

EU Monitoring Report

21-28 January 2021

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CHEMICALS

➤ REACH

- Webinar on REACH-IT new functionalities

Source: [European Chemicals Agency](#)

On 4 March 2021 (11:00-13:00), ECHA will organise a webinar which will focus on new functionalities implemented in the latest version of REACH-IT (v3.9).

- Completeness checks on chemical safety reports start on 1 March

Source: [European Chemicals Agency](#)

As of 1 March 2021, manual completeness checks performed by ECHA staff will be extended to chemical safety reports to ensure they contain all the elements required under REACH.

The completeness check of chemical safety reports was originally scheduled to start in April 2020.

➤ SVHC

- Authorisation obligations and recovered substances in the scope of two Forum enforcement projects

Source: [European Chemicals Agency](#)

The Forum's ninth coordinated REACH enforcement project (REF-9) on authorisation obligations has started. It involves all 30 EU and EEA countries, with inspectors checking whether duty holders comply with REACH authorisation requirements to protect the safety and health of workers, the general public and the environment from SVHCs.

Inspectors will check whether the SVHCs subject to authorisation that have been placed on the market have been granted an authorisation by the European Commission. They will also check whether uses of these substances comply with the conditions set in the authorisation decisions. The inspections will be carried out in collaboration with national customs and authorities responsible for occupational safety and health legislation (OSH) and for environmental protection.

- Discussion in the Council on the EU Sustainable Chemicals Strategy

Source: [Council of the EU](#)

On 5 February at 10:00, environment attachés will discuss the revised draft Council conclusions on the Sustainable Chemicals Strategy of the Union. This will be the opportunity to hold an exchange of views between Member States representatives.

➤ **Biocides**

- Referral to the Coordination Group of a disagreement on Mutual recognition (MR) in accordance with Article 35 of the Biocidal Products Regulation

Source: [European Commission](#)

Celcure C65 is a water-based wood preservative which contains a copper-based fungicide, and an organic co-biocide (a quaternary ammonium compound). Celcure C65 preserved wood is protected against wood decaying fungi and wood destroying insects. The European Commission was notified by France of a disagreement on the mutual recognition in sequence regarding Celcure C65 containing active substance including: DDA Carbonate, Basic Copper carbonate, Didecyldimethylammonium chloride (DDAC). The product meets the condition for granting an authorisation in accordance with Article 2 of the BPR. This formal referral is therefore closed.

- Article 95 has been updated and includes new suppliers of biocides

Source: [ECHA](#)

As a reminder, ECHA is responsible for the publication of the list of relevant substances and the respective substance and product suppliers, in accordance with Article 95 of the Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR). The purpose of this list is to "ensure the equal treatment of persons placing active substances on the market".

The following changes occurred:

- Active chlorine released from hypochlorous acid (Redefined from Active Chlorine: manufactured by the reaction of hypochlorous acid and sodium hypochlorite produced in situ) for PT1, PT2, PT3, PT4 and PT5 submitted by Acqua Attiva di Mario Buzzi ; AMIL CARE ITALIA SRL; and ECA Consortium A/S

➤ **Chlor**

- POSTPONED: 11th Euro Chlor International Chlorine Technology Conference and Exhibition

Source: [EuroChlor](#)

Following the ongoing Covid-19 developments, notably the diverse vaccination plans in Europe and the rest of the world, the organisers of the 11th Euro Chlor International Chlorine Technology Conference and Exhibition taking place in Warsaw, Poland concluded it was not yet feasible to hold a large face-to-face event in May 2021. Therefore, the event is postponed to 3-5 May 2022.

➤ **Polymers**

- Minutes of the 2nd Meeting of REACH and CLP Competent Authorities Sub-Group on Polymers (16 December 2020)

Source: [European Commission](#)

The EU Commission published the minutes of the meeting. They discussed:

- Identification of Polymers Requiring Registration
- Pros and Cons of a Pre-Registration or Notification of Polymers
- Update on CEFIC-ECHA Pilot projects

SUSTAINABILITY

➤ Batteries

- Brussels approves €2.9 billion investment into battery innovation

Source: [Euractiv](#)

Twelve EU countries will jointly invest almost three billion euros into innovation in battery cell technology for electric vehicles and energy storage, cementing the EU as a “global hotspot” for battery innovation, the European Commission announced on Tuesday (26 January). It is expected that the €2.9 billion investment will generate three times this amount in private investments and could potentially create 18,000 new jobs, European Commission vice-president Maros Šefčovič said. (Read the full article via the above link.)

- Discussion in the Council on the new Batteries Regulation

Source: [Council of the EU](#)

On 2 February, environment attachés will discuss the Commission’s proposal for a regulation on batteries and waste batteries. This will be the opportunity to hold a first exchange of views between Member States representatives.

➤ Water

- Water pumps and the Europe-wide opportunity for huge energy savings

Source: [Europump](#)

Europump, the European Association of Pump Manufacturers, published on 28 January a new press release stressing that its members want to implement the extended product approach (EPA) for water pumps in order to enable significant energy savings.

