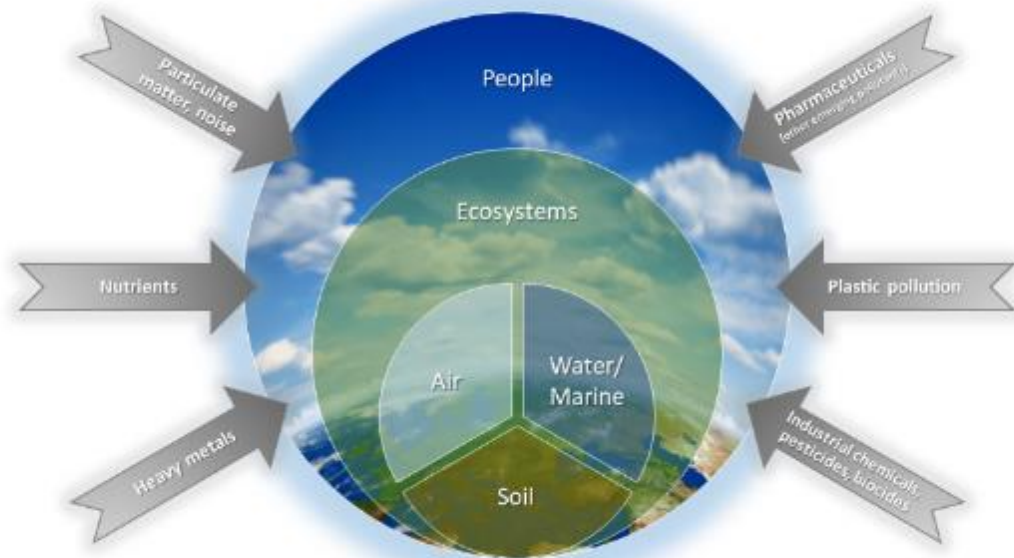
8. Minimising the EU's external pollution footprint



9. Consolidating the EU's Knowledge Centres for zero pollution



# | Zero Pollution Monitoring & Outlook (SWD(2021) 141)



## Zero Pollution Outlook (JRC lead)

- Clean Air Outlook complemented by Clean Water/Marine Outlook and Clean Soil Outlook
- Strategic foresight dimension

## Zero Pollution Monitoring (EEA lead)

- Integrated monitoring of pollution building on existing air, noise, water, marine & soil
- Focus on targets, impacts, pressures and effectiveness of measures
- Spotlight on pollutants of emerging concern (e.g. light, ultrafine particles, etc.)
- Develop and incorporate more integrated assessments (e.g. Exposome, human biomonitoring, environmental footprint)
- Thematic report on emerging research or use of Copernicus
- Contribution to 8<sup>th</sup> Environment Action Programme and Environment Implementation Review



# 10 Action areas for digital solutions

(SWD(2021) 140)



# RECOMMENDATIONS

# 10

## FOR GREEN DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

➤ Better use of **digital tools** to empower citizens for the green transition



➤ Open up '**zero pollution data**'



➤ Apply **digital solutions** for improving compliance and enforcement of EU laws



➤ **Big data** can offer new insights into pollution problems and solutions



➤ Deployment of **digital solutions** for zero pollution must be **sustainable**



➤ Accelerate **modernisation of environmental administrations**



➤ Embrace the twin digital and green transition



➤ Create **multiple benefits** from green investments which have a **digital component**



➤ Enhance **digital skills** and capacity building



➤ Create **networks** bringing together environment and digital experts and communities





# | Zero Pollution Stakeholder Platform



European Commission



European Committee  
of the Regions



## Who?

- Bringing together stakeholders and experts from different policy areas

## What?

- mainstream the zero pollution agenda, help create co-ownership,
- promote collaboration, foster integrated solutions and actions that maximise synergies

## How?

- share good practices on cross-cutting topics such as financing for zero pollution innovation and jobs, boosting sustainable production and consumption as well as creating thematic hubs (e.g. air, digital, soil)
- Create synergies with European Climate Pact, Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform, Green City Accord, Business@Biodiversity, Chemicals Roundtable, etc.



Business  
@Biodiversity



# Ambient Air Quality Directives: revision

**In line with the European Green Deal, the revision of the Ambient Air Quality Directives (AAQDs) will augment the current legislation looking at three policy areas**

- **Policy area 1:** closer alignment of the **EU air quality standards** with scientific knowledge including the latest recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO).
- **Policy area 2:** improving the **air quality legislative framework**, including provisions on penalties and public information, in order to enhance effectiveness, efficiency and coherence.
- **Policy area 3:** strengthening of **air quality monitoring, modelling and plans**.

