PFAS Management & Policy in Europe: Results of the COMMON FORUM Survey 2025

Griet Van Gestel, Julie Kofoed & the COMMON FORUM PFAS Team

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Managing Emerging Contaminants for healthy soils: Are we ready?!

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Background and Objectives of the PFAS Survey

Background and objectives of the PFAS Survey

- In 2020, the CF PFAS team prepared a '**PFAS memorandum**', including an annex with technical background

  Stressing the urgency – besides prevention - of contaminated land management. There is a need for action on questions on:

  → managing PFAS contaminated sites and excavated materials and
  → how to deal with diffusely PFAS contaminated land.

- In 2025, an update was needed – a questionnaire was sent (in May 2025)

- The objectives are:

  → update of the 2020 CF position paper on PFAS
  → to give an overview of the availability of data in Europe
  → status of progress in the approach & policy regarding PFAS in soil & groundwater

Respondents

Who provided survey responses?

- 17 respondents from 15 countries

- Austria
- Belgium (Brussels, Wallonia, Flanders)
- Republic of Cyprus
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Luxembourg
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Portugal
- Spain (Catalonia)
- Sweden
- Switzerland

RESULTS

- Monitoring of PFAS in environmental media
- Target substances & non-quantitative analytical methods
- PFAS-suspected risk activities and inventories
- Case numbers and site investigations
- Anthropogenic background levels
- Thresholds, regulations, and risk assessment for PFAS
- Policy, research, and future needs

QUESTION 1

Does your country/region monitor environmental media regarding PFAS?

	case by case	targeted investigation, point source inputs	monitoring programs, diffuse inputs
Soil			
Groundwater			
Surface water			
House dust			
In air (with regard to emission, immission and deposition)			
Other: e.g. local grown vegetables, eggs...			

Q1: Case-by-case analysis of environmental media regarding PFAS – soil/gw/surface water

Soil

	Response percent	Response total
Yes	88.24%	15
No	11.77%	2

Export Graph

Statistics based on 17 respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Yes	88.24%	15
No	11.77%	2

Export Graph

Statistics based on 17 respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Yes	82.35%	14
No	17.65%	3

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Statistics based on 17 respondents;

Q1: Target investigations of environmental media regarding PFAS – soil/gw/surface water

Soil

	Response percent	Response total
regulated	58.82%	10
voluntary initiative	29.41%	5
none	11.77%	2

Export Graph

Statistics based on 17 respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
regulated	76.47%	13
voluntary initiative	5.88%	1
none	17.65%	3

Export Graph

Statistics based on 17 respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
regulated	58.82%	10
voluntary initiative	11.77%	2
none	29.41%	5

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Statistics based on 17 respondents;

Q1: Monitoring of environmental media regarding PFAS, diffuse inputs – soil/gw/surface water

Soil

	Response percent	Response total
regulated	29.41%	5
voluntary initiative	47.06%	8
none	23.53%	4

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
regulated	70.59%	12
voluntary initiative	23.53%	4
none	5.88%	1

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
regulated	76.47%	13
voluntary initiative	17.65%	3
none	5.88%	1

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Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Q1: Monitoring of environmental media regarding PFAS – soil/gw/surface water

- Many countries/regions have programmes for monitoring of groundwater and surface water.
- Most sampling in soil has been carried out on case-by-case basis, but several countries have carried out or are working on nationwide studies of the diffuse input in soil.

QUESTION 2

Which substances are considered for target analysis?*

*Note differences in number of respondents

Target analysis - PFOS

Soil (freq,sometimes, rarely, never)

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	76.47%	13
Sometimes	11.77%	2
Rarely	0%	0
Never	11.77%	2

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	88.24%	15
Sometimes	0%	0
Rarely	0%	0
Never	11.77%	2

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Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	87.5%	14
Sometimes	0%	0
Rarely	0%	0
Never	12.5%	2

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Statistics based on **16** respondents;

Target analysis - PFOA

Soil (freq,sometimes, rarely, never)

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	76.47%	13
Sometimes	11.77%	2
Rarely	0%	0
Never	11.77%	2

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	82.35%	14
Sometimes	5.88%	1
Rarely	0%	0
Never	11.77%	2

