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THE EEB'S ASSESSMENT

OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE OF
THE CYPRIOT PRESIDENCY OF THE EU



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The EEB is Europe's largest network of environmental citizens' organisations. We bring together over 190 member organisations from 42 countries. Together, we work for a better future where people and nature thrive together.

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Introduction

The Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the European Union, which took office on 1 January 2026 as the final Presidency of the Trio, operated in an even more challenging geopolitical context than its predecessor. Rising global instability, continued security pressures linked to Russia's war against Ukraine, and escalating conflict in the Middle East—triggering a new energy and geopolitical shock—shaped its mandate and constrained political ambition. At the same time, US President Donald Trump's second term continued to foster aggressive interference in European affairs, the weaponisation of trade, and the dismantling of environmental and social protections. In addition, the reduced respect for the international rule of law, multilateralism, justice and human rights has plagued international relations, policymaking and trust.

These overlapping crises have intensified pressure on EU decision-making, often reinforcing short-term responses at the expense of long-term resilience.

This precarious context added to an already difficult political environment inherited from previous Presidencies. What the European Commission initially framed as a “simplification agenda” has now clearly become a vehicle for deregulation. The Cypriot Presidency coincided with ongoing efforts to advance and conclude a growing number of omnibus proposals. Shortly before the Presidency began, the European Commission tabled two additional omnibuses—on food and feed and on the environment—despite recent findings of maladministration by the European Ombudswoman. During the term, provisional agreements were reached on omnibuses IV (chemicals) and V (defence), while the European Council called on co-legislators to accelerate and finalise all outstanding omnibus files by the end of 2026.

As under the Danish Presidency, these processes have often been characterised by a lack of proper scientific justification, insufficient or no impact assessments, and inadequate stakeholder consultation—raising serious concerns about transparency, democratic governance, and the integrity of EU environmental legislation.

These developments have unfolded alongside continued political pressure on civil society and democratic participation. Scrutiny of NGOs, including through parliamentary processes and public narratives questioning their legitimacy and funding, persisted throughout the Presidency in the form, for instance, of the scrutiny working group in the budgetary control committee of the European Parliament. Such dynamics undermine the role of civil society in EU policymaking at a time when inclusive, evidence-based decision-making is most needed.

At the same time, the real-world impacts of the climate and environmental crises continued to intensify, with two major early heatwaves already affecting Europe at the time of this assessment. The EU remains off track on the vast majority of its 2030 targets across biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, pollution reduction, and resource use. Extreme weather events—including heatwaves, droughts, floods and wildfires—are becoming more frequent and severe, while pollution and biodiversity loss continue to impose growing social and economic costs. The latest European Environment Agency assessments confirm a trajectory of insufficient progress, driven by gaps in implementation, funding and enforcement, with the cost of non-implementation of environmental law estimated at €180 billion annually. This stark reality demands urgent and sustained ambition.

A Council Presidency is not solely responsible for these developments and cannot act independently of the European Commission, the European Parliament, and Member States. However, it plays a critical role in shaping political direction, structuring negotiations, prioritising files, and facilitating—or constraining—progress. The Cypriot Presidency, in this regard, had both the responsibility and the opportunity to steer discussions towards stronger implementation of the European Green Deal and to resist further erosion of agreed environmental protections.

This assessment is not a comprehensive political evaluation of the Cypriot Presidency, nor does it assess Cyprus’ domestic policies beyond its role in leading—or failing to lead—by example. It focuses specifically on the Presidency’s performance in advancing environmental objectives across Council configurations and EU decision-making processes, including, where relevant, the European Council.

The analysis is based on the Ten Green Tests developed by the European Environmental Bureau, building on consultation with its wide membership and civil society partners. These tests set out clear benchmarks for assessing both the **effort** and the **outcomes** of the Presidency across key European Green Deal priorities and related policy areas.



Patrick ten Brink
Secretary General

We recognise the complexity of the context and acknowledge the Presidency’s engagement across a wide range of files, including efforts to advance discussions on the future EU budget, water resilience, implementation of key legislation, and enlargement-related processes. We also thank the Presidency and its teams for their openness to dialogue during the term, the open and forward-looking discussions on Europe’s water and climate resilience at the Informal meeting of environment and climate ministers, while regretting the lack of continuity with initiatives under the Danish Presidency to ensure the meaningful participation of environmental stakeholders in the Informal and formal Agriculture Council.

However, despite these efforts, the overall trajectory observed during the Cypriot Presidency reflects a continued shift towards deregulation and reduced environmental ambition. While some progress was achieved in certain areas, this was not sufficient to counterbalance broader negative trends.

Building on the evidence of Presidency engagement and the results achieved, the overall assessment is mixed on efforts and negative on outcomes.



Faustine Bas-Defossez,
Policy Director

Ten Green Tests for the Cypriot Presidency: Assessment

The Cypriot Presidency made great efforts to advance and defend the European Green Deal and the role of science in these times of disinformation and attacks on civil society, the EGD and EU by external and internal forces. However, the EGD still suffered many steps backwards and missed opportunities, undermining social and environmental protections and trust in European Institutions, just when people need an agenda of hope.

The presidency took over from the Danish on 1 January 2026, for the second time since 2012, eight years after Cyprus joined the EU in 2004. Politics is the art of the possible. However, if and where the possible does too little to avoid climate breakdown, halt catastrophic biodiversity loss and ecological tipping points, reduce pollution exposure, or improve governance systems in a way that gives confidence in

*our governments, institutions and future, supports rights and justice then we cannot assess progress to be good, despite efforts. **It is against these needs and not short-term political “realism”, that both effort and impact are assessed to determine the Presidency performance against the memorandum.** We reached the following conclusions:*

		Effort	Outcome
	1 Implement the European Green Deal in times of disinformation and disruptive foreign interference		
	2 Commit to a sufficient EU budget and wider financial tools to catalyse a credible and fair transition to a one planet economy-enabling a race to the top on sustainability		
	3 Ensure a truly “Clean” Industrial Deal that helps EU industry be a global frontrunner in detoxification, de-pollution, decarbonisation and restoration		
	4 Build on the Strategic Dialogue for Agriculture to advance towards sustainable and just food and farming systems		
	5 Respond to the climate crisis by ensuring only the most efficient pathways to decarbonisation are supported, creating a fast track to a people and nature-positive renewable energy future		
	6 Deliver a nature-positive agenda for Land, freshwater and oceans and fast track climate adaptation and resilience		
	7 Maintaining and delivering on zero-pollution: clean air for all		
	8 Advancing a toxic-free environment and transforming the transition of the chemicals sector through a future-proof sustainable policy framework		
	9 Address resource use and seize circular economy opportunities for the economy and society		
	10 Protect the rule of law and our health, foster legal and social justice and strengthen civil society engagement and democracy		



