



Environment Council

Antwerp, January 2025

From: Paulina Hennig-Kloska, Minister of Climate and Environment, Poland

To: Environment Council

Subject: Proposed Agenda for Environment Council Meeting in January 2025

The Environment Council Chair proposes the following agenda for the discussion of the Regulation on Preventing Plastic Pellet Losses to Reduce Microplastic Pollution. The agenda contains the topics to be discussed by the environment ministers within the Council. These topics are divided into two sections—compliance and European Commission authority—to mirror the agenda of the two European Parliament subcommittees (ENVI I & II). The timeline and points are subject to change based on the flow of debate.

Friday Meeting #1

The Council will begin with a “round table” discussion where each Minister has one to two minutes to state their general position on the Proposal.

The Council will begin debate on Articles 1, 2, and 3, with particular attention to the following points:

- the distinction between maritime vs. non-maritime transport
- the set quantity of 3 tonnes and the value of lowering or raising the threshold
- the timeframe proposed for competent authorities to report enforced regulations in Article 3(6).

Friday Meeting #2

The Council will finish discussion on Article 1, 2 & 3. It will then vote on each proposed amendment individually.

The Council will begin on discussion of Article 7 if time permits.

Friday Meeting #3

The Council will begin debate on Article 7 with particular attention:

- evaluating the 10% financial support from the European Union budget, and if it will result in partiality of certifiers to align with the European Commission;
- proposing alternative funding mechanisms that can be considered to ensure complete impartiality of certifiers;
- developing standardized benchmarks for “requisite technical competence” to ensure consistency and avoid subjective interpretation in the accreditation process;
- establishing a clearer framework for assessing compliance and granting renewal of financial support under Article 7(g) to ensure transparency and consistency in the evaluation process; and
- discussing the potential inefficiency of prohibiting certifiers from subcontracting under Article 7(j).

Friday Meeting #4

The Council will finish discussion on Article 7. It will then vote on each proposed amendment individually.

The Council will begin debate on Articles that reference the authority of the European Commission in enforcing the legislation, with particular attention to:

- defining clear criteria and limits for damage recovery efforts under Article 10(1)(d) to ensure restoration requirements are feasible and proportionate to the harm caused;
- establishing a standardized process and appeal mechanism for the suspension of operations under Article 10(2) to balance safety concerns with economic impacts;
- expanding criteria for NGOs filing complaints under Article 14 to ensure only relevant and substantiated cases are addressed, with the aim of avoiding burdens on competent authorities;
- evaluating the maximum fines under Article 15(2) to prevent overly punitive measures, particularly for SMEs, and ensure penalties do not stifle innovation or competitiveness;

- reevaluating the comprehensive list of preventive, containment, and clean-up equipment required, determining whether all these measures are practical for all facilities, or should a tiered system be implemented based on installation size and risk levels (Annex I);
- debating the expectation to reuse spilled pellets as raw materials, asking whether operators should be required to recycle all spillage or if it is unrealistic to expect full recovery, particularly in cases of contamination or high-volume spills (Annex I);
- evaluating the inclusion of subcontractors, suppliers, and off-sites storage in risk assessments, asking whether it is reasonable to hold economic operators accountable for control over third-party activities (Annex I);
- examining the thresholds to differentiate between minor incidents and those requiring full-scale reporting to authorities (Annex III); and
- assessing the cost of compliance relative to the environmental impact, particularly for smaller carriers (Annex III).

Saturday Meeting #1

The Council will continue discussion on the previous provision mentioned above.

Saturday Meeting #2

The Council will debate and vote on the final resolution in accordance with the Union's procedures.

If delegates have questions regarding the agenda, please contact me via the email address below.

Bryan (Tail) Pham, bpham@colgate.edu