Pollution Prevention

Prevention and control of pollution

- Air & Water Pollution Control
- Chemical Safety & Substitution

Air & Water Pollution Control

Source Metadata

Field	Value
source	eu_taxonomy
source_version	EU Taxonomy 2026 revision
source_id	EU-POL-001
eu_objective	pollution
sector	Air and Water Pollution Control
mitigation	N
adaptation	N
last_checked	2026-05-26

EU Taxonomy Definition

Air and water pollution control under the EU Taxonomy covers activities that substantially contribute to pollution prevention and control by reducing emissions of pollutants to air, water, and soil. This includes installation and operation of air pollution abatement equipment (flue gas treatment, particulate filters, catalytic converters), industrial wastewater treatment systems, stormwater management infrastructure, noise pollution mitigation, and environmental monitoring and remediation services. The 2026 revision updates emission thresholds to align with the revised Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) and introduces specific criteria for PFAS contamination prevention and remediation, reflecting growing regulatory focus on persistent pollutants.

Technical Screening Criteria Summary

Air pollution control must achieve emission levels at or below Best Available Techniques Associated Emission Levels (BAT-AELs) as defined in BREF documents under the IED. Key thresholds include NOx, SOx, particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Water pollution control must achieve effluent quality that meets or exceeds IED BAT-AELs and Water Framework Directive environmental quality standards. Stormwater management must demonstrate pollutant load reduction through nature-based solutions or treatment trains. Noise mitigation must demonstrate measurable reduction in noise levels to below WHO environmental noise guidelines. PFAS remediation must use destruction technologies (not merely containment) and achieve PFAS concentrations below defined environmental quality standards.

Do No Significant Harm (DNSH)

Pollution control activities must not harm mitigation (treatment technologies must be energy-efficient; no net increase in GHG emissions from pollution control), adaptation (pollution infrastructure must be climate-resilient), water (air pollution control must not transfer pollutants to water; cross-media effects must be minimized), circular economy (captured pollutants and treatment residues must be managed sustainably — recovered materials preferred over disposal), and biodiversity (pollution reduction must demonstrate positive outcomes for ecosystem health in affected areas).

LATAM Relevance

Air and water pollution are major public health concerns across LATAM — Bogotá, Lima, and Mexico City face persistent air quality challenges, while mining and industrial pollution impact water quality in many regions. European industrial companies operating in LATAM are increasingly expected to meet EU-level emission standards regardless of local regulatory requirements. EU trade agreements with LATAM (EU-Mercosur, EU-Andean) include environmental provisions that reference pollution control standards aligned with EU frameworks.

Colombia Green Finance Taxonomy Alignment

The TVC covers pollution prevention and control under its environmental objectives, with particular emphasis on air quality in urban areas and industrial water pollution. Alignment is partial — Colombia uses national emission standards (Resolution 2254 of 2017 for air, Resolution 0631 of 2015 for water discharge) that are generally less stringent than EU BAT-AELs. The TVC lacks specific PFAS-related criteria, and the IED's integrated permitting approach has no direct Colombian equivalent.

Cleantech Taxonomy Crosswalk

Maps to Cleantech Taxonomy sector XS (Cross-Sectoral) — nodes XS-AIR (air quality), XS-POL (pollution control). Cross-references with IN (Industry) for industrial emission abatement, WW (Water) for water quality management, and BU (Buildings) for indoor air quality and urban noise reduction.

Chemical Safety & Substitution

Source Metadata

Field	Value
source	eu_taxonomy
source_version	EU Taxonomy 2026 revision
source_id	EU-POL-002
eu_objective	pollution
sector	Chemical Safety and Substitution
mitigation	N
adaptation	N
last_checked	2026-05-26

EU Taxonomy Definition

Chemical safety and substitution under the EU Taxonomy covers activities that substantially contribute to pollution prevention by reducing the use and release of hazardous chemicals and promoting safer alternatives. This includes development and production of safer chemical alternatives to substances of very high concern (SVHCs), implementation of green chemistry processes that eliminate hazardous inputs, chemical risk assessment and management services, contaminated site remediation, and development of chemical tracking and transparency systems. The 2026 revision strengthens alignment with the REACH Regulation revision and the EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, introducing criteria for endocrine disruptor substitution and PFAS phase-out pathways.

Technical Screening Criteria Summary

Chemical substitution activities must replace SVHCs listed under REACH Annex XIV or substances restricted under Annex XVII with safer alternatives that demonstrate equivalent functionality and lower hazard profiles through comparative risk assessment. Green chemistry manufacturing must demonstrate reduction or elimination of at least one hazardous substance category (carcinogenic, mutagenic, reprotoxic, persistent bioaccumulative toxic, endocrine disrupting) while maintaining product performance. PFAS substitution must provide alternatives for at least one PFAS application with demonstrated equivalent performance. Chemical management services must implement systematic substitution planning following the OECD Substitution Toolbox methodology. Site remediation must achieve contaminant levels that restore environmental function and comply with soil and groundwater quality standards.

Do No Significant Harm (DNSH)

Chemical safety activities must not harm mitigation (substitute chemicals must not have higher lifecycle GHG emissions than the substances they replace), adaptation (chemical management must account for climate-related release risks), water (alternatives must not increase water pollution risk; wastewater from chemical production must meet discharge standards), circular economy (substitute materials must be recyclable and compatible with circular material flows), and biodiversity (no testing on endangered species; substitutes must not pose ecotoxicological risks exceeding those of replaced substances).

LATAM Relevance

Chemical safety is increasingly relevant for LATAM as the region's agricultural and manufacturing sectors face growing scrutiny from EU chemical regulations. The EU's PFAS restriction proposal and REACH revision create compliance requirements for LATAM chemical manufacturers and users exporting to Europe. Colombia's agricultural sector — heavily reliant on agrochemicals for export crops — faces particular exposure to EU maximum residue level (MRL) requirements and pesticide bans that drive taxonomy-aligned chemical substitution.

Colombia Green Finance Taxonomy Alignment

The TVC does not explicitly address chemical safety or substitution as a standalone category, representing a notable gap. Colombia's chemical management is governed by the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) commitments and national regulations (Decree 1076 of 2015), but these lack the EU's systematic substitution framework. The growing alignment between Colombian agricultural exports and EU chemical standards (particularly MRLs for pesticides) creates an indirect pathway for future TVC updates in this area.

Cleantech Taxonomy Crosswalk

Maps to Cleantech Taxonomy sector XS (Cross-Sectoral) — node XS-CHM (chemical safety), and IN (Industry) — node IN-CHM (chemicals manufacturing). Cross-references with AF (AFOLU) for agrochemical substitution, WW (Water) for chemical contamination of water resources, and IC (ICT) for chemical tracking and transparency digital systems.