1. Implement the European Green Deal in times of disinformation and disruptive foreign interference

The verdict:  on effort  on outcome

The [first green ten test](#) called upon the Cypriot Presidency to: Prioritise the **implementation and enforcement of the European Green Deal**; Ensure **simplification is about smarter implementation**, not dismantling existing targets or obligations; Guarantee that **simplification efforts are evidence-based, proportionate**, and subject to impact assessments and proper consultation; **Restrict omnibus packages to technical adjustments only**; Pursue the efforts in quantifying and understanding the threats, while encouraging the development of an EU strategy and practices **to combat disinformation**; **Secure civil society space and integrity** through a meaningful implementation of the EU civil society strategy; Ensure **appropriate communication of the EGD**; Catalyse the development of a **fact-checking portal and services**; Better **communicate environmental scientific consensus**; Promote the systematic **communication of the benefits of action**; Demonstrate **solidarity with Ukraine** and support EU enlargement **and lead by example**.

Key developments

- Shortly before the Cypriot Presidency kicked in, the European Commission proposed two new omnibuses: one on food and feed, one on the environment, despite two cases of maladministration found by the ombudswoman shortly before.
- The Environment Omnibus was published against the backdrop of strong public mobilisation, with around 200,000 citizens calling on the Commission not to weaken rules protecting nature and human health.
- During the Presidency, the Council and the European Parliament reached provisional agreements on omnibuses IV (chemicals) and V (defence) and the European Council called on co-legislators to accelerate and finalise all outstanding "Omnibus" simplification files by the end of 2026.
- Throughout the Presidency, pressure on NGOs—including scrutiny of their activities, funding, and legitimacy—continued within the European Parliament. This was notably reflected in the work of the scrutiny working group of the budgetary control committee, whose mandate was extended by a further six months. In parallel, as already seen in 2024, the European Parliament's discharge procedure was again used by some Members to exert additional pressure on EU funding allocated to civil society organisations.

Good

- The Presidency made the fight against the attacks on democracy — including disinformation, foreign interference, pressures on media freedom, hate speech and electoral manipulation — a priority of its programme. It aimed at working closely with the Commission and Member States to strengthen democratic resilience through initiatives such as the EU Democracy Package.
- The Presidency made water resilience a strategic priority central to climate adaptation, economic competitiveness, and crisis preparedness. As such it committed to support the implementation of the European Water Resilience Strategy, ensuring access to clean and affordable water for all.
- The Informal Council of environment ministers in February in Lefkosia prioritised discussions on water and climate resilience, strengthening EU's role in global climate diplomacy and transition to a circular economy.
- The Presidency ensured Council's adoption of the political agreement reached previously to update the EU's water pollution standards.
- The Presidency supported progress towards the implementation of the Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR), facilitating exchanges on practical delivery across Member States.
- Cyprus led by example on the Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD), demonstrating strong national commitment by advancing the transposition of the revised directive into domestic legislation and setting a positive benchmark for other Member States.
- The Presidency played a constructive role in addressing concerns related to the Commission's Chemicals Omnibus proposal. It contributed to the removal of problematic proposed exemptions, helping to preserve the integrity and level of protection of EU chemicals legislation.
- The Presidency oversaw significant progress in EU enlargement negotiations with Ukraine, Moldova, Albania and Montenegro. Notably, it led the formal opening of the first cluster of negotiating chapters ("Fundamentals") for Ukraine and Moldova, an important step in aligning candidate countries with the EU acquis, including on environmental standards and governance.

Poor

- Despite some positive developments— particularly on advancing implementation of the Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR) and the Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD), as well as limited pushback on the Chemicals Omnibus—the Presidency broadly supported the Commission's deregulation agenda. It did not challenge the underlying methodology of the Omnibus approach, in particular the lack of comprehensive impact assessments and concerns over biased consultation processes, despite clear maladministration findings by the European Ombudsman.
- The Presidency contributed to the organisation of the Informal European Council (EUCO) Summit in February, which strongly reinforced calls for deregulation in the name of competitiveness. The direction of the Summit appeared closely aligned with the positions of major business and industry groups, which had convened a dedicated gathering the day prior to the Summit, raising strong concerns about the balance and diversity of stakeholder input shaping high level EU policy priorities.
- While the Presidency identified the fight against attacks on democracy as a priority, it fell short of addressing misleading narratives and

political attacks targeting EU civil society organisations, including those related to LIFE programme funding. This represents a missed opportunity to actively defend and strengthen the role of civil society in EU democratic processes.

- The Presidency did not build on efforts made by the Danish Presidency to enhance dialogue with

environmental stakeholders in agri-food policy. It did not invite the EEB to take part in the Informal Agriculture Council and the absence of opportunities for structured exchange—such as meetings with the Danish Agriculture Minister ahead of formal AGRIFISH Councils—highlight a weakening of inclusive stakeholder engagement in this area from the previous Presidency.

Despite some positive developments—notably progress on the implementation of key European Green Deal (EGD) legislation and on the enlargement agenda, as well as constructive commitments in its Presidency programme—the Presidency ultimately contributed to a strengthening of the deregulation agenda. It also fell short in actively countering misleading and harmful attacks targeting NGOs and civil society organisations.

The verdict is therefore **neutral on efforts and negative on outcomes.**



2. Commit to a sufficient EU Budget and wider financial tools to catalyse a credible and fair transition to a one planet economy – enabling a race to the top on sustainability

The verdict:  on effort  on outcome

[This test](#) called on the Cypriot Presidency to: Securing dedicated and **increased funding for biodiversity and nature restoration**; Setting **robust climate funding targets and instruments** to address pollution at its source; Ensuring the **competitiveness fund is a genuinely clean and transformative fund**; Including strong **safeguards for inclusive, transparent, and balanced consultation on national plans**; **Applying the Do No Significant Harm principle rigorously** across all EU funds and programmes; Reinforcing **support for civil society organisations** (CSOs); Moving towards a **performance-based Common Agricultural, Food, and Land Stewardship Policy**; Advancing discussions on new **EU own resources**; Establishing a **long-term EU Just Transformation Fund post-2026**.

Key developments

- The Cypriot Presidency presented a mature negotiating box the European Council (EUCO) for their meeting on 18-19 June.
- The General Affairs Council in June agreed on partial general approaches regarding the National Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs), the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) and the performance regulation framework.

