



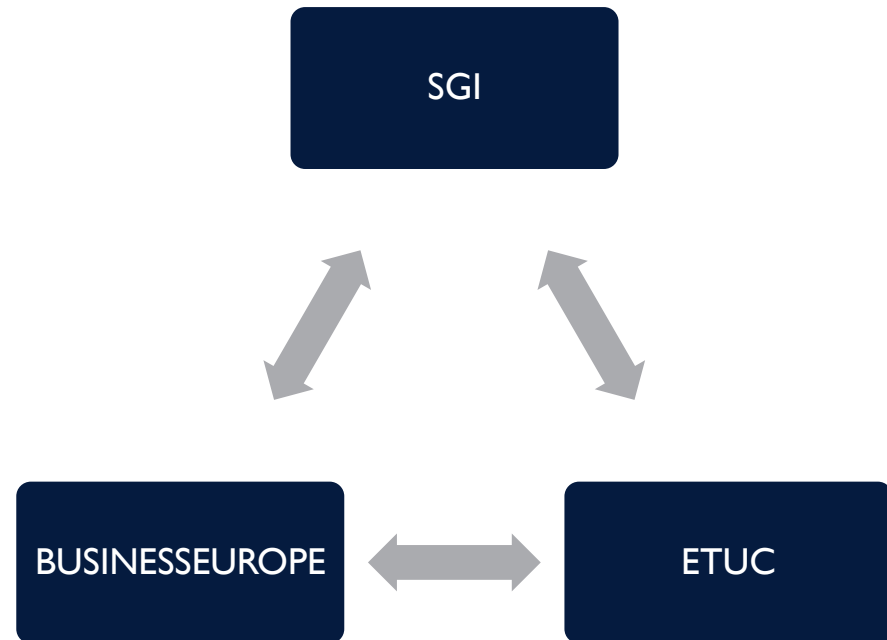
*Employers entrusted to deliver  
Sustainability Growth Innovation*

## **AGENDA EUROPEA PER L'ACQUA**

23 settembre 2022

# WHO WE ARE – SGI EUROPE

- *Let me shortly introduce you to the work of SGI Europe. We are cross-industrial European association representing enterprises and association providing Services of General Interest both public and private at national, regional and local level independent of its legal ownership status.*
- *Il SGI EUROPE è l'associazione delle imprese o delle organizzazioni con partecipazione pubblica, nonché delle imprese che forniscono servizi di interesse generale indipendentemente dalla natura giuridica delle stesse.*
- Dal 1965 la Commissione delle Comunità Europee ha riconosciuto al SGI EUROPE il ruolo di Partner Sociale.
- Oggi il **SGI EUROPE** è - insieme a **BUSINESSEUROPE**, che rappresenta le imprese private e all'**ETUC**, che associa i sindacati europei - uno dei tre partner riconosciuti nel dialogo fra le parti sociali a livello comunitario ex art. 3 e 4 del Protocollo sociale annesso al Trattato di Maastricht e, quindi, può rappresentare direttamente al tavolo delle trattative istanze e specificità espresse dai settori di propria competenza.



# WHO WE ARE- WATER TASK FORCE

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- ▶ The Water Task Force is working under the umbrella of the Sustainability Board that covers and oversees also the **Energy, Transport, Environment and Communication** Task Forces.
- ▶ Together, members of the Sustainability Board work in sync and not in isolation.
- ▶ Since the adoption of the EU Green Deal, it is ever more clear that one sector cannot fight alone against climate change. Together we work under the principle to prevent, protect, reduce and creating a **sustainable path whilst respecting the social, economic and environmental dimensions**. Here, all sectors can work in harmony and in a supporting manner to reach the ambitious goal of a climate-neutral economy by 2050.

## **I. EXEMPTION OF THE WATER SECTOR FROM THE CONCESSIONS DIRECTIVE**

# EXEMPTION OF THE WATER SECTOR FROM THE CONCESSIONS DIRECTIVE

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- ▶ The EC is undertaking an evaluation of the economic impacts of the exclusion of water from concessions obligations.
- ▶ The **study is based on the input** by the Member States and will **be a major input to the final report.** The questionnaires were sent out to the Member states on 4 January 2021 with the deadline to respond on 31 March 2021. However, the deadlines were not respected, DG Grow received the last reply in August 2021.
- ▶ The questionnaires consisted of **10 questions regarding** the legal issues, regulatory framework, managerial systems, data for verification (the least successful) ...
- ▶ Preliminary results: **reveal the complexity of the sector** and summarizing all this will be a challenging task. –

The Commission is already delayed with the task (initially Q1 for the Study, now "second part of the year")

# COVERAGE OF THE WATER SECTOR

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Three different regimes of the Concessions Directive application:

**1. application of the concessions** (meaning no exemption): Czechia, Poland, Romania

**2. partial application of the concessions:** Bulgaria, France, Spain

**3. exemption from the concessions:** all other member states (21) concessions, access to remedies to challenge the decision

