

A decade of EU policy progress for phosphorus

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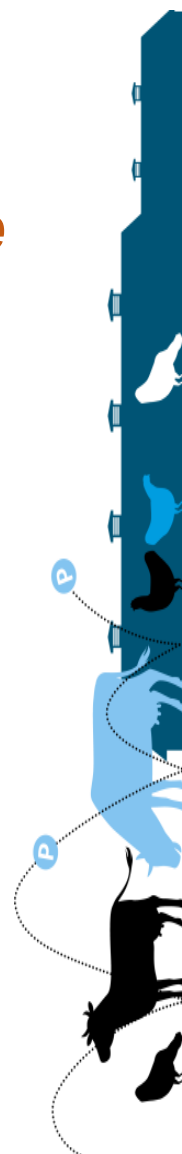
**8th Sustainable Phosphorus Summit
session 6 - 1st October 2025**



- 1991: EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive & EU Nitrates Directive
- 2013: 1st European Sustainable Phosphorus Conference (ESPC1):
declaration for the launch of a European Phosphorus Platform
- European Commission Consultative Communication on sustainable phosphorus use
- 2024: revised EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (2024/3019):
'Phosphorus reuse & recycling rates' to be defined within 3 years

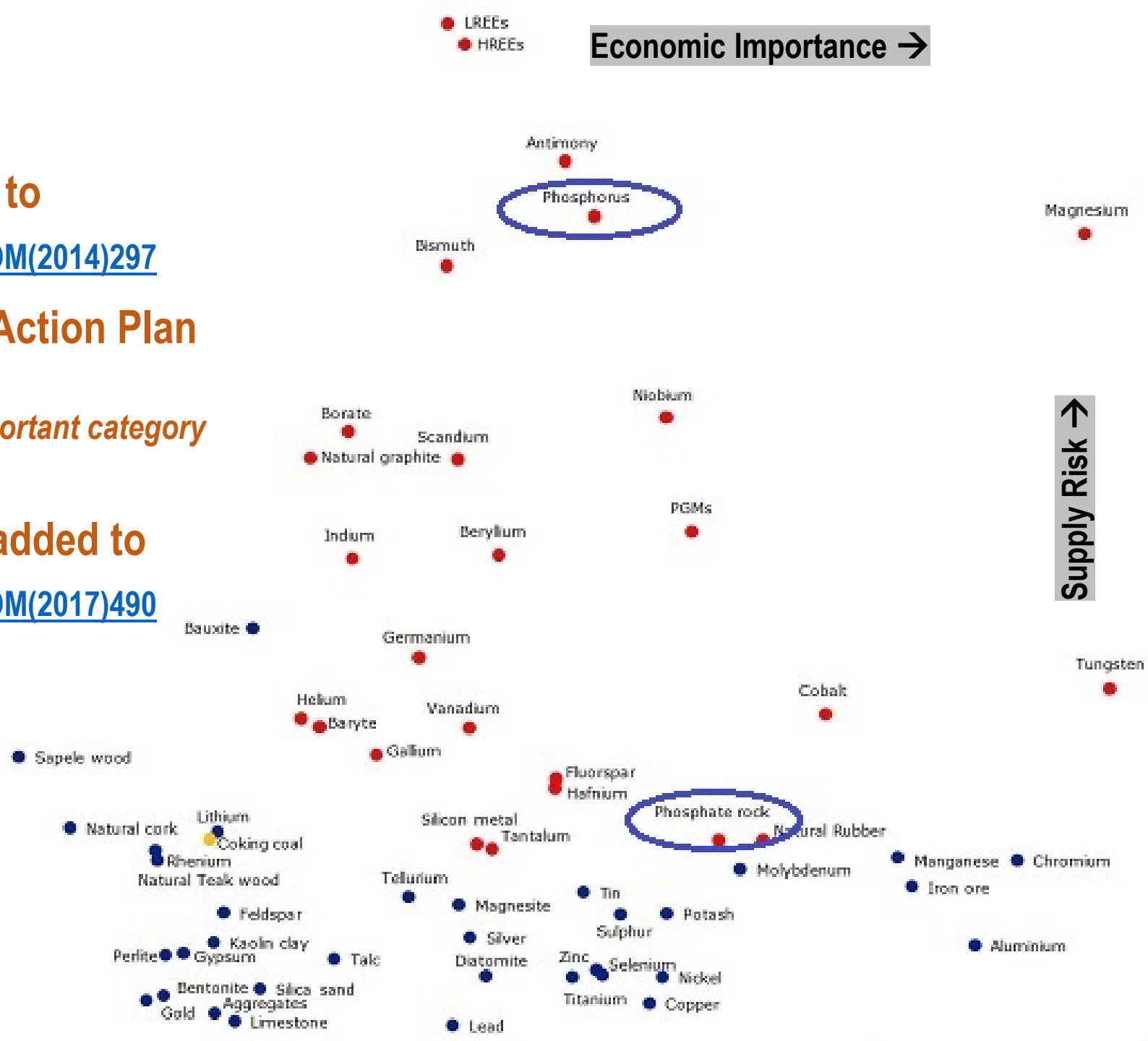


*Janez Potočnik,
European Commissioner for the Environment, at ESPC1*

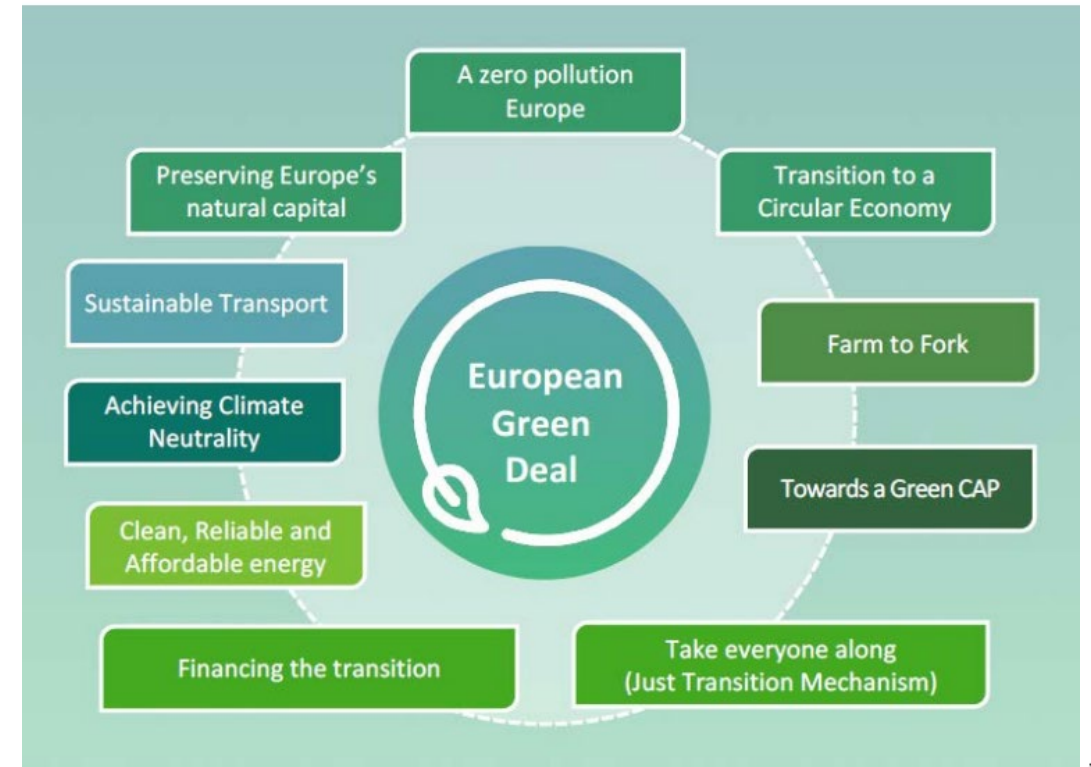


Critical Raw Materials

- 2014: “Phosphate Rock” added to EU Critical Raw Materials list [COM\(2014\)297](#)
- 2015: 1st EU Circular Economy Action Plan [COM\(2015\)614](#)
“Recycled nutrients are a distinct and important category of secondary raw materials ...”
- 2017: “Phosphorus” (meaning P₄) added to EU Critical Raw Materials list [COM\(2017\)490](#)