Good

- The Presidency made important progress in the MFF, significantly advancing on key pillars of the framework and the negotiating box.
- In its partial general approach on the NRPPs, the General Affairs Council clarified and strengthened the focus of LIFE activities under the EU Facility, specifying that they should support nature and biodiversity, climate adaptation, non-industrial climate change mitigation, water resilience, pollution prevention, the circular economy, and the energy transition.
- In its partial general approach on the ECF, the General Affairs Council recognised the value of the LIFE Programme and affirmed that its core features should be preserved under the next MFF, including support for bottom-up innovation projects, all relevant stakeholders, and climate and environmental awareness-raising across all levels of governance.
- In its partial general approach on the performance regulation framework, the Council included good elements regarding the tracking of biodiversity expenditures.
- The Presidency held an AOB discussion at the June Environment Council on the added value of the LIFE Programme and its future under the next MFF. Countries expressed strong support for LIFE, highlighting its proven impact on the ground and calling for its continuation in the next EU long-term

budget. Most of the members states intervened in favour of adequate funding through a dedicated budget line and warned against diluting its impact within the

proposed larger funds (ECF and EU Facility within NRPPs), and some also called for LIFE to remain a standalone programme.

Poor

- Despite its stated ambition to advance discussions on new EU own resources, the Presidency delivered only limited, largely procedural progress and did not manage to meaningfully bridge Member State divisions to move towards an agreement.
- While some progress was achieved on climate and environment spending—through the inclusion of a 35% target in the Presidency's negotiating box, where no figure had previously been agreed—this level of ambition remains largely insufficient. It falls short of the scale of investment required to deliver a secure, climate-resilient and nature-positive Europe, which would require at least 50% of EU spending to be aligned with these objectives.
- The Presidency also failed to propose a dedicated biodiversity spending target within the broader climate and environment envelope, missing an important opportunity to ensure that biodiversity objectives are adequately funded and not diluted within broader categories.
- Despite clear signals from the European Parliament in favour of maintaining earmarking for LIFE activities, including in its interim report, the Presidency did not include dedicated funding for LIFE actions in its negotiating box. In its partial general approaches on the NRPPs and ECF, the General Affairs Council also failed to secure earmarked funding for LIFE actions and activities. This omission raises concerns about the future visibility, effectiveness and accessibility of EU funding for environmental implementation on the ground
- Despite some improvements made to the application of the 'Do No Significant Harm' (DNSH) principle under direct management, the Council weakened DNSH provisions by removing the explicit requirement for the DNSH guidance to include exclusion lists of activities that are ineligible for EU funding and by excluding certain sectors from the application of the principle.

While the Presidency made considerable progress in the MFF negotiations and secured some spending for climate and environment, it felt short in ensuring the next EU multiannual budget is fit with the challenge of the triple crisis.

The verdict is therefore **good on efforts, neutral on outcomes**.



3. Ensure a truly “Clean” Industrial Deal that helps EU industry be a global frontrunner in detoxification, de-pollution, decarbonisation and restoration

The verdict:  on effort  on outcome

[This test](#) called on the Cypriot Presidency to: Uphold a **holistic zero-pollution-aligned ambition within acts to be adopted pursuant to the Clean Industrial Deal**; Ensure that the **Industrial Accelerator Act provides the right incentives for the uptake of low emissions steel and cement**; Make **CBAM a driver for clean industrial processes** and promote an evidence-based review; Ensure that the **ambition of the revised Industrial Emissions Directive (IED 2.0) and the Regulation establishing the Industrial Emissions Portal (IEP-R) will not be compromised**; Ensure systematic **internalisation of negative externalities**; Secure user-friendly and transparent pollution benchmarking tools through ambitious **implementation of the Regulation establishing the Industrial Emissions Portal**; **Secure political direction for a comprehensive UNECE Kyiv Protocol** (on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers); Secure mandatory **environmental and socially responsible procurement criteria**; Guarantee the **right to clean air** by cutting emissions and reducing exposure.

Key developments

- After the European Commission adopted the text of the Industrial Accelerator Act on March 4th, the Cypriot Presidency prioritised the analysis of the act and guided a policy debate during the Competitiveness Council on May 28th.
- The Cypriot Presidency held various exchanges on the simplification omnibus on environmental legislation (incl. on IED) within the Antici Group on Simplification. A revised compromise text was presented on 26 May 2026. The European Parliament is advancing on its position in parallel, with the ENVI draft report being scheduled to be discussed in the ENVI committee on 2 July 2026.

Good

- The Presidency promptly started the analysis on the Industrial Accelerator Act, mentioning decarbonisation as one of the levers to restore competitiveness and guiding a discussion on how low-carbon criteria for industrial products would support EU industry.
- The Cyprus Presidency has also been proactive on CBAM, pushing Member States to agree on their stance on the CBAM extension proposal before the end of their Presidency.
- Whilst the revised compromise text on the environmental simplification largely maintains significant weakening introduced by the European Commission, it aims to restore in part the chemicals inventory and substitution provision but diminished its scope to substances of very high concern only.

Poor

- The Presidency allowed the May Competitiveness Council to shift from a forward-looking discussion on how to make EU industry more sustainable and resilient through decarbonisation to a backward debate which focused on a potential freezing of the ETS benchmarks.
- While the Presidency has been proactive on CBAM legislation, they have **done little to improve the environmental integrity of the Commission's proposals**. This is particularly the case for the damaging Article 27a, which creates uncertainty by opening the door to the exemption of some goods from CBAM's scope. The Presidency's proposed changes to Article 27a aim to "better define the conditions under which this article can be triggered", but they unfortunately do not sufficiently reduce uncertainty caused by the article, which should be deleted.
- Furthermore, in its second draft compromise on the revision of the CBAM, the Presidency still leaves the door open for international credits to be used as part of a carbon price paid in a third country. This raise concerns around equivalence with the carbon price faced by industry in the EU.
- The environmental simplification omnibus (VIII) proposals of the European Commission are significantly damaging key provisions of the Industrial Emissions Directive relating to the environmental management systems. Unfortunately, the Presidency draft maintains the dangerous deletion of the requirement on operators to elaborate an installation-level transformation plan proposed by the European Commission. Further, the Presidency draft proposes to delete the mandatory publication of the content of environmental management systems. Overall, the result is a significant weakening of the IED 2.0. However, while the Presidency and the Council did not limit the damages and went one step further, the European Commission's proposal was the starting point of this weakening.