→ *to be further developed into more detailed options/scenarios for each policy area, also based on inception impact assessment*



# AAQD revision – indicative timeline

**Fitness Check**  
(note: published in Nov 2019)

**Council Conclusions**

**NEC Implementation Report**  
(Commission Communication)

**Expert consultation**  
(on monitoring, modelling, plans)

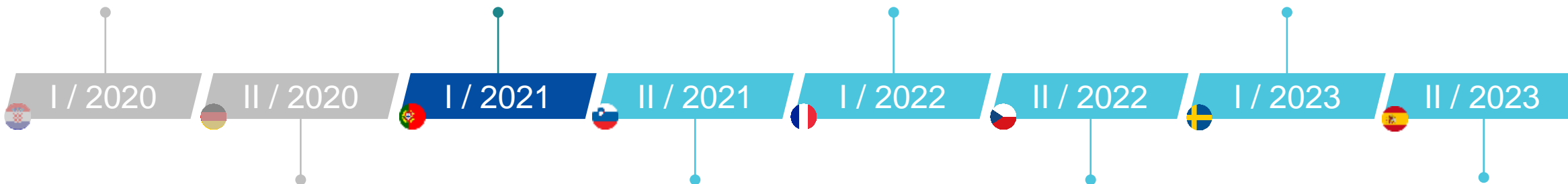
**WHO Guidelines publication**  
(precise timing to be confirmed)

**Zero Pollution Action Plan**

**Finalisation of Impact Assessment** (air quality)

**Council discussions of legislative proposal**  
(air quality - revision of EU rules)

**Submission of Second National Air Pollution Control Programmes** begins



**EEA Air Quality Report 2020**

**EEA Air Quality Report 2021**

**EEA Air Quality Report 2022**

**EEA Air Quality Report 2023**

**Inception Impact Assessment**  
(revising the Air Quality Directive)

**Public consultation: air quality**  
(air quality - revision of EU rules)

**Adoption: legislative proposal**  
(air quality - revision of EU rules)

**4<sup>th</sup> EU Clean Air Forum**  
(location to be determined)

**Second Clean Air Outlook**  
(Commission Report)

**3<sup>rd</sup> EU Clean Air Forum**  
(in Madrid)

**Review Gothenburg Protocol**  
(Air Convention)

**Third Clean Air Outlook**  
(Commission Report)



# Rules for industrial emissions - revision

**How can industrial emissions legislation contribute to solving these six problem areas?**


1a  
The environment is polluted  
(zero pollution ambition)



1b  
The environment is polluted  
(non-toxic environment)



2  
Climate crisis is happening  
(carbon neutrality at EU level)



3  
Natural resources are being depleted  
(circular economy)



4  
State-of-the-art techniques cannot respond in a satisfactory manner  
(deploy breakthrough technologies)



5  
Public access to information  
(empower citizens, etc.)



6  
Excessive burden may affect efficiency of policy  
(ensure proportionality of EU law)



## Key topics:

- How to turn the IED into a forward looking instrument supporting innovation?
- How can we enhance synergies between depollution and decarbonisation?
- What can operators of large industrial plants do to contribute more to the circular economy and the use of safer chemicals?
- Which sectors and pollutants should be added to the scope?

