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Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(26.8.2025)

The Water Resilience Strategy (WRS)[1] acknowledges the potential health costs of inaction in relation to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and the high costs of remediation. It emphasises the need to apply the polluter pays principle[2] and commits to action on promoting best practices including as regards that principle. Arriving at accurate estimates of remediation and other costs related to PFAS pollution is an important step towards taking effective clean-up action. Some methodologies and estimates[3] are available, but further work is needed. A study supported by the Commission to identify treatment methods for removing PFAS and other pollutants from drinking water will include a cost-benefit analysis and is expected to be published by the end of 2025. The Commission maintains regular dialogue and exchange with Member State authorities and with associations representing utilities involved in the delivery of water services across the EU.

As regards the announced public-private initiative to achieve technological breakthroughs on the remediation of PFAS and other persistent pollutants, the establishment of the PFAS initiative will be based on a thorough strategic assessment, aimed among other things at identifying possible partners and their financial capacity. It will also involve stakeholder consultation, during which local governments will be encouraged to express their interest and capacity to participate.

[1] https://commission.europa.eu/topics/environment/water-resilience-strategy_en.
[2] https://environment.ec.europa.eu/economy-and-finance/ensuring-polluters-pay_en.
[3] E.g. https://foreverpollution.eu/lobbying/the-cost-methodology/, https://foreverpollution.eu/lobbying/the-bill/.