Overall, the Cypriot Presidency made efforts on the policy files, but results on outcomes have been disappointing.

The verdict is therefore **mixed on effort and poor on outcome**.



4 Build on the Strategic Dialogue for Agriculture to advance towards sustainable and just food and farming systems

The verdict:  on effort  on outcome

[The test](#) called on the Cypriot Presidency to: Support a move towards a **genuinely performance-based Common Agricultural Policy**; Bring the topic of **emissions reductions in the agriculture and land use sector centre stage**; Champion an **evidence-based and inclusive dialogue on the future of the EU's livestock sector and broader protein system**; Promote **high ambition on animal welfare** through EU legislative reforms; **Increase the dialogue** between the **Agriculture Council and Environment Ministers and stakeholders**; Set 2026 **fishing opportunities below the Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) limits in line with the best available scientific advice** to operationalise **the Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management approach** under the Common Fisheries Policy.

Key developments

- In the wake of the US-Israel attack on Iran, high oil and gas prices caused a rise in fertiliser prices, which led the Commission to publish a Fertiliser Action Plan on 19th May 2026.
- The Cyprus Presidency continued the work on developing a Council Position on the CAP. They chaired political discussions on the targeting of payments, CAP National Recommendations and generational renewal.
- The Vision for agriculture and food was discussed to assess progress and take stock of whether further actions needed to be taken in the context of strengthening resilience, competitiveness and food security across the EU agrifood sector.

Good

- The Cyprus Presidency put the fairness of CAP payment distribution high on the agenda, notably through the discussion of degressivity and capping at the February 2026 AGRIFISH meeting. This discussion is key to ensuring CAP income support goes to those who need it most, while others may rely on targeted support, notably through agri-environmental incentive schemes.

Poor

- The Cyprus Presidency **did not foster better dialogue between the Agriculture Council and Environment Ministers and stakeholders**. Environmental NGOs were excluded from the informal Agriculture Council and were not invited for a briefing ahead of Agriculture Council meetings, breaking with the good practice established by the Danish Presidency, while some agricultural representatives continued to be given preferential access.

- The Presidency failed to focus Council discussions on fertilisers and the Fertiliser Action Plan on concrete, structural issues that make EU farming highly vulnerable to shocks to the fertiliser market (inefficient, wasteful use, over-reliance, etc.). Instead, the conversation was framed entirely around short-term supply and price considerations.
- The Cypriot Presidency did not put much focus on the environmental and climate resilience of EU agriculture in the context of the CAP. Most problematic is the lack of discussion around the re-introduction of ring-fencing for agri-environmental incentive measures in the CAP. Furthermore, harmful subsidies were not addressed.
- No notable efforts by the Presidency to champion climate action in policy discussions around emission reductions in the agri-food sector, nor to improve the social and environmental integrity of the upcoming CRCF carbon farming certification methodologies.
- The Presidency was absent from the ongoing structured dialogue on the upcoming EU Livestock Strategy, nor did it make any notable efforts to foster better dialogue on animal farming and protein diversification.
- **Animal farming and animal welfare:** The Presidency made no visible effort to advance the process on the proposal for the Regulation on the protection of animals during transport or foster a constructive exchange on animal welfare ahead of the expected revision of EU animal welfare legislation. In the Presidency work programme, simplification proposals on the EU animal welfare legislation were meant to be pursued, but this was not followed up on.

Overall, the Cypriot Presidency has delivered a disappointing performance in terms of agenda-setting and inclusivity and achieved little progress on the most important legislative file on their plate – the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. While their efforts to place the socio-economic fairness of CAP payments front and centre are welcomed, the short-termism that characterised discussions on fertilisers and the lack of focus on environmental sustainability across policy and legislative files fall far short of expectations.

The verdict is therefore **poor on efforts and poor on outcomes.**



5. Respond to the climate crisis by supporting only the most efficient pathways to decarbonisation, creating a fast track towards a people – and nature – positive renewable energy future.

The verdict:  on effort  on outcome

[This test](#) called on the Presidency to: **Protect ETS2** from further political attacks in the Council; Promote active discussion and the sharing of **best practices on ETS2 revenue use, beyond the Social Climate Fund; Promote global climate ambition; Promote electrification and lower bills for consumers;** Finalise the **Energy taxation Directive;**

Key developments

- The Presidency has framed its priorities around electricity networks, system integration, and interconnectors as essential elements for energy security and affordability, working towards a proposal that can land a compromise in the Council.
- The war in the Gulf has taken a central role in the energy and climate debate within the Council and has become a strategic driver for decisions.
- The energy crisis unleashed by the Hormuz Strait crisis has encouraged the voices against ETS2, and this has led to an overall negative change to the ETS2 framework, which takes place in a context where the measure is still to be transposed by many Member States.

Good

- The Presidency has promoted electrification, grid modernisation and interconnection as central tools for reducing energy costs and strengthening European resilience.
- The Presidency has in its Programme framed 'autonomy' as encompassing energy, climate transition, and resilience, rightly linking climate and environment with wider EU stability and preparedness challenges.

Poor

- The Presidency has not actively defended the **ETS2** from political attacks – on the contrary, Cyprus has contributed to uncertainty by expressing openness to delays, weakening confidence in **ETS2** as an essential piece of EU climate policy and encouraging more EU country pushback, eventually landing a compromise on Market Stability Reserve that will cost the EU dearly in terms of climate ambition, though it's good to remark that also negative amendments from the European Parliament have been rejected.
- While the Council reached a General Approach on the **Grids Package**, the current position risks weakening environmental safeguards in permitting for energy infrastructure and reiterates fossil fuel infrastructure investments for island-states' gas connections.

- Little to no advancement has been made on the National Energy and Climate Plans, and no major discussion on the topic – despite the energy crisis – has taken place.
- The Presidency has moved forward a proposal to speed up gas prospection offshore the Cypriot coast and in Romanian and Polish waters to react to the international crisis. Not only would these investments threaten the EU climate goal, but they also have no temporal link whatsoever to the short- and medium-term measures needed to respond to the war in the Persian Gulf.
- During the Cypriot Presidency, the wording around energy has changed in favour of nuclear energy and CCS: in the discussions around post 2030 framework, "clean energy" has substituted renewable energy, though new nuclear capacity has no realistic role to play in that decade.
- No progress has been made on the **ETD**, so much so that the European Commission has been forced to promote initiatives and measures to lower electricity costs within the existing framework.