- **2019/2020: EU Green Deal** [COM\(2019\)640](#)
Farm-to-Fork Strategy [COM\(2020\)381](#)
& Biodiversity Strategy [COM\(2020\)380](#)
 fix targets to reduce nutrient losses by -50%
 whilst ensuring no deterioration in soil fertility
- **9/2024: the Green Deal is confirmed**
 in [mandates](#) to new EU Commissioners
- **2020: United Nations**
 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
 -> reduce nutrient losses by -50%



November 2024: (recast) EU Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD) 2024/3019

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202403019

- ✓ Art. 20: “combined reuse and recycling rates” for phosphorus from sewage and sludge to be fixed within 3 years
- ✓ feasibility study on N reuse and recovery will be engaged (by 2033).

ESPP outline for proposals

**on targets for Phosphorus “Reuse & Recycling” from urban waste water
as required by art. 20 of the revised Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive**

- **Keep different technology and sludge management route options open**, subject to ensuring safety, quality and crop availability of nutrients when used in agriculture (see below). Not limit to only the options of incineration or agricultural sewage use (as in the 2023 JRC report for the
- **Where phosphorus is reused by sewage sludge application in agriculture** (not as a certified fertiliser product), this should be:
 - after stabilisation and sanitisation (often by anaerobic digestion. enabling methane production).

Input to ESPP's proposals:

www.phosphorusplatform.eu/regulatory



European States with P-recycling obligations

Switzerland

- 2016 VVEA (waste act), Art 15, makes **phosphorus recycling becomes obligatory by 2026** from sewage sludge incineration ash* and meat and bone meal ash
* Switzerland banned land use of sewage biosolids in 2006

Germany

- 2017 AbfKlärV (sewage sludge regulation): **phosphorus recycling from sewage becomes obligatory**
 - by 2029 / 2032 years for all WWTPs > 100 000 P.E. / 50 000 P.E.
 - if sewage sludge P > 2% of dry matter

Austria

- 13th May 2024 AVV [Abfallverbrennungsverordnung](#) **phosphorus recycling becomes obligatory by 2033** for WWTP >20 000 P.E.
 - from sewage (>60% recovery of wwtp inflow) or sludge ash (>80% recovery)

Under discussion

- Denmark, Sweden, Baltic ...



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra



Bundesministerium
für Umwelt, Naturschutz
und nukleare Sicherheit

National | Verordnungen | AbfKlärV

Verordnung zur Neuordnung der Klärschlammverwertung
Klärschlammverordnung



Bundesministerium
Klimaschutz, Umwelt,
Energie, Mobilität,
Innovation und Technologie

European Sustainable Phosphorus Platform: A decade of action

Legal entity: not-for-profit association

→ *transparency:*

- statutes are public

- EU Transparency Register

→ *clear decision making*

→ *representation of members*

100% membership funded

→ *credibility, independence*

→ *long term engagement*

→ *not short-term R&D funding cycles*

→ *not fickle government subsidies*

60+ paying members

→ *balance between interests and industries*



Phosphorus Platform

2710 abonnés

10 h.

A #sales #quota for #recycled #phosphorus r
challenges in implementation. fairness. and ef

Functioning Nutrient Platforms

ESPP (European Sustainable Phosphorus Platform) 2014

www.phosphorusplatform.eu

Netherlands 2010 <http://www.nutrientplatform.org/>

Germany 2015 www.deutsche-phosphor-plattform.de

Italy: 2023 <https://www.piattaformaitalianafosforo.it/en/who-we-are.html>

North America Sustainable Phosphorus Alliance (SPA) 2017

(launched as NAPPS in 2015) <https://phosphorusalliance.org/>

Japan PCPR 2011 (Phosphorus Recycling Promotion Council)



**Sustainable
Phosphorus
Alliance**



ESPP is made possible by our 60+ members



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