

EN
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Answer given by Ms Roswall
on behalf of the European Commission
(13.4.2026)

Projects not directly connected to the management of a Natura 2000 site, but likely to have a significant effect on it¹, must be subject to an appropriate assessment to evaluate its impact in view of the site's conservation objectives². Projects may only be authorised if no significant impact is detected. This concerns any project likely to have an impact, even if located outside a Natura 2000 site, as is the case for the planned incineration plant. According to publicly available documents³, the project will not have significant impacts on nearby Natura 2000 sites⁴.

Competent authorities must consider all the polluting substances, scientifically recognised as harmful, that an installation emits before granting a permit⁵ including per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) emissions, even if these were not included in the relevant best available techniques (BAT)⁶ conclusions for the activity concerned. The Commission is working to determine current and future techniques to avoid or reduce PFAS emissions that could be applied in installations covered by the Industrial Emissions Directive⁷. The Innovation Centre for Industrial Transformation and Emissions⁸ helps gathering knowledge on PFAS⁹.

The Commission agrees that disposal operations undermine the circular economy by hampering the supply of valuable secondary raw materials. Disposal shall only be a last resort option according to the waste hierarchy¹⁰. With the forthcoming Circular Economy Act¹¹, the Commission is assessing ways to maintain and improve incentives to move waste away from incineration. The Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive¹² also encourages the recovery of sludge in accordance with the waste hierarchy.

¹ Alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

² According to Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora; OJ L 206, 22.7.1992.

³ On the Regione Veneto portal: <https://sharing.regione.veneto.it/index.php/s/WRezFgeiEFHwLf4>.

⁴ Namely, sites 'Delta del Po (IT3270023)' and 'Delta del Po: tratto terminale e delta Veneto (IT3270017)'.

⁵ Case 626/22 of the Court of Justice of the EU, <https://infocuria.curia.europa.eu/tabs/document?source=document&docid=287503&doclang=EN>.

⁶ Best available techniques (BAT) means the most effective and advanced techniques, developed on a scale allowing implementation in the relevant industrial sector, under economically and technically viable conditions.

⁷ Directive (EU) 2024/1785 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 OJ L, 15.7.2024.

⁸ <https://innovation-centre-for-industrial-transformation.ec.europa.eu/>.

⁹ necessary before launching a revision of the relevant BAT conclusions.

¹⁰ Set out in Article 4 of Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives, OJ L 312, 22.11.2008, p. 3–30, as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/851 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May, OJ L 150, 14.6.2018, p. 109–140 and Directive (EU) 2025/1892 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 September 2025 amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, OJ L, 2025/1892, 26.9.2025.

¹¹ https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/circular-economy_en.

¹² Directive (EU) 2024/3019 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 November 2024 concerning urban wastewater treatment (recast), OJ L, 2024/3019, 12.12.2024, Article 20.