The Cypriot presidency will be remembered as the presidency of the war in the Persian Gulf and its related energy crisis. Many of the energy files, including the **AccelerateEU strategy**, discussed during the Cypriot presidency are obviously influenced by the new geo-strategic threat. In this sense, more was expected from Cyprus to help make this crisis an occasion to speed up the achievement of the objectives of the Fit For 55 package. A critical decision taken during the Cypriot presidency concerned the changes to the ETS2 system, which was substantially watered down. Overall, the Cypriot Presidency has successfully elevated electrification and has achieved progress on the Grids Package. However, this progress is at the risk of lower environmental standards. Further, the Presidency unfortunately has not sufficiently defended ETS2.

The verdict is therefore **neutral on efforts but poor on outcomes**.

6. Deliver a nature-positive agenda for land, freshwater and oceans and fast-track climate adaptation and resilience

The verdict:  on effort  on outcome

[This test](#) called upon the Presidency [a\) on Biodiversity and nature restoration](#): Maintain the **integrity of the EU's nature laws**; Support the impactful **roll-out of the Nature Restoration Regulation**; Promote the need for **stepping up implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030**; Insist that Member State reporting under the **Nature Directives remains based on science**; follow the recommendations from more than 200 NGOs and **support EU Member States in maintaining the highest protection status of the wolf**; [B\) On water](#): Support **ambitious rollout of the EU's Water Resilience Strategy**; Engage in **final adoption of the updated priority water pollutants**; **Pushback** against the Commission's concerning **decision to revise the Water Framework Directive in 2026**; insist that the **Nitrates Directive is fit for purpose**; Demonstrate EU's global leadership on water protection and resilience at the upcoming **UN Water Conference in 2026**. [C\) On soil](#): Support the Member States in their efforts to **transpose the first EU Soil Monitoring Law**. [D\) On Oceans](#): Champion the **full implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy**; Support the **implementation of the Ocean Pact** by driving the negotiations for an ambitious Ocean Act; Support the parallel revision of **the Marine Strategy Framework Directive** and the **Maritime Spatial Planning Directive** to align both Directives; Convene a cross-sectoral high-level **Ocean Ministers** meeting to foster integrated marine governance. [E\) On ecosystems-based adaptation](#): ensure that the upcoming **integrated framework for climate resilience prioritises nature-based solutions** to adapt to climate change. [F\) On Forests](#): Work to **prevent any further legislative proposals that could weaken the EUDR**.

Key developments

- The first half of 2026 marked a key moment for the implementation of the flagship **Nature Restoration Regulation**, as Member States have been preparing their draft National Restoration Plans, due on 1 September 2026;
- The Presidency organised a **policy debate on the role of nature for the competitiveness of the EU's economy** at the Environment Council on 25 June as well as a **successful meeting of the EU Nature Directors** in April, including a session on the implementation of the Nature Restoration Regulation. The Nature Directors meeting allowed full participation of stakeholders and NGOs;
- On the eve of the Cypriot Presidency, the Commission proposed an Environment Omnibus to "simplify" environmental legislation, including a **proposal on speeding up environmental assessments** as well as a proposal to accelerate permit granting procedures for grid infrastructure and other industrial projects. The Cyprus Presidency organised discussions on these files, but with varying degrees of progress. The work in the European Parliament on these files continued in parallel;
- In December 2025, the European Commission announced (in the RESource EU Action Plan) the intention to **'review and revise' the WFD in Q2 2026 to 'improve access to critical raw materials** in the EU'. No justification or evidence for this revision, that put at risk the core principles of the EU's main water law, has been presented by the Commission. In addition, even when expressly asked to provide evidence of the WFD harming competitiveness of the critical raw materials, neither the mining sector nor other business stakeholders have been able to present evidence of the 'bottlenecks and permitting issues' they claim stem from the WFD;

- The Commission **published a guidance document on the WFD and environmental permitting**, including for the mining sector in May 2026. The guidance clearly shows the large margin for flexibility the WFD offers, confirming there is no need to revise the Directive to introduce further exemptions. On the contrary, Member States should be more restrictive in their use of exemptions to protect and restore Europe's aquatic ecosystems;
- The European Parliament and the Council adopted the trilogue agreement on updated water pollution rules for the EU and the **new legislation entered into force in May 2026**;
- In February, the Commission **weakened one of the essential elements of the Nitrates Directive** - it has increased the limit to how much manure can be spread on fields in the areas already suffering from nitrate pollution, following a flawed process that disregarded the Commission's own Better Regulation guidelines. The Commission went even further by announcing in May, in the Fertiliser Action Plan, that it **intends to further loosen manure application rules for digestates**, despite continued widespread nitrogen pollution of EU waters. The Commission **has not published either the conclusions of the evaluation of the Nitrates Directive**, initiated in 2023 or the implementation report for the 2020-2023 period – both of which are now overdue;
- The European Commission has continued to roll out the **EU's Water Resilience Strategy**, including by conducting Structured Water Dialogues with Member States with the aim of closing implementation gaps. The Presidency organised a debate on the Water Resilience Strategy at the Environment Council meeting on 25 June;
- The Presidency continued to **support the innovative Common Implementation Strategy of the WFD** through organising both the Water Directors meeting in June as well as working group meetings on floods, water reuse and groundwater (these meetings allowed full participation of stakeholders and NGOs);
- The Presidency **led the preparation for the international fora** (e.g. IPBES 12, CMS COP 15, CBD COP17) and regularly briefed the Environment Council on latest developments.;

Good

- The Presidency organised a timely debate on nature and competitiveness at the Environment Council meeting in June **highlighted the risks of biodiversity loss for a transition to a nature-based economy**. The Ministers also discussed the **need for the EU's climate adaptation plan and stressed the importance of** ecosystem-based adaptation.
- The Presidency stressed the need for the EU to become more **water resilient** at the Environment Council meeting in June. The Presidency acknowledged the position of 4 Member States **opposing the revision of the WFD** and several others asking for legal certainty in the EU's water policies.
- The Presidency ensured Council's adoption of the political agreement reached previously to **update the EU's water pollution standards**. The debates at the Nature Directors' and Water Directors' meetings helped advance the progress towards full implementation of the **NRR and the WFD**.
- The Presidency represented the EU at several international fora, with several **decisions adopted at the COP 15 under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals representing a significant advance in ocean conservation** in recent years.