The pump industry is determined to encourage legislators to move away from the existing product approach that was adopted in 2009 for water pumps. Europump supports the demand of pump manufacturers to move from the ‘narrow’ to the ‘extended’ product approach when assessing the energy efficiency for water pumps.

You can access the full press release [HERE](#).

➤ Environment

- European Commission launched Green Consumption Pledge, first companies commit to concrete actions towards greater sustainability

Source: [European Commission](#)

On 25 January, the European Commission launched its new [Green Consumption Pledge](#), the first initiative delivered under the [New Consumer Agenda](#). The Green Consumption Pledge is part of the [European Climate Pact](#) which is an EU-wide initiative inviting people, communities and organisations to participate in climate action and build a greener Europe.

With their signatures, companies promise to accelerate their contribution to a green transition. The pledges have been developed in a joint effort between the Commission and companies. Their aim is to accelerate the contribution of businesses to a sustainable economic recovery and to build consumer trust in the environmental performance of companies and products.

The **Green Consumption Pledge** is based on a set of five core pledges. To join it, companies commit to ambitious actions to improve their environmental impact and to help consumers make more sustainable purchases. They have to take concrete measures in at least three of the five pledge areas:

- 1) **Calculate the carbon footprint of the company**, including its supply chain, using the calculation methodology or environmental management scheme developed by the Commission, and establish proper due diligence processes towards achieving footprint reductions in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.
- 2) **Calculate the carbon footprint of selected flagship products of the company**, using the methodology developed by the Commission, and to achieve certain footprint reductions for the selected products and disclose the progress to the general public.
- 3) **Increase the sale of sustainable products or services within the total sales** of the company or its selected business part.
- 4) **Commit part of the corporate public relations expenditure to the promotion of sustainable practices** in line the Commission's implementation of the European Green Deal policies and actions.
- 5) **Ensure information provided to consumers in relation to the company and product carbon footprints** is easy to access, accurate and clear, and maintain this information up-to-date following any reductions or increases of the footprints.

➤ Circular Economy

- MEPs call for binding 2030 targets for materials use and consumption footprint

Source: [European Parliament](#)

The EU needs clear policy objectives to achieve a carbon-neutral, environmentally sustainable, toxic-free and fully circular economy by 2050 at the latest, say MEPs. On 27 January, the Environment Committee adopted its report on the new [EU Circular Economy Action Plan](#), with 66 votes in favour, 6 against and 7 abstentions.

Circular economy principles

MEPs emphasise that the current linear “take-make-dispose” economy must be transformed into a truly circular economy, based on a series of key principles such as preventing waste and reducing energy and resource use. Products should be designed in a way that reduces waste, harmful substances and pollution, and protects human health. The consumer benefits of a circular economy should be made clear, they say.

Binding targets and indicators

MEPs call for science-based binding 2030 EU targets for materials use and consumption footprint, covering the whole lifecycle of each product category placed on the EU market. To this end, they urge the Commission to introduce in 2021 harmonised, comparable and uniform circularity indicators for material and consumption footprints.

The Environment Committee also calls on the Commission to propose product-specific and/or sector-specific binding targets for recycled content, while ensuring the performance and safety of the products concerned and that they are designed to be recycled.

Sustainable product policy

MEPs strongly endorse the Commission’s intention to broaden the scope of the [Ecodesign Directive](#) to include non-energy-related products. They insist that new legislation should be put forward in 2021. This should set horizontal sustainability principles and product-specific standards so that products placed on the EU market perform well, are durable, reusable, can be easily repaired, are not toxic, can be upgraded and recycled, contain recycled content, and are resource- and energy-efficient.

Other key proposals by MEPs include:

- introducing measures against greenwashing and false environmental claims, as well as legislative measures to stop practices that result in planned obsolescence;
- championing the [EU Ecolabel](#) as a benchmark for environmental sustainability;
- strengthening the role of [Green Public Procurement](#) by establishing minimum mandatory criteria and targets;
- mainstreaming circular economy principles into member states’ national recovery plans.

- **Plastics, a growing environmental and climate concern: how can Europe revert that trend?**

Source: [European Environment Agency](#)

The ever-increasing amount of plastic, its impact on biodiversity and contribution to climate change, and how to deal with it in a circular economy perspective have been on the European Union's policy agenda for years. The COVID-19 pandemic has only increased the attention for plastic waste with images of masks in our seas, and large amounts of single-use protective gear. In the circular plastics economy report, published on 28 January, the European Environment Agency (EEA) analyses the need and potential for a shift to a circular and sustainable approach to our use of plastics.

- **New study on the circular economy**

Source: [Euractiv](#)

Switching to a circular economy could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 39% and ease pressure on virgin materials by 28%, according to the Circularity Gap Report, published on 26 January. If those principles were applied, 22.8 billion tonnes of carbon emissions could be saved and help avoid climate breakdown, according to the study by Circle Economy. But the report also contained bad news. Only 8.6% of the world's economy can be considered circular, down from 9.1% two years earlier.

You can access the full study [HERE](#).