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Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	81.25%	13
Sometimes	6.25%	1
Rarely	0%	0
Never	12.5%	2

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Statistics based on **16** respondents;

Target analysis - PFNA

Soil (freq,sometimes, rarely, never)

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	76.47%	13
Sometimes	11.77%	2
Rarely	0%	0
Never	11.77%	2

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Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	82.35%	14
Sometimes	5.88%	1
Rarely	0%	0
Never	11.77%	2

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Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	81.25%	13
Sometimes	6.25%	1
Rarely	0%	0
Never	12.5%	2

Export Graph

Statistics based on **16** respondents;

Target analysis - PFBA

Soil (freq,sometimes, rarely, never)

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	76.47%	13
Sometimes	11.77%	2
Rarely	0%	0
Never	11.77%	2

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	82.35%	14
Sometimes	5.88%	1
Rarely	5.88%	1
Never	5.88%	1

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	81.25%	13
Sometimes	6.25%	1
Rarely	0%	0
Never	12.5%	2

Export Graph

Statistics based on **16** respondents;

Target analysis – 6:2 FTS

Soil (freq,sometimes, rarely, never)

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	60%	9
Sometimes	26.67%	4
Rarely	6.67%	1
Never	6.67%	1

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Statistics based on **15** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	53.33%	8
Sometimes	33.33%	5
Rarely	0%	0
Never	13.33%	2

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Statistics based on **15** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	40%	6
Sometimes	33.33%	5
Rarely	6.67%	1
Never	20%	3

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Statistics based on **15** respondents;

Target analysis - TFA

Soil (freq,sometimes, rarely, never)

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	0%	0
Sometimes	18.75%	3
Rarely	6.25%	1
Never	75%	12

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Statistics based on **16** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	26.67%	4
Sometimes	40%	6
Rarely	6.67%	1
Never	26.67%	4

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Statistics based on **15** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	12.5%	2
Sometimes	43.75%	7
Rarely	18.75%	3
Never	25%	4

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Statistics based on **16** respondents;

Target analysis – 6:2 FTAB

Soil (freq,sometimes, rarely, never)

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	10%	1
Sometimes	10%	1
Rarely	10%	1
Never	70%	7

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Statistics based on **10** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	0%	0
Sometimes	10%	1
Rarely	30%	3
Never	60%	6

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Statistics based on **10** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Frequently	0%	0
Sometimes	11.11%	1
Rarely	22.22%	2
Never	66.67%	6

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Statistics based on **9** respondents;

QUESTION 3

Which other PFAS substances are considered for target analysis in soil / groundwater / surface water?

Q3: Other PFAS substances considered for analysis – no media given

- Capstone A = 6:2 FTNO
- Capstone B = 6:2 FTAB
- PFTrDS
- EtFOSE
- MeFOSE
- FOSAA
- PF-3,7-DMOA
- HPFHp
- PFPS
- ADONA
- PFOcDA
- PFSA
- PMeS
- PFEtS
- PFPrS
- brPFOS
- PFTeDS
- N-EtFBSA
- 12:2FTS

QUESTION 4

Are non-quantitative methods or methods based on sum parameters applied in your country/region?

Which methods (AOF/EOF/TOF/NTA) for which media (soil, groundwater, surface water, leachate…)?

Q4: Non-quantitative methods - TOF

Soil

	Response percent	Response total
Checked	5.88%	1
UnChecked	94.12%	16

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Checked	5.88%	1
UnChecked	94.12%	16

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Checked	0%	0
UnChecked	100%	17

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Leachate

	Response percent	Response total
Checked	0%	0
UnChecked	100%	17

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Q4: Non-quantitative methods - NTA

Soil

	Response percent	Response total
Checked	17.65%	3
UnChecked	82.35%	14

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Groundwater

	Response percent	Response total
Checked	17.65%	3
UnChecked	82.35%	14

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Surface water

	Response percent	Response total
Checked	11.77%	2
UnChecked	88.24%	15

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Leachate

	Response percent	Response total
Checked	5.88%	1
UnChecked	94.12%	16

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Q4: Non-quantitative methods

- **Most of these methods are not used regularly.**
- **Used for wastewater in some countries.**
- **Might be applied on a case-by-case basis and/or for research purposes.**
- **Barriers for use:**
  - → Detection limits are too high
  - → No standards for analysis
  - → No reference values for assessment
  - → Most methods are not yet standardized

QUESTION 5

Is there a list of PFAS-suspected risk activities available in your country/region?