Poor

- The Council's position on the update of **priority water pollutants** fails to tackle the urgent and serious water pollution challenges and oversteps the limited character of the revision by proposing to weaken key principles of the **Water Framework Directive (WFD)**. The Presidency didn't provide any proof that such amendments are needed or that Member States have not been able to grant permits for sustainable projects due to the WFD. Therefore, the negotiations run counter to the conclusions of the WFD fitness check evaluation, which deemed the WFD fit for purpose.
- The Presidency made no effort to push the Commission to deliver on the promised zero pollution commitments such as publishing the Integrated **Nutrient Management Action Plan (INMAP)** nor intervened to stop the unfounded decision to review and revise the WFD, undermining the progress towards reaching the WFD objectives by 2027 as well as the EU's ability to become water resilient by 2050.
- Under the Presidency, meetings on the proposed **Regulation on speeding up environmental assessments** started quickly. While negotiations are ongoing and a compromise under Member States is only expected in the second half of the year, first indications of this compromise seem to accept proposed measures that would lower environmental standards and weaken rules for environmental assessments and permitting.
- The Presidency advanced discussions on the energy transition in fisheries and aquaculture but largely framed the issue through a technological and fuel-transition lens, **without sufficiently linking it to the broader just transition needed in the sector**, including a shift towards lower-impact and less fuel-intensive fishing practices.
- Under the Cypriot Presidency, the Council adopted a General Approach on the **Grids Package** (see section 5 of this assessment) that weakens high-integrity environmental rules for the permitting of renewable energy projects.

Overall, the Cypriot Presidency made some efforts to advance a progressive nature, water and oceans agenda during the six months at the helm of the EU Council by, for example, organising several timely high-level debates at both Ministerial and Directors level on the role of nature for the EU's competitiveness or the importance of ambitious implementation of the Nature Restoration Regulation (earning the mixed on effort ranking). However, the Cyprus Presidency did not oppose the deregulation agenda and continued to oversee the weakening of the existing environmental standards in relation to permitting of damaging projects, as well as supported the unfounded Commission's decisions to revise/weaken the WFD.

The verdict is therefore **mixed on effort and poor on outcome**.

7. Maintaining and delivering on zero-pollution objectives on air quality and noise

The verdict:  on effort  on outcome

[This test](#) called on the Cypriot Presidency to **object to any simplification** of the recently agreed **Ambient Air Quality Directive and National Emission reduction Commitments Directive**. Guarantee the right to clean air; ensure the **Clean Industrial Deal** embeds meaningful air pollution reduction strategies and measures; promote the necessary steps to define the EU strategy in line with the recently published **Evaluation of the National Emission Reduction Commitments Directive**. secure an ambitious positioning of the EU within the **ongoing negotiations of the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution's Gothenburg Protocol**; contribute to the process of revision of **EcoDesign** standards and deliver on existing air quality objectives also through the energy policies and legislation commit to meaningfully **addressing air pollution from agriculture**; make the case for the swift **revision of the Environmental Noise Directive**.

Key developments

- The **Zero Pollution Stakeholders Platform** subscription was re-opened, marking an important step for the future of this key initiative, confirming the need for it to continue to pursue its objectives.
- The drafting process for defining the Uniform Conditions for Operating rules for Livestock was finalised under the Cypriot Presidency, with Member States now having to agree and vote on a final text in July 2026.
- In December 2025, the European Commission's European Affordable Housing Plan was published, setting the scene for the definition of a dedicated instrument

Good

- Cyprus seems to be on track when it comes to the transposition into national law of the new Ambient Air Quality Directive, leading by example, securing this becomes national law at the latest by 11 December.

Poor

- After the new **Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD)** became EU legislation in November 2024, air quality related matters were somehow archived. No dedicated initiatives were adopted, nor specific steps were taken, during the Cypriot Presidency. This is unfortunate as air pollution does not pause. Air pollution is the first environmental health risk in Europe, and this requires regular and continuous efforts to secure the right direction of travel and much-needed results.
- Unfortunately, it seems that Cyprus will make use of the flexibility tool described in Article 18 of the AAQD, to postpone the deadline for achieving compliance with the new AAQD air quality standards.
- Unfortunately, no ambitious position was declared during the negotiation process for a revised **Gothenburg Protocol**, regarding the need to expand the scope of the instrument and include reduction objectives for methane, black carbon and mercury emissions. And little

ambition was also shown regarding the European Union's willingness to properly tackle ammonia emissions from agriculture, already mentioning the need to secure a less complex/specific in nature Annex IX of the Gothenburg Protocol. The ongoing process for reviewing the **National Emission reduction Commitments Directive** was not on the

Presidency's radar, with no public debate or dedicated initiatives being organised during the semester.

- No dedicated initiatives were taken regarding the topic of environmental noise, or the need to revise the **Environmental Noise Directive**.

Despite the challenging phase that the European Union is going through, air pollution and the related health and environmental burden are not to be dismissed. No visibility was given, and no dedicated initiatives were organised on the topic of air quality at EU level. Cyprus moved forward at national level with its responsibility to swiftly transpose the new AAQD.

For these reasons the assessment **is mixed on effort and poor on outcome**.



8. Advancing a toxic-free environment and transforming the transition of the chemical sector through a future-proof, sustainable policy framework

The verdict:  on effort  on outcome

[The eighth Ten Test](#) urged the Presidency to: Support a **Chemicals industry package**; Adopt a general approach to the **REACH revision** to initiate interinstitutional negotiations; Support a **clarification on PFAS that acknowledges the strong, science-based and democratic REACH restriction process**; Ensure that the final agreement on the **Omnibus on chemicals** legislation reduces burdens on authorities while **increasing the protection of people and the environment**; Ensure that the Council's general approach **strengthens the ECHA Regulation** by clearly prioritising the protection of **human health and the environment**; Promote EU leadership in strengthening the **Minamata Convention on Mercury**; Facilitate cooperation among Member States for the swift and **effective implementation of the revised EU Mercury Regulation**; Promote the revision of regulatory tools such as the **Cosmetic Products Regulation, the Market Surveillance Regulation, the New Legislative Framework**, to hold online platforms accountable for selling illegal and dangerous chemicals; Ensure a swift agreement on the customs reform in trilogues with the Parliament and the European Commission to **address the surge in non-compliant, dangerous products entering the EU Single Market**.