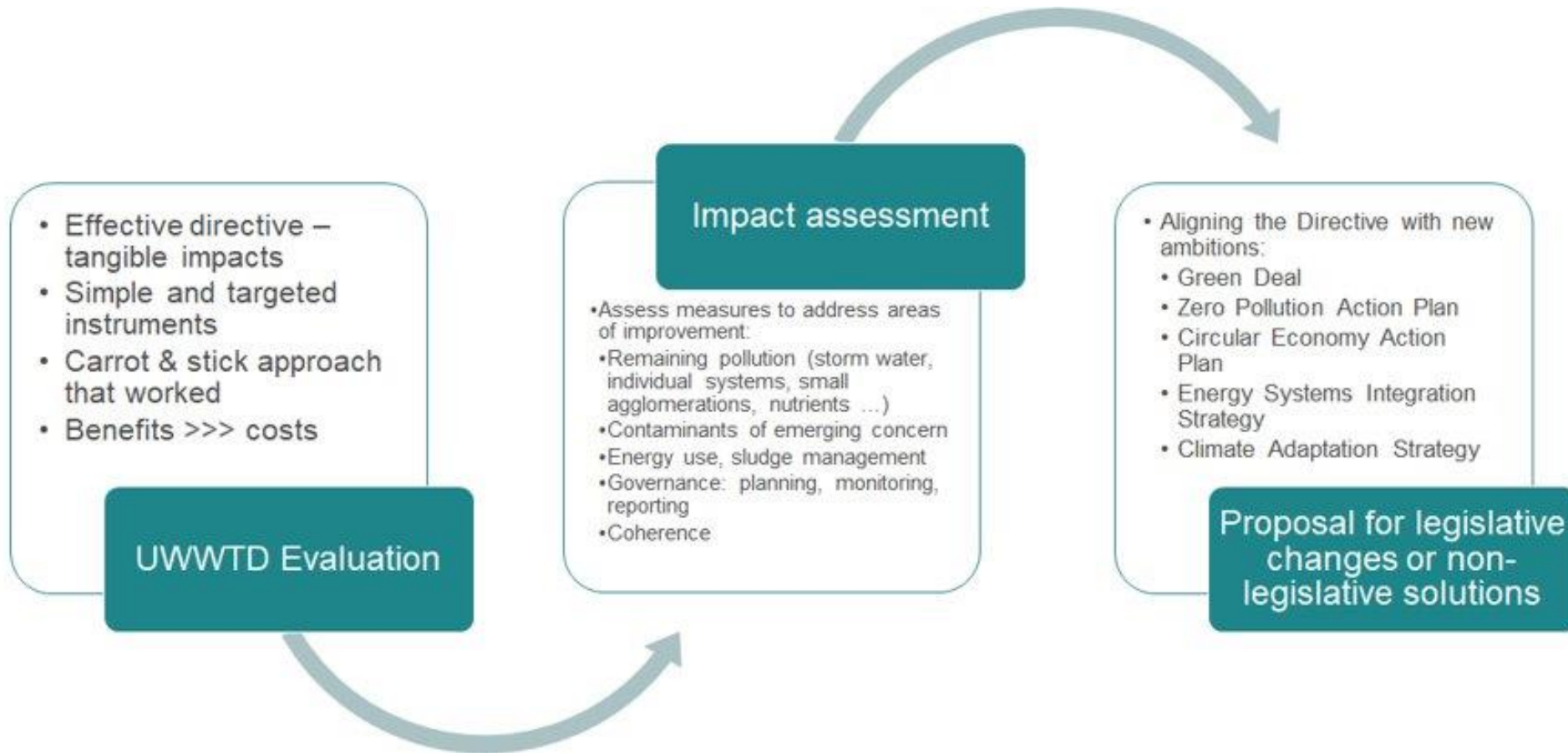


# IED & EPRTR revision – indicative timeline

- **Inception Impact Assessment** - 03/2020-04/2020
- **OPC** (open public consultations) – 12/2020 – 03/2021 – **closed**
- **TSS** (targeted stakeholder survey) – 02/2021 – 04/2021 – **closed**
- **Stakeholder interviews** – 06/2021 – 07/2021 – **ongoing**
- **Focus groups** - 06/2021 – 07/2021 – **ongoing**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> stakeholder workshop** – **7 July - IED**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> stakeholder workshop** – **8 July – E-PRTR**
- **Commission Proposal – IED and E-PRTR revision – Q1 2022**



# Urban Waste Water Treatment: revision



# UWWTD – indicative timeline

- **Inception Impact Assessment** - Q3 2020
- **Expert consultations** - Q4 2020 to Q4 2021:
  - speed dates, expert workshops, stakeholder conference with DE presidency, UWWTD MS expert group meetings, final stakeholder conference
- **OPC** (Open Public Consultation) - 28/04/2021 to 21/07/2021
- **Commission Proposal UWWTD revision** – Q1 2022



# Water – Review of pollutants in surface and ground waters

## Key topics

- Adding (or removing) substances from Priority Substances list in **surface waters**, reviewing quality standards
  - Plant protection products and biocides, pharmaceuticals, industrial chemicals, PFAS, and metals
- Adding substances to **groundwater** pollutants lists (GWD Annex I (EU-wide) & Annex II (MS-specific))
  - Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), pesticides (harmful degradation products), pharmaceuticals
- Assessing possible digitalisation & streamlining options

**Final aim: improve environmental and health protection**





# Water – Review of pollutants in surface and ground waters; tentative timetable

## Key processes and milestones

- On-going impact assessment support study- final report due beginning 2022
- Open public consultation and targeted expert survey – upcoming weeks, summer 2021.
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Stakeholder workshop – Autumn 2021
- Opinions from SCHEER committee – end of summer 2021 for groundwater, end of 2021 for surface waters
- Adoption of Commission proposal of policy reviews and staff working document – Q3 2022



# Zero Pollution Action Plan timetable

## First Zero Pollution Monitoring and Outlook (2022)

- Revision of **Air Quality Directive**
- Revision of the **Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive**
- Revision of **water pollutants list** (Environmental Quality Standards and Groundwater Directives)
- Revision of the **Mercury Regulation**
- Implementation Report of **Environmental Noise Directive**
- **Establish EU priority watch list for soil**