→ **2/3 of responding countries/regions have a list of PFAS-suspected risk activities**

QUESTION 6

Have there been or will there be national/regional programs to establish inventories and/or investigations?

- → **About half of the of responding countries/regions have implemented or ongoing inventories**
- → **Many others have planned inventories (or under discussion)**

QUESTION 9

Are there threshold/limit/indicative values for PFAS in soil / groundwater / soil materials (excavated soil) available in your region / country?

‘Threshold/limit values’ means that the values are legally binding, i.e. they are included in a legal text or in an equivalent document.
‘Indicative values’ means that the values are not legally binding.

Q9: Threshold/limit/indicative values for PFAS - soil

Threshold/limit values

	Response percent	Response total
Available	17.65%	3
Planned	11.77%	2
None	70.59%	12

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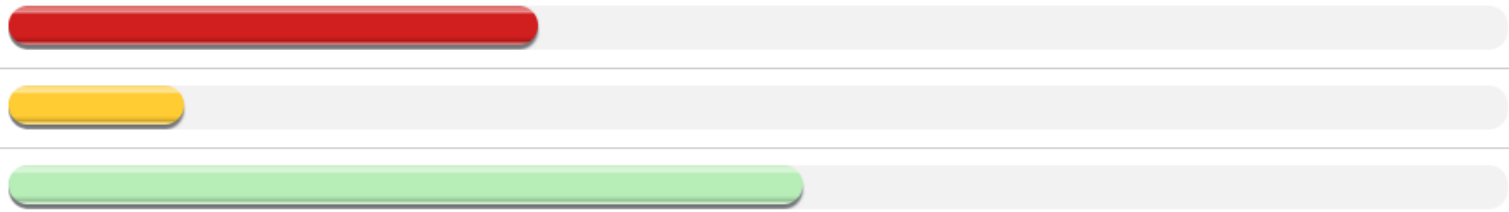
Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Indicative values

	Response percent	Response total
Available	35.29%	6
Planned	11.77%	2
None	52.94%	9



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Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Q9: Threshold/limit/indicative values for PFAS – groundwater

Threshold/limit values

	Response percent	Response total
Available	47.06%	8
Planned	17.65%	3
None	35.29%	6

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Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Indicative values

	Response percent	Response total
Available	41.18%	7
Planned	11.77%	2
None	47.06%	8

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Q9: Threshold/limit/indicative values for PFAS – soil materials

Threshold/limit values

	Response percent	Response total
Available	11.77%	2
Planned	5.88%	1
None	82.35%	14

Export Graph

Statistics based on **17** respondents;

Indicative values

	Response percent	Response total
Available	23.53%	4
Planned	5.88%	1
None	70.59%	12