Key developments

- On 27 April, during a debate with Members of the European Parliament, Environment Commissioner Jessika Roswall announced that the European Commission will not table a comprehensive **revision of REACH**. Instead, it will pursue a simplification approach based on targeted technical amendments through secondary legislation and strengthened enforcement of existing rules.
- As part of the **Chemicals Industry Package**, the Commission convened the inaugural General Assembly of the **Critical Chemicals Alliance** on 13 January, marking the start of its work to strengthen the resilience and competitiveness of Europe's chemicals value chain.
- The European Commission has postponed its planned **clarification on PFAS** policy, likely awaiting ECHA's scientific recommendations, expected by the end of 2026.
- On 17 June, the Council Presidency and the European Parliament reached a provisional agreement on the **Chemicals Omnibus** package, covering amendments to the CLP, Cosmetics and Fertilising Products Regulations. The agreement introduces targeted simplification measures while retaining some provisions on consumer and environmental protection, including requirements related to hazardous substances, nanomaterials, certain REACH obligations and online labelling for cosmetics.
- The European Parliament adopted its report on the **ECHA Regulation** on 29 April. The Council had previously adopted its negotiating mandate on 10 December 2025, paving the way for interinstitutional negotiations.

- On 26 March, the Council and the European Parliament reached a provisional agreement on a **new Customs Code**, almost 3 years after the proposal was released by the Commission. It includes new provisions to ensure a responsible actor is based in the EU for goods sold through e-commerce to the EU and a handling fee on small items sold through online sales, tackling illegal goods containing harmful chemicals.

Good

- The Cypriot Presidency has **advanced negotiations** on the Chemicals Omnibus and the ECHA regulation and steered trilogue discussions with the European Parliament with the objective of reaching an interinstitutional agreement before the end of its term.
- The Chemicals Omnibus deal **preserves several important health and environmental safeguards** that were at risk in the Commission's initial proposal, and under pressure from industry and some Member States. In particular, the agreement maintains shorter phase-out timelines for cosmetics containing CMR (carcinogenic, mutagen and reprotoxic substances), **removes the Commission's proposed exemption for CMR substances based on oral or inhalation exposure** and reintroduce the prior notification requirement for nanomaterials in cosmetics. It also partly strengthens online labelling requirements for cosmetic products and acknowledges the importance of the growth of online sales of cosmetics. It maintains the reintroduction of REACH registration obligations for particularly harmful substances in fertilising products. The Presidency scheduled a discussion on the **future of REACH** at the Environment Council on 25 June following the Commission's confirmation that it would not pursue a comprehensive revision of the legislation. This provided an opportunity for Member States to exchange views on the way forward.
- The deal on the **Customs Code** positively reinforces the EU's toolbox, complementing the efforts to ensure that products containing dangerous chemicals, such as mercury-added skin-lightening products, are not imported into the EU.

Poor

- The Presidency has strongly supported the **Commission's simplification and competitiveness agenda**, which risks weakening key chemicals legislation and reducing regulatory ambition.
- For example, the Presidency **prioritised industry perspectives** in its discussions on the future of the chemicals sector. The invitation of CEFIC's Director General to address industry ministers at the Competitiveness Council in May, without equivalent representation from public health experts, independent scientists, environmental organisations or affected communities, reinforced concerns about an unbalanced stakeholder process. This approach risks giving disproportionate weight to industry calls for deregulation and "simplification" while sidelining evidence on the health, environmental and economic costs of chemical pollution.
- The **Chemicals Omnibus** deal was strongly driven by objectives to reduce administrative burdens for industry, with simplification measures affecting several areas of chemicals regulation, including CLP, cosmetics and fertilising products. This raise concerns that certain provisions on transparency, hazard communication and public health protection were undermined, including simplified labelling

requirements under CLP, reduced information obligations for advertising and online/distance sales, and extended transition periods for the phase-out of CMR substances in cosmetics compared to the current regulatory framework. While the final deal retains core safeguards, these simplification elements reflect a broader

shift towards regulatory burden reduction, with potential implications for the level of information available to consumers and downstream users.

- Reference to strengthening online platforms' responsibilities was not retained.

The Cypriot Presidency ensured steady progress on key chemicals dossiers, including the Chemicals Omnibus and the ECHA Regulation, and successfully helped advance trilogue negotiations with the European Parliament towards timely agreements before the end of its term. On substance, several important regulatory safeguards were maintained or modestly reinforced in areas such as cosmetics, fertilisers and customs controls on hazardous chemicals imports, thereby preventing a further weakening of the EU chemicals acquis. However, the Presidency's approach to chemicals policy has been largely driven by a competitiveness and simplification agenda, which has shaped both its negotiation strategy and stakeholder engagement. This was reflected in a marked emphasis on reducing regulatory burdens and efforts to prioritise industry perspectives in high-level discussions, alongside a strong focus on reducing regulatory burdens, raise concerns about an unbalanced process and limited attention to public health and environmental protection. This has contributed to a limited political ambition in advancing stronger chemicals protection beyond maintaining the status quo.

Overall, the verdict of the Presidency is **moderately positive on efforts** as key safeguards were largely maintained, but it is **poor on outcomes** as no significant strengthening of EU chemicals protection was achieved.



9. Address resource use and seize circular economy opportunities for the economy and society

The verdict: on effort on outcome

[The ninth Test](#) called on the Cypriot Presidency to support ambitious action to **address overconsumption**; Take a **nature restoration-first approach to biomass**; Make every possible effort **to re-establish a majority in the Council for the Green Claims Directive**; Engage with the actions proposed in the **European Affordable Housing Plan**; Uphold democratic and evidence-based procedures in dealing with the proposal for an **Omnibus on the environment and waste**; Ensure that the EU continues to champion an ambitious **Global Plastics Treaty at INC-5.3**; Follow the Commission's work on the newly announced **ResourceEU plan**; Ensure that **ResourceEU does not become a shortcut for cheap inputs** at the expense of people's rights, water protection and long-term resilience.

Key developments

- The Presidency was relatively quiet on circular economy aspects.
- [Council conclusions](#) were adopted on the bioeconomy strategy on the 17th of March.
- A first set of discussions on the environment omnibus was held in the Antici Group on Simplification.
- Debates on **ResourceEU** around Strategic Project and permitting acceleration were held without strong focus on environmental safeguards.

Good

- The Presidency adopted Council conclusions on the **Bioeconomy strategy** which acknowledged the ecosystem services provided by the natural environment and the importance of circularity/precautionary principle but stopped short of demanding or setting adequate safeguards.
- In the context of the Environment Omnibus, it was acknowledged that the authorised representative scheme for the extended producer responsibility (**EPR**) is best dealt with in the upcoming **Circular Economy Act**.

