

EU sues six nations for failure to adopt green laws

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Tourists relax by the sea in the Cyprus coastal city of Paphos in May 2006. The European Commission is taking Cyprus and five other member states to court for failing to transpose EU environmental rules into national law.

The European Commission announced on Thursday it is taking six member states to court for failing to transpose EU environmental rules into national law.

"EU environmental law is there to protect EU citizens and the environment. I urge those member states that have not done so to put the laws in question on to their national statute books as soon as possible,"

said the EU's Environment Commissioner Janez Potocnik.

For five of the nations in question -- Cyprus, Finland, France, Greece, and Luxembourg -- the problem is with their failure to adopt European laws which require that data is shared on all tasks related to the environment.

Such data could range from basic mapping information, such as transport networks and administrative units, to "key environmental information" such as emissions, environmental quality and location of protected sites.

"It is important to be able to combine these different types of data to obtain the best information on how to better protect our society from, for example, the many possible impacts of climate change and [air pollution](#) as well as natural and technological disasters," the EU Commission said.

The states targeted were meant to have included the EU rules in national legislation more than a year ago.

Belgium is also being taken to the European Court of Justice but for failing to adopt a directive which sets [underground water](#) quality standards and introduces measures to prevent or limit inputs of pollutants into [groundwater](#).

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