

# Foreword

I welcome the publication of this handbook, which I hope will become an indispensable tool and work of reference for everyone interested in EU environmental policy. This includes not only those who are involved professionally but also citizens who are interested in learning what the EU has done to protect the environment and to improve the quality of life in Europe, and what can be achieved in future.

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Well structured, concise and forward-looking, the handbook describes the history and current status of EU environmental law, but also looks to the future by analysing the strengths and weaknesses of the actions taken so far.

EU environmental law has been decisive in improving the state of the environment in Europe. On average, 80% of what becomes national environmental legislation in EU Member States originates at EU level. I hope this handbook will be read in particular by those who are responsible for putting EU environmental law into practice. Understanding how laws have been developed and what they set out to achieve is important to improve implementation.

All stakeholders interested in the further development of our policies will find this handbook extremely useful. It will make them see where we come from and where we are today – and why we are pushing for a comprehensive and holistic approach to environmental policymaking.

The European Environmental Bureau is a key stakeholder in the process of formulating, monitoring and evaluating EU environmental policies. It defends the interests of more than 140 citizens' organisations across Europe in order to protect, preserve and improve our environment and protect our health and our resource base for future prosperity.

With this handbook, the EEB has shown once again, its value as an advocate of the environment in the EU.



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