## Second Zero Pollution Monitoring and Outlook (2024)

- **Recommendations on implementation of polluter pays principle**

2021

2023

2022

2024

## Launch of the Zero Pollution Stakeholder Platform (2021)

- New emission limit values for motor vehicles (**EURO7**)
- Revision of the **Industrial Emissions Directive** and EU Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (or early 2022)
- Revision of the **Environmental Crime Directive**
- **Launch global initiatives, e.g. on lead batteries recycling**

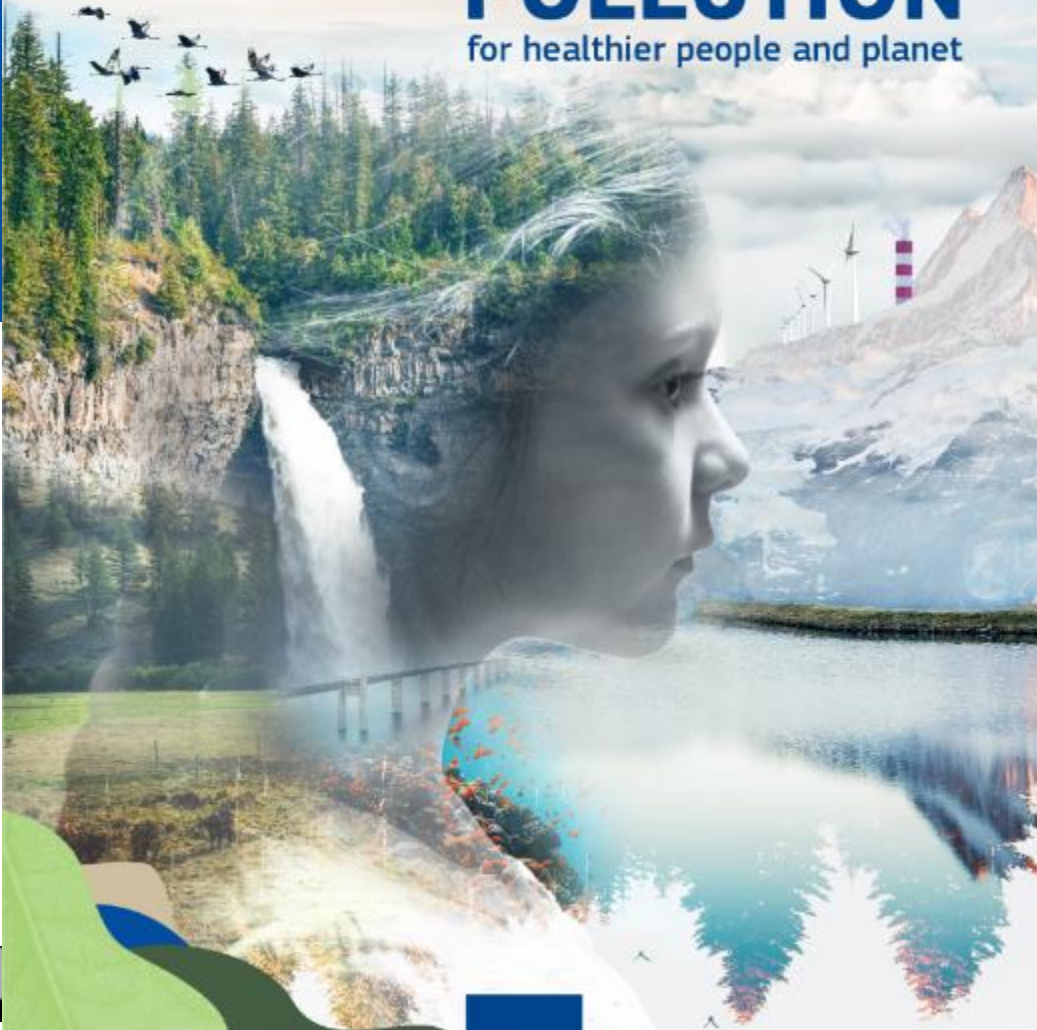
## EEA's European Environment & Health Atlas (2023)

- Review of **Marine Strategy Framework Directive**
- Review of **Bathing Water Directive**
- Fitness Check of **Environment Liability Directive**
- **Assess pathways and policy options for indoor air quality**
- **Dedicated nutrient (ammonia) actions contributing to the Integrated Nutrient Management Action Plan**
- Zero pollution contribution to **European Green Deal Dataspace**



# ZERO #EuGreenWeek POLLUTION

May 31 → June 4  
for healthier people and planet



## More information:

- [Zero Pollution webpage](#)
- [Zero Pollution Stakeholder Platform](#)
- [Analysis of open public consultation](#)
- Contact: [ENV-ZERO-POLLUTION@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ENV-ZERO-POLLUTION@ec.europa.eu)

**Your input is welcome!**

| Time for feedback and questions