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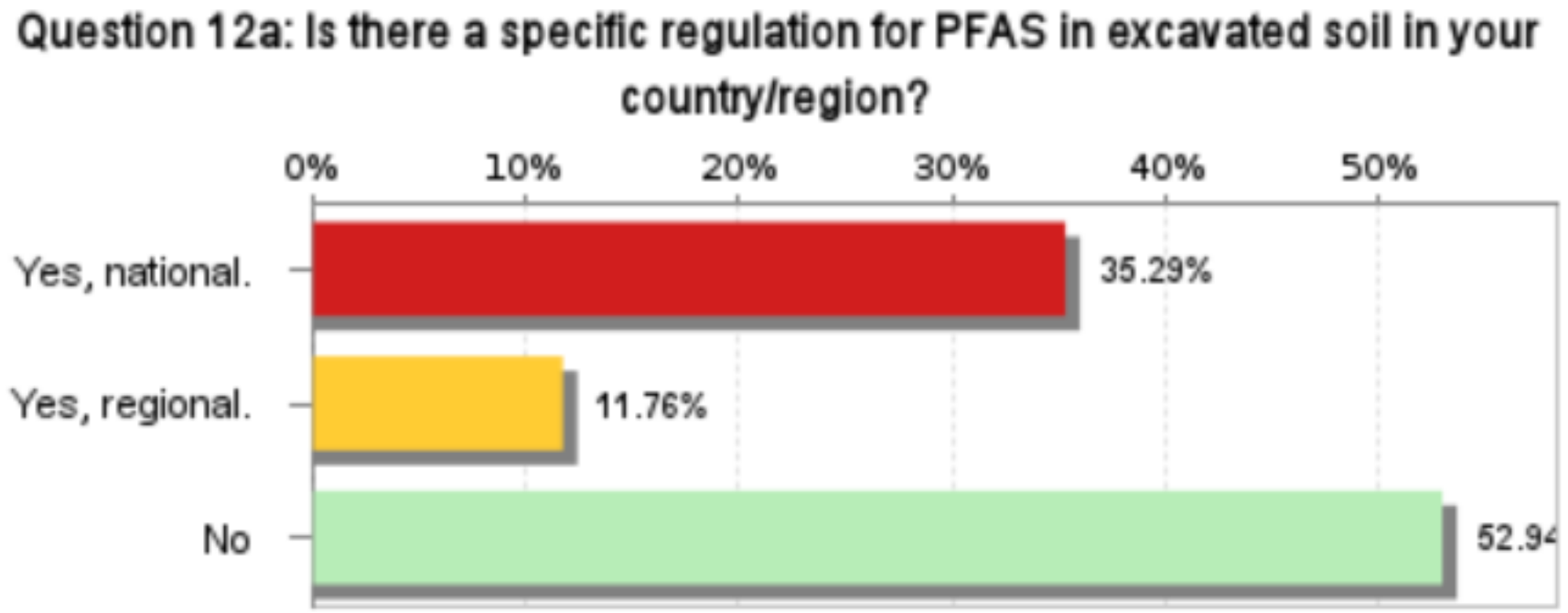
Statistics based on **17** respondents;

QUESTION 12

Is there a specific regulation for PFAS in excavated soil in your country/region?

Q12: Specific regulation for PFAS in excavated soil

Question 12a: Is there a specific regulation for PFAS in excavated soil in your country/region?



Statistics based on **17** respondents;**0** filtered;**0** skipped.

Q12: Specific regulation for PFAS in excavated soil

- Many countries have no guidelines at the moment, but several expect this to change (several proposals under consideration)
- In several countries it is regulated through existing waste management regulation
- Some countries are looking into leaching tests as a part of (future) regulation

QUESTION 13

Is there a specific regulation for PFAS in soil improves in your country/region?

→ **3 countries/regions out of 17 responded with ‘yes’ to this question**

Conclusions (1/2)

- **Management of PFAS in soil & groundwater** in Europe is **rapidly evolving** with increased efforts for monitoring and regulatory developments
  - Compared to the 2020 Survey: more countries, more inventories, more PFAS measured
  - → Monitoring programs for groundwater/surface water: national <> for soil: case by case
  - → Which PFAS? Well-known + info on other PFAS → TFA
  - → Most non-quantitative methods (AOF, EOF, TOF, NTA) are not used regularly
  - → 2/3 of responding countries/regions have a list of PFAS-suspected risk activities
  - → Anthropogenic background levels – some countries have data for soil and/or groundwater
  - → half of responding countries/regions have a specific regulation on excavated soils

- Very divers state of affairs: some countries are well ahead, others just started
  - → Collaboration and knowledge exchange is crucial to get all countries/regions to a comparable level

Conclusions (2/2)

- Most countries/regions have set or are discussing PFAS-related priorities & goals
- Pressing research needs :
  - → effective remediation & treatment technologies
  - → What PFAS are present in the environment & what are the health risks?
  - → How & how fast does PFAS move below ground?
- Pressing policy & regulatory needs:
  - → Prevention / extended producer liability
  - → Identification / investigation / management of PFAS contaminated sites
  - → Excavated soils / soil material / construction material / waste / circular economy
  - → UBA discussion paper 'PFAS in soil – Time to act together'
  - → Specific approaches for emerging pollutants / diffuse pollution & land management strategies that take into account anthropogenic background values
  - → Cross-sectoral understanding & agreement whether and how to implement the ALARA-principle

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Questions?

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