
EU: Commission launches public consultation on implementation of “polluter pays” principle

The European Commission has launched a public consultation to gather views from citizens and stakeholders on the implementation of the “polluter pays” principle in the European Union, the European Commission announced in a statement. The information gathered will help to “evaluate whether EU and national policies are sufficient to ensure that polluters bear the cost of measures to prevent, control, and remedy pollution”. This public consultation is a response to the recommendation in the report by the European Court of Auditors, which concluded that “the ‘polluter pays’ principle is applied to varying degrees in EU environmental policies, with incomplete coverage and implementation”. In 2024, the results will be used by the European Commission to prepare an evaluation and recommendation on how to better implement the “polluter pays” principle in environmental policies. “The ‘polluter pays’ principle is fair and simple: it requires polluters to bear the cost of the pollution they cause. Correct application of the principle provides incentives to avoid damaging the environment and makes polluters responsible for cleaning up. When it is not properly applied, the bill for environmental damage caused by polluters too often ends up being paid for by citizens and weighs heavily on public funds. We are inviting everyone to contribute”, said Commissioner for Environment Virginijus Sinkevičius.

Irene Giuntella