

Reference:

E. Latter, *PFAS Plan - Building a safer future together*, 7th ESA REACH Workshop, ESA ESTEC, Noordwijk, the Netherlands, 2nd June 2026

Author affiliation:

Edward Latter, Chemicals Policy Team, DEFRA UK

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Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

PFAS Plan

Building a safer future together

Ed Latter

Defra, Chemicals Policy Team

2nd June 2026



Overview

- Background
- What are PFAS?
- Our Vision and approach
- PFAS Plan Structure
 - Understanding PFAS sources
 - Tackling PFAS pathways
 - Reducing ongoing exposure to PFAS
- Next Steps

Background

- The revised Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) 2025 announced a commitment to take action on PFAS through **a new PFAS plan, to be published in 2026.**
- The Plan sets out a vision and our approach for managing PFAS risks
- It covers a range of regulatory and non-regulatory interventions, measures and initiatives with specific actions and delivery milestones.

What are PFAS?

- PFAS are a group of thousands of chemicals. They are widely used due to beneficial properties.
- There is no universally agreed definition of 'PFAS', but these chemicals are grouped together as they share common features of organo-fluorine chemistry.
- The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) define PFAS as **“fluorinated substances that contain at least one fully fluorinated methyl or methylene carbon atom (without any hydrogen, chlorine, bromine or iodine atom attached to it). This means that, with a few noted exceptions, any chemical with at least a perfluorinated methyl group (-CF₃) or a perfluorinated methylene group (-CF₂-) is a PFAS.”**
- This is a pragmatic choice on which to base PFAS policy and we will use it to guide the actions in this plan. It ensures a common understanding of what is meant by 'PFAS' in this plan.
- While it is neither practical nor necessary to examine every individual substance, awareness of the full group and its diversity is important to inform policy interventions. Persistence is a common feature.
- It may need to be recognised that sub-groups of PFAS can also have different and beneficial properties, uses and associated risks.

Our long-term vision is to work in partnership, taking a **science-based and proportionate approach**, to **reduce and minimise the impacts of harmful PFAS** on public health and the environment, including through the **transition to safer alternatives**.



PFAS Plan- Approach

- Our approach is **science-based and evidence-led**. This ensures proportionate regulation is effectively prioritised and implemented to address risks in a balanced way.
- **Regulation will be needed** to protect people and the environment. Actions will be designed that work together and take account of the full life cycle of PFAS, covering its manufacture, use and the management of PFAS waste.
- The governments of the UK also **expect industry to be proactive** in improving our understanding of PFAS risks and supporting informed consumer choices.
- This plan represents a **UK approach**, with the devolved governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland working collaboratively with the UK government.
- The Plan will also provide a **platform for further engagement** with industry and other key stakeholders to manage the risks from PFAS and transition to alternatives.

PFAS Plan- Structure

- Set out under 3 pillars:
 - 1. Understanding PFAS Sources**
 - 2. Tackling PFAS Pathways**
 - 3. Reducing ongoing exposure to PFAS**
- The 3 sections work together to manage PFAS risks in a coordinated way. Understanding PFAS helps deliver effective and well prioritised interventions that, in the longer term, contribute together to reducing PFAS risks across the environment and society. This will, in turn, reduce our reliance on costly preventative measures at the point of exposure.
- Each section has outcomes and actions

Section 1 Outcomes

- The outcomes we hope to achieve on understanding PFAS sources and impacts are:
 - improved knowledge of the uses, extent and impact of PFAS across society and in our natural environment
 - more efficient and effective use of evidence for societal benefit, including by designing and delivering better coordinated research programmes across government, academia, industry and other stakeholders
 - improved evidence of PFAS across different environmental compartments (such as land, air and water) and improved knowledge of PFAS exposure pathways to support effective interventions, prioritised according to risk

Section 2 Outcomes

- The outcomes we hope to achieve on tackling PFAS pathways are:
 - environmental monitoring of PFAS demonstrating a significant reduction of emissions of PFAS to the environment from production, use and disposal
 - industry moving away from PFAS in manufacturing and consumer products, towards the growing international market for PFAS alternatives
 - the public having clear, accessible information on PFAS risks and product content, enabling informed choices regarding the products they buy and use and supporting demand for PFAS-free alternatives

Section 3 Outcomes

- The outcomes we hope to achieve by reducing ongoing exposure are:
 - public health and environmental risks from PFAS exposure are reduced, as shown by ongoing monitoring of PFAS exposure levels
 - regulations to reduce exposure to PFAS from different routes are in place and work together, to ensure a high level of protection for public health
 - improved join-up between the regulations and approaches that reduce wildlife exposure to PFAS and that contribute to nature recovery, ensuring sensitive ecosystems are better protected

Next Steps

- Focus on delivery of the actions. To monitor implementation of the plan, the Plan includes a list of actions in the with delivery outlook and responsible owners.
- Engagement with stakeholders which will help shape delivery.
- This plan is a stepping stone to meet our longer-term vision.
- As a commitment set out in the Environment Improvement Plan (EIP), review and reporting of this plan will become part of our statutory reporting cycle for the EIP.