EU Launches 2025–2030 Plan to Boost Sustainable Products

The European Commission recently unveiled a comprehensive 2025–2030 Ecodesign Work Plan under the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) and the Energy Labelling Regulation, marking a major step in the transition of EU towards a circular economy and carbon neutrality. With the aim of making sustainable products the standard in the European market, this plan establishes broad sustainability and energy efficiency standards for important product sectors, such as steel, aluminium, clothing textiles, furniture, tires, and mattresses.

Strategic Vision and Regulatory Shift

The new Ecodesign regulation significantly broadens the scope of sustainability requirements beyond the traditional focus on energy efficiency. It introduces compulsory standards for:

Reusability, durability, and repairability of the product

Use of recycled materials and recyclability

Reduction of substances that hinders circularity

Transparency of Environmental Footprint

One of the key innovations is the introduction of the Digital Product Passport, which will provide detailed information on environmental impacts, repairability, and recyclability of the product, which will help empower consumers and businesses to make informed, sustainable choices.

Priority Product Sectors

Six product categories were given regulatory priority by the Commission because of their potential to promote circularity and their impact on the environment:

| Steel | Aluminium | Apparel textiles |
| Furniture | Mattresses | Tyres |

These product sectors will be subjected to harmonized EU-wide requirements aimed at curtailing administrative costs, removing barriers to trade, and increasing the competitiveness of sustainable products in the EU market.

Key Measures and Market Transformation

The Ecodesign strategy comprises:

> Consumer electronics and small appliances are given repairability scores to promote product longevity.

> Recyclability requirements for electrical and electronic equipment.

> Minimum standards for recycled content, spare part availability, and energy/resource efficiency.

> The European Product Registry for Energy Labelling (EPREL) and the Digital Product Passport have improved the disclosure of product information.

Industry and Stakeholder Engagement

The following factors influenced the regulatory approach and product selection:

Technical evaluations

Consultations with stakeholders, including EU member states and industry experts

Feedback from the Ecodesign Forum

Emphasis will be placed on supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and micro enterprises in order to help them transition to new requirements and promote innovation in sustainable product design.

Controversies and Criticism

Although the plan has widely been accepted. Some Environmental groups were critical of the plan's narrow scope, particularly for some product categories like footwear, paints, detergents, lubricants, and chemicals were removed from the draft working plan despite being emphasized in previous legislative agreements.

The Commission has been urged to set the highest standards possible to stop low-quality goods from flooding the EU market, especially through online platforms, as it has been warned that excluding these categories could weaken the Ecodesign framework's overall impact.

Implementation and Next Steps

With the help of impact analyses and ongoing stakeholder engagement, the requirements will be gradually introduced through delegated acts on a product-by-product basis. To ensure a seamless transition, current ecodesign guidelines for energy-related products will be updated through the end of 2026.

The Commission emphasizes that companies which provide high-performance, sustainable products will benefit from a more competitive and unified EU market as well as first-mover advantages.