



TO: URSULA VON DER LEYEN, PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION
CC: FRANS TIMMERMANS, FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Re: Urgent Delivery of the Toxic-Free Pillar of the Green Deal and REACH Reform

Brussels, 31 May 2023

Dear President von der Leyen,

On behalf of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Europe's largest network of environmental organizations, we would like to acknowledge and commend the tremendous achievements made under your leadership with the European Green Deal. The launch of the Green Deal marked a historic moment, demonstrating your unwavering commitment to addressing the pressing environmental and health challenges we face.

The European Green Deal has delivered an unprecedented number of environmental policies, fostering progress in many areas and inspiring hope for a sustainable future. The ambitious goals outlined in the Green Deal have set the European Union on a path towards carbon neutrality, biodiversity conservation, and a circular economy. We commend your efforts in mobilizing political will and driving the necessary transformative changes.

However, despite the remarkable progress made in numerous environmental domains, we remain deeply concerned about the delayed delivery of the zero pollution and toxic-free pillar of the European Green Deal and the lack of progress in reforming the REACH regulation.

In our [previous correspondence](#) with you in September 2022, we emphasized the critical importance of delivering the toxic-free pillar as a fundamental component of the Green Deal. Unfortunately, we are disheartened about the fact that the REACH proposal has not yet been presented, despite being in the European Commission's table for almost two years already.

The REACH revision holds immense importance in protecting not only human health and the environment, but also our economy, from the harmful and costly impacts of hazardous substances, such as cancer, infertility, exposure of children, PFAS pollution on drinking water, and many others. Its timely implementation is crucial for upholding the commitments of the Green Deal and ensuring a toxic-free future for all European citizens. Unfortunately, as shown in our recent report '[Waiting for REACH](#)', the delay in presenting the proposal negatively impacts the European Green Deal goals of biodiversity, air and water quality, and human health (including for workers and consumers) as well as the EU's transition towards a sustainable, circular and resilient economy, with clear direction for innovation and investors. This delay also undermines the trust placed in the European Commission to safeguard our well-being and maintain a sustainable environment.

Additionally, we urge you to prioritize comprehensive reform of the REACH regulation. While celebrating the achievements of the Green Deal, we recognize that the current regulatory framework requires significant updates to effectively address emerging challenges posed by new and hazardous chemicals.

European Environmental Bureau

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By strengthening REACH, we can enhance chemical safety, promote transparency, and provide robust protection for public health and the environment.

President von der Leyen, we applaud your achievements with the European Green Deal and your momentous 'person in the moon' vision that has inspired change and galvanized support for environmental action. **As you continue to lead the European Commission towards a sustainable future, we urge you to prioritize the delivery of the toxic-free pillar proposal before this summer.** This timeline will allow sufficient time for preliminary analysis by the current parliamentary mandate, avoiding any further delays that may compromise the commitments of the Green Deal.

Additionally, we request that you prioritize the reform of the REACH regulation, taking into account the recommendations outlined in our previous [letter](#). Addressing the deficiencies of the current regulatory framework is vital for effectively managing chemicals and safeguarding human health and the environment while investing in the green transition for our common future.

President von der Leyen, this is an opportune moment to showcase strong leadership and ensure that the European Commission's commitments extend to all areas, including chemicals legislation. We appreciate your dedication to a sustainable and toxic-free future, and we remain hopeful that you will take swift action in delivering the toxic-free pillar and delivering the REACH reform.

Thank you for your attention to these urgent matters. We eagerly await your continued support and decisive action.

Yours sincerely,



Patrick ten Brink
Secretary General, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)