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## Comment

Well, it may be only a very short time since the previous Issue, but there have been some major developments in EU environmental policy over the past few weeks! Perhaps the most significant item is the **European Pollutant Emission Register**, which was published at the end of February (see main article on this page).

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## Eco-design Directive progress

There has been considerable discussion about this draft Directive on the eco-design of energy-using products, since it was launched last Autumn. The draft includes proposals to encourage manufacturers to integrate environmental life-cycle concepts into product design, but provides only general ideas about the requirements for energy-using products.

Member States have requested some clarification to the products to be included. Consequently, the Council of Ministers has asked the European Commission to establish a 3-year forward plan for a priority list of product groups.

Even before this plan is developed, however, the Commission may be required to implement controls for any products covered by the European Climate Change Programme, which covers items with a high potential for cost-effective reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Such products include:

- ✂ air conditioning systems
- ✂ consumer electronics
- ✂ domestic appliances
- ✂ electric motor systems
- ✂ heating equipment
- ✂ lighting
- ✂ office equipment

## European Pollutant Emission Register

Pollution data from over 9000 industrial facilities across the EU has been made available in the new internet-based register, which is available at [www.eper.cec.eu.int](http://www.eper.cec.eu.int). The data reported can be downloaded as a Microsoft Excel file.

EPER was established under the IPPC Directive and is run jointly by the European Commission and the European Environment Agency. The information covers emissions of 50 pollutants during 2001 from 9,159 industrial sites in the 15 EU Member States, plus Norway. Hungary has also provided details and will be included shortly.

Key industries included in EPER		
	Sites	Pollutants
Cement / lime	661	32
Coke ovens	14	25
Combustion	867	35
Hazardous / municipal waste	599	38
Inorganic chemicals	315	45
Landfills	631	29
Metals	777	43
Organic chemicals	653	48
Pharmaceuticals	106	32
Pigs and poultry	2776	9
Pulp and paper	378	31
Refineries	166	42
Slaughterhouses	638	30
Surface treatment	344	35
Tanning	24	10
Textiles	129	24

Emissions from the various industrial sectors provide interesting contrasts. Perhaps as anticipated, combustion processes are the largest contributors to particulate emissions, while the inorganic chemicals sector accounts for 41% of the EU's total release of mercury to water.

The metals industry does not seem to come out well. For example, the sector now accounts for 57% of the EU's total release of dioxins to air and 30% of the EU's total release of mercury to air. In fact, one steel plant in Spain emitted 30% of the EU's total release of dioxins to air, one aluminium works in France discharged over 70% of the EU's total release of chromium to water, while one aluminium smelter in Greece emitted 77% of the EU's total release of perfluorocarbons.

Importantly, the database allows comparison of emissions across the EU, which should help in achieving a more level "playing field" in terms of both individual company performance and also legislation enforcement. This emphasises the principle that divergence in regulatory standards must be minimised once the

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IPPC Directive is implemented fully. At the present time, however, it is recognised that there are some huge gaps in reporting. Many installations are believed to have been missed because they have not yet applied for IPPC permits. In contrast, the European Commission estimated that around 20,000 facilities would be covered by EPER, over twice the actual count to date!

EPER coverage by country		
	Sites	Pollutants
Belgie	282	41
Danmark	158	24
Deutschland	1839	44
España	1399	43
France	1280	47
Greece	82	28
Ireland	154	17
Italia	672	46
Luxembourg	12	12
Nederland	129	35
Norge	97	31
Österreich	132	34
Portugal	159	34
Suomi	188	32
Sverige	183	36
United Kingdom	2490	44
<b>EU total</b>	<b>9159</b>	<b>50</b>

France is the biggest emitter of chlorinated solvents, and in fact represents 99% of the EU's total release of trichloroethane. Portugal accounts for a massive proportion of the EU's total releases of copper (84%), lead (92%), nickel (88%), phosphorus (52%) and zinc (67%) to water. Deutschland and Italia were the biggest emitters of mercury to air. France and Italia are the main emitters of nitrous oxide. The UK is the largest emitter of HFC's.

The next report is due in 2006, to cover emissions in 2004 from all EU Member States, including the accession countries. The third report, covering emissions in 2007, is due by 2009, but it is likely that this may be replaced by a more comprehensive registry, entitled the **Pollutant Release and Transfer Registry (PRTR)**. The European Commission plans to introduce the PRTR under a Regulation which it aims to publish in 2004 and ratify in 2006, as the implementation of a UN Protocol agreed last year.

The PRTR will tighten up on the EPER by requiring annual reporting and increasing the number of substances to 86. Mining operations and ship building will be added to the list of activities. Releases to land will also be included.

## Election delays REACH

The European Parliament has confirmed that it will not proceed further with the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH) programme in this parliamentary session. This is in order to allow the Accession States, which join in May, an opportunity to influence this sensitive issue.

With the European Parliament elections set for June, the next parliamentary session will start in July. From this date, the new Parliament will have the option to either re-start the procedure from scratch, or take over the REACH concept from where it stands now. However, even if Parliament opts to continue the programme, it is unlikely that the first reading would be before the start of 2005.

This is a significant blow to the Environment Commissioner, Margot Wallström, whose controversial draft has been unpopular with the chemical industry and the victim of political in-fighting within the European Commission itself.

## New COMAH Directive published

The Major Accident Hazards (so-called "COMAH") Directive has been revised and Member States must implement the amendments by 2005 July. The revisions follow a series of recent incidents and the Directive now covers certain mining operations, petroleum products, pyrotechnic and explosive substances, plus storage or processing of dangerous substances. There are also several additions to the list of carcinogens and lower tonnage thresholds to bring more sites within the remit of the legislation.

## Relevant forthcoming meetings

### ♦ FSA Spring Meeting

Key Largo (Florida), 2004 April 21 - 23

Fluid Sealing Association  
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### ♦ ESA General Meeting

Edinburgh, 2004 May 11 - 13

European Sealing Association  
(contact details on front page)

### ♦ AchemAsia

Beijing, 2004 May 11 - 15

Dechema e.V.  
Tel: +49 69 75 64-0  
Fax: +49 69 75 64-201  
e-mail: [info@dechema.de](mailto:info@dechema.de)

### ♦ Centrifugal Pumps - state of the art

London, 2004 September 22

I.Mech.E.  
Tel: +44 20 7973 1260  
e-mail: [m\\_willis@imeche.org.uk](mailto:m_willis@imeche.org.uk)

### ♦ Isgatec 2004

Stuttgart, 2004 October 19 - 21

Isgatec GmbH  
Tel: +49 621 717 68 880  
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e-mail: [info@isgatec.com](mailto:info@isgatec.com)

### ♦ Valve World 2004

Maastricht, 2004 November 9 - 11

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