EU MATTERS
NIEL's Monthly European Environmental News

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Agriculture

[IEEP at COP24 – Agriculture's Future, Delivering Net Zero GHG Emissions – Reflections from Katowice](#)
Rural land using sectors have a multidimensional role in the delivery of climate action. Agriculture needs to reduce its own emissions but is also being called upon to provide biomass for the replacement of carbon-intensive materials and carbon removals via sequestration and storage in soils and biomass. Increasing pressure is being placed on the agricultural sector to deliver transformational change.

[Cutting down on ammonia emissions in the EU: for healthier and more sustainable food production](#)
Ammonia emissions – ammonia released into the atmosphere in high concentrations pollute the air we breathe and represent a significant threat to human health and the environment.

Circular Economy

[Europe paves way for right to repair](#)
The EU has taken a step towards cutting waste and greenhouse gases from manufacturing of popular consumer goods. For the first time, manufacturers will be obliged to make appliances more easily repairable and longer-lasting as a result following a decision by national representatives.

[Europe struggles to cut waste, new data](#)
Newly released data shows little to no progress in reducing waste across the EU, the (EEB) warns. EU countries generated 487kg of waste per person in 2017, according to Eurostat. That's only eight kilograms less than the 496kg generated in 1997, when figures were first compiled.

[Commission launches Circular Plastics Alliance to foster the market of recycled plastics in Europe](#)
The European Commission has launched an alliance of key industry stakeholders covering the full plastics value chain as part of its persisting efforts to reduce plastics littering, increase the share of recycled plastics and stimulate market innovation.

Climate Action

[Climate change is a problem of politics, not science](#)
The scientific, economic and social arguments for aggressive action on climate change are powerful. Our political leaders are now at a fork in the road and our children and grandchildren are watching (Euractiv).

[EC publishes evaluation of the EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change](#)
The European Commission has published its evaluation of the EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change.

[Cooperation is key to improve climate change adaptation across Europe's border regions](#)
Europe's border regions and shared maritime areas are facing increased negative impacts due to climate change, but countries and regions responsible for these areas are already taking action at transnational scale to adapt to these impacts according to a European Environment Agency briefing.

Northern Ireland
environment
link

Brexit: *Updates on NIEL's EU Policy work after the UK Referendum decision can be found [here](#).*

Energy

[EU Member States need more ambition to reach joint target on renewable energy](#)
The share of renewable energy sources in the European Union's (EU) energy use has doubled since 2005 but this growth has been slowing down in recent years, especially due to increasing energy consumption and lack of progress in the transport sector. The European Environment Agency's (EEA) new report shows that EU Member States need to step up their efforts to reach the 2020 target on renewable energy.

[European Commission: wind energy on course to be the cornerstone of Europe's energy mix](#)
The European Commission's recent decarbonisation strategy puts wind energy centre stage in Europe's future, echoing several major publications by energy analysts.

Environmental Governance

[The Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration: some environmental implications](#)
Two documents, central to Brexit and its aftermath, have been endorsed by the UK government and the European Council. In principle, one of these, the Agreement, will enter into force at the time of the UK's departure from the EU. Taken together, they have potentially significant implications for the environment and environmental policy.

Freshwater

[More action needed to tackle mixtures of chemicals in Europe's waters](#)
Despite successes in addressing some of the most hazardous chemicals, more attention is needed to address the danger posed by the 'cocktail effect' of lower concentrations of chemicals in European lakes, rivers and other surface water bodies, according to a European Environment Agency (EEA) report.

Health

[What are the health costs of environmental pollution?](#)
This report outlines some of the methodologies that have been used to account for the health costs of environmental pollution, both in Europe and other parts of the world. The strengths and weaknesses of each methodology are considered, and their potential applications explored. Finally, the future directions of research in this field are investigated.

Marine

[Single-use plastics: Commission welcomes ambitious agreement on new rules to reduce marine litter](#)
The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union have reached a provisional political agreement on the ambitious new measures proposed by the Commission to tackle marine litter at its source, targeting the 10 plastic products most often found on our beaches as well as abandoned fishing gear.

[Brexit preparedness: European Commission adopts two contingency proposals to help mitigate impact of "no-deal" Brexit on EU fisheries](#)
Given the continued uncertainty in the UK surrounding the ratification of the Withdrawal Agreement, the Commission has adopted two legislative proposals to help mitigate the significant impact that a "no-deal" Brexit would have on EU fisheries.

Sustainable Development

[Commission's Reflection Paper on a more sustainable Europe by 2030 – IEEP reaction & recommendations](#)
IEEP welcomes the urgency of the Commission's SDG reflection paper "Towards a sustainable Europe by 2030" and strongly supports the development of an overarching EU SDG strategy. To support further policy action, here is their analysis of the paper.

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