## **II. ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN**

# ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN INITIATIVES

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- ▶ The **Zero pollution vision for 2050** is for air, water and soil pollution to be reduced to levels no longer considered harmful to health and natural ecosystems.
- ▶ This is translated into key 2030 targets to speed up reducing pollution at source, including:
  - improving water quality by reducing waste, plastic litter at sea (by 50%) and microplastics released into the environment (by 30%);
  - improving soil quality by reducing nutrient losses and chemical pesticides' use by 50%;
- ▶ SGI Europe welcomed the Zero Pollution Action Plan initiatives by contributing to the consultation phase of the EU Commission:
  - ▶ [Chemical strategy for sustainability](#) - to better protect citizens and the environment against hazardous chemicals.
  - ▶ [Zero pollution action plan for water, air and soil](#) - to better prevent, remedy, monitor and report on pollution. ([SGI Europe response to the Zero Pollution Action Plan](#))
  - ▶ [Revising measures to address pollution from large industrial installations](#) - to ensure they are consistent with climate, energy and circular economy policies.



# ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN INITIATIVES

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- SGI Europe came up with a well-balanced and holistic approach set of recommendations that I like to outline to you today very shortly:
- **1. Align all existing and future EU Green Deal initiatives that contribute to the zero emissions target through the preventative measures to avoid pollution at source:**
  - This means to take into account the challenges of climate change, air and soil pollution, micropollutants, pharmaceuticals, persistent substances (such as PFAS) and other emerging pollutants, by consequently implementing the **precautionary and polluter pays principle** and **ensure it becomes part of the solution**
  - Here the introductions of the **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Scheme** would be helpful.
- **2. A prerequisite for systematic protection of the environment and water resources is the coherence of European legal acts:**
  - SGI Europe calls here for a strong link and harmonisation with EU water policy such as the Water Framework Directive and its daughter directives, the Drinking Water Directive as well as with REACH is needed for a holistic approach.
  - In particular, we would like to underline in the context of the Pharmaceutical Strategy and the Pharmaceuticals in the Environment, to come up with a **green pharmacy and green manufactory strategy** that follows the objectives of the Zero Pollution plan. This should also include more awareness raising for the general public, medical personnel and pharmacists and enforce provisions for take-back schemes for unused medicines.

# ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN INITIATIVES

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- 3. We also call for **building synergies with the evaluation of the Urban Waste-Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD)** and the **Sewage Sludge Directive** for a coherent policy framework under the new Zero Pollution and the EU Green Deal.
- ▶ The Water Task Force published its [Position paper](#) on the revision of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) on 20 July 2021 and the [Annex](#) responding to the policy options presented by the Commission on 9 March 2022.
- ▶ Adoption is foreseen for Q4 2022

# STATE OF PLAY - REVISION OF THE UWWTD

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- ▶ The Water Task Force published its [Position paper](#) on the revision of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) on 20 July 2021 and the [Annex](#) responding to the policy options presented by the Commission on 9 March 2022.
- ▶ Adoption is foreseen for Q4 2022

### **III. SUSTAINABLE USE OF PESTICIDES DIRECTIVE**

# SUSTAINABLE USE OF PESTICIDES REGULATION

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- ▶ The new [Regulation on the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products](#), includes EU wide targets to reduce by 50% the use and risk of chemical pesticides by 2030, has been presented on 22 June 2022, measures:
  - **Legally binding targets at EU level** to reduce by 50% the use and the risk of chemical pesticides as well as the use of the more hazardous pesticides by 2030. MS will set their own national reduction targets within defined parameters to ensure that the EU wide targets are achieved.
  - **Environmentally friendly pest control:** New measures will ensure that all farmers and other professional pesticide users practice Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This is an environmentally friendly system of pest control which focuses on pest prevention and prioritises alternative pest control methods, with chemical pesticides only used as a last resort.
  - **A ban on all pesticides in sensitive areas:** The use of all pesticides is prohibited in places such as urban green areas, including public parks or gardens, playgrounds, recreation or sports grounds, public paths as well as protected areas in accordance with [Natura 2000](#) and any ecologically sensitive area to be preserved for threatened pollinators.
- ▶ Other key measures include requiring MS to set positive targets to increase the use of non-chemical pest control methods and requiring **farmers and other professional users of pesticides** to obtain independent advice on alternative methods to ensure greater uptake of non-chemical pest control methods.
- ▶ The proposal transforms the existing Directive into a Regulation.
- ▶ These proposals overhaul the existing rules on the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (see [Directive 2009/128/EC](#)) to bring them in line with the ambitions set in the Biodiversity and Farm to Fork strategies. The proposals must be approved by MS in the Council and the EP, under the normal legislative procedure.

