Air & Water Pollution Control

Source Metadata

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sector	Air and Water Pollution Control
mitigation	N
adaptation	N
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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.

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