European Commission

ROADMAP

Roadmaps aim to inform citizens and stakeholders about the Commission's work in order to allow them to provide feedback and to participate effectively in future consultation activities. Citizens and stakeholders are in particular invited to provide views on the Commission's understanding of the problem and possible solutions and to make available any relevant information that they may have.

TITLE OF THE INITIATIVE	Ecodesign and energy labelling working plan 2020-2024
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	GROW/I3, ENER/B3
LIKELY TYPE OF INITIATIVE	Communication from the Commission
INDICATIVE PLANNING	*Second semester 2021*
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	*https://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/sustainability/product-policy-and-ecodesign* *https://ec.europa.eu/info/energy-climate-change-environment/standards-tools-and-labels/products-labelling-rules-and-requirements/energy-label-and-ecodesign_en*

This Roadmap is provided for information purposes only and its content might change. It does not prejudge the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content. All elements of the initiative described by the Roadmap, including its timing, are subject to change.

A. Context, Problem definition and Subsidiarity Check

Context

The EU's ecodesign and energy labelling policies[1] deliver key contributions to the 'European Green Deal'[2] objectives. They regulate the environmental performance of energy-related products on aspects related to energy consumption, water consumption, emission levels and material efficiency. They contribute to EU's energy efficiency target, by encouraging the efficient use of energy-related products through the provision of accurate, relevant and comparable information on the energy consumption of energy-related products, and through the removal of the least efficient products from the market. In addition, the two policy instruments facilitate the functioning of the internal market by setting common rules for products across the EU.

Currently around 30 product groups are regulated, based on approximately 50 regulations and a few voluntary agreements. They apply to billions of products placed on the market each year, and have tangible implications for manufacturers, suppliers, retailers, businesses and consumers on a daily basis.

The selection of what products to consider for new regulations and the planning for reviews of existing regulations is set out in working plans, such as those covering 2009-2011, 2012-2014 and 2016-2019[3].

The 'Sustainable Product Initiative' will propose to revise the Ecodesign Directive (and propose additional legislative measures as appropriate)[4] in order to make it applicable to the broadest possible range of products and make it deliver on circularity. In the meantime, the Circular Economy Action Plan stressed the need to increase the effectiveness of the current ecodesign framework for energy-related products, and of energy labelling, based on a new working plan.

Problem the initiative aims to tackle

Energy-related products can have a negative impact on the environment depending on how they are made, used and disposed. Ecodesign and energy labelling policies address this, but they need prioritisation on what product groups to regulate and what regulations to revise. This is because each product group requires a tailored regulation detailing what requirements it needs to meet, addressing the specific environmental impacts and characteristics of that product group. The working plan addresses the need for prioritisation and provides further certainty to manufacturers, suppliers and retailers.

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[1] Directive 2009/125/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-related products, and Regulation (EU) 2017/1369 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2017 setting a framework for energy labelling
[2] COM (2019) 640
[3] COM/2008/0660, SWD(2012) 434, and COM(2016) 773, respectively.
[4] https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12567-Sustainable-products-initiative

Basis for EU intervention (legal basis and subsidiarity check)
Through the Ecodesign Directive and the Energy Labelling Regulation, the European Parliament and the Council have given a legislative mandate to the Commission to regulate the environmental performance of products. To ensure the free circulation of goods, it is appropriate to set EU-level rules on the energy labelling and ecodesign of energy-related products. If the EU did not intervene, some Member States would set their own rules, which would be necessarily different, due to the complexity of the technical aspects, thereby disrupting the functioning of the internal market. The Ecodesign Directive (Article 16) and the Energy labelling Regulation (Article 15) require the Commission to update a working plan periodically. They allow a combined working plan addresses both policies together.

B. What does the initiative aim to achieve and how

The new working plan aims to address:

- The conclusion of all work streams initiated in the previous work plan, in particular legally required rescaling of existing energy labels but also other reviews and potential revisions of current ecodesign and labelling regulations in the next years;
- The currently unregulated product groups that are of interest to be studied in detail for potential regulation in the next years;
- The environmental and circular economy aspects and ways of addressing them that should receive increased attention. In addition to energy efficiency, several regulations address pollutant emissions, durability, reparability, recyclability etc. but there is likely scope for further addressing these and other aspects of material efficiency and ecological profile of products. The current Ecodesign Directive[5] provides scope for addressing further environmental aspects;
- Enforcement by market surveillance authorities and further development/implementation of the European Product Registry for Energy Labelling (EPREL).

Prioritisation will take into account proportionality, including consideration criteria of the Ecodesign Directive (Article 15) and Energy Labelling Regulation (Article 16(2)), such as significant quantities of products, significant environmental impacts and significant potential for improvement of such impacts. The detailed assessment of those criteria will be considered in any next steps towards regulation.

C. Better regulation

Consultation of citizens and stakeholders

Citizens and stakeholders are invited to provide their feedback on the roadmap of this initiative.

The Consultation Forum[6] established by Ecodesign Directive (Article 18) and the Energy labelling Regulation (Article 14) will be consulted for the working plan. The Forum mainly consists of a group of interest and Member States representatives.

Evidence base and data collection

A preparatory study was initiated to map the entire range of energy-related products not yet regulated. It also mapped crosscutting aspects that are yet little or not taken into account in the existing legislation, including environmental and circular economy aspects such as recycled content and product aspects becoming more prominent for the environmental performance of products, such as firmware and software. Through analysis these were narrowed down in several steps to the most promising ones in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Detailed information is available on: http://www.ecodesignworkingplan20-24.eu/

The external study team shortlisted for their final assessment the following products groups and cross-cutting aspects that :

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[5] Furthermore and in parallel to the implementation of the Ecodesign Directive, the European Commission level is preparing an initiative on 'Sustainable Products', which would revise the Ecodesign Directive to enlarge its scope and further address sustainability and circularity issues; implementing measures under the revised legislation could be expected only in the medium term.

[6] https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=3609

Product groups

- Professional laundry appliances
- Professional dishwashers
- Professional cooking appliances
- Low temperature emitters (radiators optimised for <45 °C)
- Swimming pool heaters
- Small network equipment for home and office use (for internet connection and local network)
- Enterprise network equipment (switchers, routers)
- Universal external power supplies (common chargers for household and office equipment)
- Uninterruptible power supplies (standard systems used in enterprises and data centres)
- Industrial smart sensors

Cross-cutting aspects relevant for a significant number of reviews and new product groups

- Lightweight design
- Recycled content
- Ecological profile
- Durability
- Firmware and software
- Scarce and critical raw materials

For these product groups and crosscutting aspects, the study assesses the potential energy and greenhouse gas savings, resource efficiency impacts, other environmental and circular economy impacts, current regulatory coverage and feasibility for regulation and enforcement, cost-effectiveness of improved design options, and industrial competitiveness. The study will also recommend for each product group and crosscutting aspect whether the next step would be a detailed preparatory study or other kind of follow-up.

As there will likely be many of the above product groups and crosscutting aspects of interest for further study, the working plan will address prioritisation among them and versus the implementation and reviews of the existing regulations.