## **IV. ISSUES TO BE MONITORED**

# INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT

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- ▶ The commission initiative Integrated water management – **revised lists of surface and groundwater pollutants**- aims to improve European water legislation and to re-harmonize the modalities of investments, implementation rules, integration of water objectives into other policies, chemical pollution, administrative simplification and digitization.
- ▶ This initiative addresses the findings on chemical pollution and the legal obligation to regularly review the lists of priority substances and groundwater pollutants
- ▶ The adoption by the commission is **planned for Q3 2022**

# NUTRIENTS – ACTION PLAN FOR BETTER MANAGEMENT

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- ▶ To better address **nitrogen and phosphorus pollution** of air, water and soil, the EC is preparing an action plan for [integrated nutrient management](#).
- ▶ The action plan aims to cover all media (air, water, sea and soil) and all relevant sources of pollution (agriculture, industry, cities, waste, energy, transport). The objective is to **fill the gaps in existing sectoral legislation by providing an integrated approach to pollution reduction policy**. The plan involves reducing fertilizer use by at least 20%. In particular, it will address industrial and urban sources of nutrient losses.
- ▶ The commission will build on existing assessments of air quality, water quality, sewage sludge, and revisions of related legislation such as the wastewater treatment directive or the industrial emissions directive.
- ▶ [Public consultation](#) **ends on 26 august 2022**
- ▶ **Commission adoption planned for Q4 2022**



# INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS DIRECTIVE (IED)

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- ▶ On 5 April 2022, the Commission adopted proposals for revised EU measures to address pollution from **large industrial installations**. These proposals concern [revision of the IED](#) and [revision of the E-PRTR Regulation](#) (to create the Industrial Emissions Portal).
- ▶ The overall aim of these proposals is to progress towards the EU's zero pollution ambition for a toxic-free environment and to support climate, energy and circular economy policies.
- ▶ More specifically, the new rules aim to:
  1. Ensure full and consistent implementation of the IED across MS, with **tighter permit controls on air and water emissions**;
  2. **Increase investment in new, cleaner technologies** taking into account **energy use, resource efficiency and water reuse** whilst avoiding lock-in to obsolete technologies;
  3. Support more sustainable growth of sectors that are key to building a clean, low carbon and circular economy;
  4. Cover additional intensive farming and industrial activities, ensuring that sectors with significant potential for high resource use or pollution also curb environmental damage at source by applying Best Available Techniques;
  5. Establish an Innovation Centre for Industrial Transformation and Emissions (INCITE);
  6. Integrate the previously separate requirements for depollution and de-carbonisation so that future pollution control investments take better account of greenhouse gas emissions, **resource efficiency and water reuse**.
  7. Enhance **data transparency and public access to environmental information** by making permit summaries available online and providing more opportunities for public participation in the setting and review of permits.
- ▶ Together, these measures aim to boost effectiveness and increase **the focus on energy, water and material efficiency and reuse, and promote the use of safer, less toxic or non-toxic chemicals in industrial processes**.

# REPOWEREU PLAN: IMPACTING THE WATER SECTOR?

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- ▶ The [REPowerEU Plan](#) and [Annexes](#) aims at rapidly **reducing the EU's dependence on Russian fossil fuels** ([SGI Europe Position on the REPowerEU Initiative](#))
- ▶ By building on the FF55 Proposals and completing the action on energy security of supply and storage, the plan puts forward a set of actions to :
  1. *save energy*
    - Amendments to the EED and EPBD
    - EU Save Energy Communication
  2. *diversify supplies*
    - EU Energy Purchase Platform to secure supply of gas, LNG and hydrogen
    - EU External Energy Engagement Strategy
  3. *accelerate the roll out to renewables*
    - Amendments to the RED
    - EU Solar Strategy
    - Recommendation on permitting procedures and PPAs
  4. *smart investments*
    - Proposal for a Regulation on REPowerEU chapters in recovery and resilience plans
    - Guidance on recovery and resilience plans in the context of REPowerEU
- ▶ **Are the adopted proposal impacting the Water sector?**

# STRATEGIC FORESIGHT REPORT 2022

## WITH VP MAROS SEFCOVIC

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the **green and the digital transitions** are political priorities of the European Commission that will shape our future in the long-term.

While these two simultaneous, or 'twin', transitions, can reinforce each other in many areas, they are not automatically aligned. For example, digital technologies have substantial environmental footprints that go against the targets of the green transition. This is why a proactive and integrative approach to managing the twin transitions is important to ensure their successful implementation. The goal of this study is to analyse how the European Union can make sure that these two transitions mutually reinforce each other. In doing so, the study focusses on five of the most greenhouse gas emitting sectors: 1) agriculture, 2) buildings and construction, 3) energy, 4) energy-intensive industries, and 5) transport and mobility. Based on this analysis, the report derives key requirements for the success of the European Union's green and digital transitions.

### **NOT ONLY THE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP – PIL) AS INDICATOR OF WELL-BEING**

Finally, for SGI Europe, the climate transition must be socially fair:

the success of the energy and climate transition lies in its integration into a balanced approach to sustainable development at the interface between the **economic, social and environmental** dimensions

SGI Europe consider FAIR transition that respects **all three dimensions**, which means that the right measures and tools must be adapted to each sector