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IEEP UK Divergence Newsletter

2 May 2024

EU finalises Green Deal files ahead of EU elections

Dear ,

When IEEP UK started out tracking and analysing EU/UK and intra-UK divergence in environmental policy in 2021 we always thought that there was going to be a lot of policy and legal divergence coming down the track – and so it has come to pass. This edition will look at some of the key green laws that have been enacted by the EU before the European elections in June.

The Green Deal has turbo-charged the EU's legislative drive, towards net-zero emissions by 2050, and the outgoing Parliament has been keeping busy in the run-up to the elections to finalise as many files as possible while still active. Amid concerns after the EU Council's priorities for the next five years [dropped environmental considerations down in the pecking order](#), it has been a real show of effort to ensure that as many of the files remaining in the pipeline as possible have finally been brought into law.

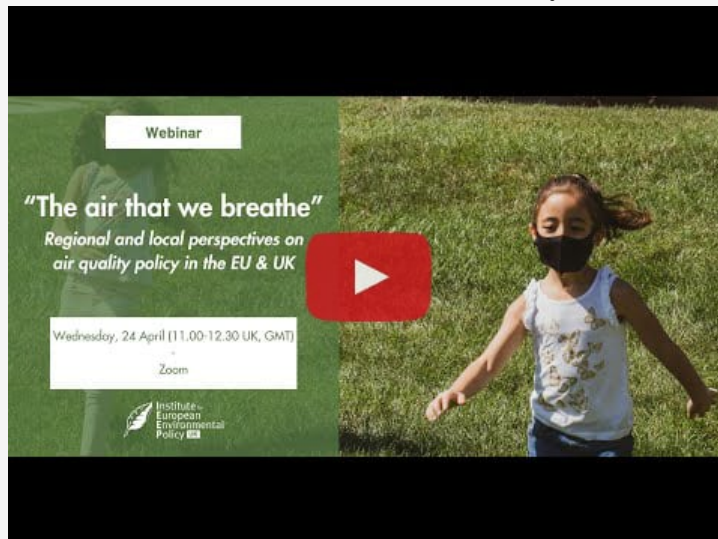
💡 In case you missed it! 💡

On 24 April, IEEP UK hosted a webinar to discuss our latest briefing: "[Air Quality Policy in the UK Post-Brexit](#)", which has revealed incidences of divergence in air quality policy between the EU and the UK, some of which threaten to be consequential in their impact.

The [webinar](#) covered important topics, including the sources of urban air pollution in the UK and EU, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms taken by Environmental Standards Scotland, and stories and challenges of implementing low-emission zones across the EU. On the day, we heard from an expert panel made up of:

- [Emma Bergeling](#) – Junior Policy Analyst, IEEP
- [Michael Nicholson](#) – Head of Environmental Policy, IEEP UK
- [Clare Hamilton](#) – Senior Policy Associate, IEEP UK
- [Aleksander Szałański](#) – Transport Policy Advisor, FPPE
- [Matt Towner](#) – Health Effects of Air Pollution Programme Director, Impact on Urban Health
- [Mark Roberts](#) – Executive Director, Environmental Standards Scotland

Find a **full recording of our event** below 



"EU Parliament adopts new rules banning greenwashing and misleading product information"



EU legislators have passed a [new directive](#) outlawing generic environmental claims and other misleading information. Only sustainability labels based on approved certification schemes or established by public authorities will be allowed. The new rules also aim to tackle the early obsolescence of products by banning practices including unfounded durability claims, presenting software updates as necessary when they only enhance functionality, presenting goods as repairable when they are not, and inducing consumers to replace consumables earlier than necessary for technical reasons.

[Read more about how this may impact trade with the UK on our website.](#)

"EU lawmakers strike deal for more sustainable packaging and reducing packaging waste"



On 15 March, the European Parliament and Council announced [a provisional agreement on a proposal](#) for a regulation on packaging and packaging waste. The main elements of the agreement entail minimum recycled content requirements in packaging, a restriction on

polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAs) above certain thresholds, and the development of bio-based plastic packaging. It also sets new targets to minimise unnecessary packaging, reuse targets, and reduce single-use plastic packaging for food products. The proposal also sets out a collection target of 90% for single-use plastic bottles and metal containers through national deposit return systems by 2029.

[For more analysis on what this means for the UK, read here.](#)

"EU passes new critical raw materials strategy"



The EU adopted on 18 March a new [Critical Raw Materials \(CRMs\) strategy](#) designed to secure a sustainable supply of raw materials deemed essential for manufacturing goods central to the green transition. The new [regulation](#), dubbed the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA), is a key instrument of the EU's Green Industrial Plan and aims to reduce the EU's reliance on third countries for materials such as lithium for battery making or rare earth elements critical for electronics production.

[Read more about the CRMA and its implications for the UK on our website.](#)

"EU approves watered-down Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive before EU elections"



[The Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive](#)

(CS3D) is set to become EU law after the Parliament [approved the final text](#) on 24 April 2024. The new rules aim to reform value chain governance, creating new obligations for large companies based or trading in the EU to identify and address human rights and environmental risks in their value chains. Once endorsed by the Council and published in the EU Official Journal, EU Member States will transpose the Directive into domestic law and ensure larger companies will be expected to comply with the rules first before other companies fall into scope over the next five years.

[Read more about the CS3D and current efforts in the UK here.](#)

"EU reaches agreement on new rules to reduce harmful industrial emissions"



The Council of the EU has [rubber-stamped](#) the European Parliament's [final text](#) of the newly revised Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) after extended negotiations and [opposition from farming and right-wing groups](#).

The IED is a [central pillar](#) of the EU's campaign to reduce emissions from industrial sources and will now include intensive livestock farms (excluding in addition to those sectors already covered in the existing directive (i.e. power plants, refineries, and waste treatment – approximately 40% of GHG emissions and 20% of air and water pollutants). And, subject to a review by the Commission, the scope could also be extended to industrial minerals.

[Find out more about the IED and its implications for the UK on our website.](#)



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For more information, please check IEEP UK's website [here](#)

This newsletter is part of IEEP UK's 'Divergence Project' dedicated to tracking and reporting shifts in environmental policy happening in the UK and EU, assessing the degree of alignment or divergence between them, and analysing the potential impacts for the environment and climate as a result.

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