

## **Council adopts the UWWTD recast - Cosmetics Europe highly concerned**

### **Statement**

**Brussels, 5 November – Today, at the Economic and Financial Affairs Council meeting, the Member States adopted the final text of the recast of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (UWWTD). Cosmetics Europe remains highly concerned about the fairness and effectiveness of the adopted Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme. Some of the industry's concerns were also echoed by 16 Member States during the Council meeting.**

The recast of the UWWTD aims to tackle water pollution and guarantee cleaner water to European citizens. The new rules agreed will introduce an EPR scheme for only two sectors, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics, that will be required to financially contribute to the upgrade of wastewater facilities to quaternary treatments.

Cosmetics Europe strongly supports the overall objective of the directive to effectively tackle water pollution in Europe as well as the EPR principle proposed. However, Cosmetics Europe is highly concerned that as the application of the EPR scheme is skewed and limited to only two sectors, the directive will not achieve its objective. A study from the European Commission's Joint Research Centre provided data on the fact that the cosmetics account for only around 1% of the total toxic load. By singling two sectors, the directive misses the opportunity to provide an incentive to all economic sectors to improve their environmental footprint and effectively tackle water pollution.

The key concerns raised by Cosmetics Europe on the fairness and effectiveness of the EPR scheme were also echoed by 16 Member States in statements they presented today at the Council meeting. Cosmetics Europe particularly aligns with their concerns on the effectiveness of a sector-based EPR and impact on accessibility and affordability of pharmaceutical and cosmetic products. Cosmetics Europe supports the call for the European Commission to conduct an early evaluation of the EPR scheme to ensure it is implemented fairly, according to a true Polluters Pays Principle (PPP), as requested by some Member States. In addition, Cosmetics Europe supports the concerns from a Member State on the potential significant financial and administrative burden that the EPR scheme requirements may cause to small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

As we move towards to the implementation phase, Cosmetics Europe believes it is important to address these concerns and will continue to engage with all the relevant stakeholders at European and Member State level to advocate for a fair and effective EPR.

#### **Read more:**

Member States statements, [here](#).

#### **Previous Cosmetics Europe statements:**

[Cosmetics Europe reacts to the provisional agreement on the UWWTD recast](#)

[Cosmetics Europe disappointed with the Council position on UWWTD recast](#)

[Cosmetics Europe concerned about European Parliament's position on UWWTD revision](#)