Poor

- There were no developments to keep the momentum from the December 2025 [conclusions](#) on "Europe's Environment 2030 – Building a more climate resilient and circular Europe" and push the Commission towards **prevention** or setting binding **EU targets reducing resource use**, or strategies for sustainable resource management.
- Regarding the **Critical Raw Materials Act** implementation, transparency and accountability concerns surrounding Strategic Projects and raw materials governance remain insufficiently addressed. Civil society organisations affected communities and local authorities continue to face significant barriers in accessing information and meaningfully participating in decision-making processes related to mining and processing projects.
- The Presidency could have shown stronger political leadership in ensuring that **ResourceEU** remains fully aligned with environmental law, democratic oversight and

- human rights obligations. Recent debates around Strategic Projects, permitting acceleration and the Water Framework Directive highlighted continued risks of weakening environmental safeguards in favour of industrial competitiveness and strategic autonomy objectives.
- While efforts were made to keep EPR discussions in the Circular Economy Act, **environment omnibus** discussions continued apace on the SCIP database and worsening other circular economy data reporting.
- Regarding the **plastics treaty**, no meaningful progress was made as the discussions were postponed again for a later date.
- Following the previous presidency's decision to abandon the discussions, no attempts were made to rebuild a majority to conclude the trilogues for the **Green Claims Directive**.

In part because of lack of opportunity, as many key moments are yet to come, the efforts on Circular Economy were limited and the outcomes if not directly harmful (yet), not positive due to the strong push for speed on the simplification/deregulation narrative.

Our verdict is that both **the efforts and outcomes were mixed**.



10. Protect the rule of law and our health, foster legal and social justice and strengthen civil society engagement and democracy

The verdict:  on effort  on outcome

[The tenth Test](#) called on the Cypriot Presidency to: Protect **democracy and the rule of law** by promoting and safeguarding fundamental rights, including the universal right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment; Support any **strengthening of Europol and Eurojust** that will aid in combatting cross-border environmental crime; Support the Commission's strategy on **intergenerational fairness and consider an interinstitutional declaration** recognising the rights of future generations; Supervise the European Commission's revision of the **communication on better regulation** with a view to safeguarding and strengthening the inter-institutional balance; Lead the Council in discussions on any revision of the **Environmental Liability Directive**; Lead by example on **implementation and enforcement of EU environmental law**; Adhere to and **promote the international Rule of Law generally**; **Counter the Commission proposal on Harmonised requirements on transparency** of interest representation of third countries; Engage with the Commission on the implementation of the **EU Democracy Shield** and the **Civil Society Strategy**, and be vocal about the need for them to not only defend the status quo of European democracy and be vocal about the need **to protect operating support for NGOs (e.g. LIFE) and to protect CSOs from smear campaigns** in order to safeguard democratic processes and protect the European Project as a whole.

Key developments

- On 28th of April the Commission published its Communication on Better Regulation, which sets out five main areas of action regarding EU decision-making.
- The 30th Working Group of the Parties of the Aarhus Convention took place right at the end of the Cypriot Presidency on 23-26 of June. During this meeting, Parties to the Convention, which include the EU and its Member States, discussed the urgent and existential need to provide more funding to the Aarhus Convention Secretariat, and discussed the how to gather stakeholder and Parties' experiences with the Aarhus Convention Compliance Committee.
- The Cypriot Presidency has had little opportunity to take decisive action to influence the legal framework or legislative processes in this area. While it has not directly contributed to a worsening situation, the Presidency has not been vocal on the need to defend **civic space and environmental defenders** in these times when the rollback of environmental democracy rights is being pushed for in some Member States and even in EU politics.

Good

- The Presidency has been welcoming and open to NGOs expressing their positions at the **Council's Working Group on International Environmental Issues (WPIEI)** and it exceptionally **invited NGOs to exchange views at the WPIEI twice during its term**. The first time was at the beginning of the Presidency to exchange views following the 8th Aarhus

Convention Meeting of the Parties which took place in November 2025. The second time was to prepare the EU and its Member States on the various positions to be taken at the upcoming **Aarhus Convention 30th Working Group** of the Parties in June. They have helped facilitate this exchange and also seem to appreciate the

importance of collaborating with the upcoming Irish Presidency. Regarding the problematic **Commission proposal on Harmonised requirements on transparency** of interest representation of third countries, the Presidency has not prioritised this file.

Poor

- There has been little public reaction from the Presidency on the increasing problems which NGOs face in being part of environmental decision-making, and they have rather taken a passive approach to these fundamentally important issues. Moreover, their leniency towards the Commission's proposal to change laws on environmental assessments and permitting shows complacency towards efforts

to curb environmental rights as opposed to ensuring that they are safeguarded. Their lack of leadership in this area has led to other stronger negative forces determine the positions of the EU and its Member States at the **Aarhus Convention's 30th Working Group** of the Parties. Therefore, the Presidency has not been a staunch defender of environmental rights at a time when they are increasingly being threatened and even their existence threatened.

Overall, the Cypriot Presidency has conducted itself with professionalism and has valued maintaining an open dialogue with NGOs by inviting the EEB twice to the Working Party on International Environmental Issues to discuss work under the Aarhus Convention. However, given the seriousness of the times, the Presidency missed its chance to leave its mark, could have led more strongly on defending civic space, prioritised work on safeguarding environmental rights, and could have expressed itself more politically on the defence of fundamental rights.

This is why the verdict is **mixed on effort and poor on outcome.**

Abbreviations

8EAP	8th Environmental Action Programme
AAQD	Ambient Air Quality Directive
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CRMA	Critical Raw Materials Act
CSS	Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability
EAP	Environmental Action Programme
EC	European Commission
ECF	European Competitiveness Fund
EEB	European Environmental Bureau
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EGD	European Green Deal
EMD	Electricity Market Design
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
ETD	Energy Taxation Directive
EUDR	Regulation on Deforestation-free Products
FML	Forest Monitoring Law
IED	Industrial Emissions Directive
IEP-R	Industrial Emissions Portal
INMAP	Integrated Nutrient Management Action Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NGTs	New Genomic Techniques
NRPPs	National and Regional Partnership Plans
NRR	Nature Restoration Regulation
OSOA	One Substance, One Assessment
PFAS	Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances
PPWR	Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation
REACH	Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals
SML	Soil Monitoring Law
VDEoL	Regulation on Circularity Requirements for Vehicle Design and on Management of End-of-Life Vehicles
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UWWTD	Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WFD	Waste Framework Directive

The EEB and its members welcome continued engagement and cooperation with the Presidencies of the Council of the European Union.

We develop a paper before each Presidency. The [Memorandum addressed to the Irish Presidency can be read here](#)

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