EU Monitoring Report

22–29 October 2020

CONTENTS

Chemicals

➢ SCIP database

- **Tracking chemicals of concern in products – SCIP database ready for use**

  Source: ECHA

Industry can now submit information on substances of very high concern in their articles to ECHA's SCIP database. The aim is to make recycling of products safer and improve information about dangerous chemicals in products. A webinar on SCIP database will be hosted by ECHA on 19 November 2020.

- **New release of IUCLID available**

  Source : ECHA

IUCLID 6.5 includes the latest changes to the OECD harmonised templates, and a revised Classification and Labelling format in line with the updates made to the CLP Regulation and the Globally Harmonised System.

In addition, modifications have been made to the SCIP and Poison Centre Notification formats to comply with the information requirements for submissions to the SCIP database and the poison centres in Europe. ECHA will also organise a webinar for IUCLID users on 11 November 2020.

➢ REACH

- **Video online for webinar on restriction of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) under REACH**

  Source : ECHA

Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Denmark are working on a REACH restriction proposal to limit the risks to the environment and human health from the manufacture and use of all per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). A call for evidence was held during the summer of 2020.

The webinar organized by ECHA about the REACH restriction process and the status of the work of five European countries on a potential restriction of all per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) can now be viewed online.

- **Draft summary record of the 34th meeting of Competent Authorities for REACH and CLP**

    Source : [European Commission](#)

A draft summary record was published for the 34th Meeting of Competent Authorities for REACH and CLP, specifically for the CLP part of the meeting, which was held on 15 May 2020.

There was no agenda was provided for this meeting, as the only topic scheduled for discussion was the consultation of the expert group on the latest drafts of the so-called workability amendments made to Annex VIII to CLP, which were made available on the [public CIRCABC folder](#) beforehand.

➢ **SVHC**

- **New intention to identify orthoboric acid, sodium salt**

    Source: [ECHA](#)

An intention has been received for [orthoboric acid, sodium salt](#) (EC 237-560-2, CAS 13840-56-7). Boric acid, also known as orthoboric acid, is often used as an antiseptic, insecticide, flame retardant, neutron absorber, or precursor to other chemical compounds.

- **Authorisations granted for use of sodium dichromate**

    Source: [ECHA](#)

The European Commission has granted an authorisation for one use of [sodium dichromate](#) (EC 234-190-3, CAS 10588-01-9) to Wesco Aircraft EMEA Limited (review period expiry date 21 September 2024). It is used as a corrosion inhibitor, and in the manufacture of other chemicals.

➢ CLP

- **Updated PCN format and improved IT tools support amended Annex VIII solutions**

  Source: [ECHA](#)

Companies can now benefit from the updated poison centre notification format that supports the recent derogations such as standard formulas and interchangeable component groups for industry-specific and cross-industry sectors.

➢ Exports

- **EU companies can now notify PIC exports to the UK**

  Source: [ECHA](#)

The transition period of the UK's withdrawal from the EU ends on 31 December 2020. EU-based companies and companies in the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) can now start notifying their exports of PIC substances in ePIC for non-EU countries, including UK (Great Britain), taking place as of 1 January 2021. EU exporters can find the "United Kingdom (Great Britain)" in the "importing country" dropdown lists when preparing their submissions in ePIC. Companies who are submitting PIC export notifications for the first time can consult ECHA's guidance to know more about their obligations under PIC.

➢ Biocides

- **EU Commission ongoing work on adapting data requirements in the Annexes to the BPR to the ED criteria**

  Source: [European Commission](#)

The draft delegated act was adopted on 19 October 2020. Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products (hereinafter the BPR) aims to improve the functioning of the internal market for biocidal products, whilst ensuring a high level of protection of human and animal health and the environment.

Annexes II and III to the BPR set out the information requirements for active substances and biocidal products, respectively. According to Article 5(1)(d) of the BPR, active substances considered as having endocrine-disrupting properties on the basis of the scientific criteria specified in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/2100 shall not be approved unless it is shown that at least one of the conditions in Article 5(2) of the BPR is met. Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2017/2100 applies since 7 June 2018. The European Chemical Agency (ECHA) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) have developed, with the support of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), a common guidance document for implementing the criteria laid down in that Regulation, specifying an assessment strategy and information requirements supporting such an assessment.

Therefore, the information requirements in Annexes II and III to the BPR should be adapted to scientific and technical progress in relation to the determination of endocrine-disrupting properties. In addition, these Annexes should also be adapted to the current state of science, for example in relation to new test methods ensuring a better protection of human and animal health or reducing the number of tests conducted on vertebrate animals.

- **Get an overview of the biocidal product families concept**

    Source: Chemical Watch

Preparing an application dossier for a biocidal product family (BPF) can be a big challenge depending on the number of biocidal products, co-formulants, product types (PTs) claimed and intended uses to be included. Having a comprehensive understanding of the BPF concept allows applicants to streamline resources and time spent preparing applications.

This course will be particularly useful for prospective authorisation holders for a BPF and those dealing with the uncertainties and discussions around the splitting and restructuring of product families under the biocidal products Regulation, focusing on:

- similarity of uses;
- similarity of composition and grouping of co-formulants;
- similar levels of risk and efficacy;
- best practices for BPF pre-submission meetings; and
- splitting of families for ongoing applications.

Nathalie Hanon and Cyril Durou (CEHTRA) will guide you through the BPF concept, the steps necessary for grouping biocidal products into a BPF, and the challenges to be faced when applying the BPF concept according to the latest regulatory guidance and regulations.

- **Short Course: The EU and New Legislative Framework for Product Manufacturers**

    Source : Chemical Watch

This short course will introduce manufacturers to important concepts and requirements that must be understood in order to successfully and competently manufacture products for and sell products into European Union markets.

We provide an overview of the European Union and how it differs from other markets around the world, how those differences impact regulations and the regulatory approach, and how they should be interpreted and understood in the context of the EU market. The New Legislative Framework is introduced. This regulatory framework is a systematic approach to ensuring the safety of products that are placed on the market in the EU. Important concepts such as essential requirements, harmonised standards, technical documentation and the EU Declaration of Conformity are covered. The course will cover:

- Directive vs Regulation vs Decision
- The "new legislative framework", or NLF
- Harmonised standards
- Technical documentation

- **'Essential Uses' of PFASs in the EU**

    Source : Chemical Watch

The European Commission's recently published chemicals strategy for sustainability – widely regarded as launching the most far-reaching regulatory measures in the EU in over a decade – promises a comprehensive action plan to address per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs), such as phasing them out of consumer products.

Meanwhile, five European countries have agreed to prepare a restriction proposal covering the entire group of more than 4,700 substances, while Echa has announced its intention to restrict their use in firefighting foams.

And the EU has committed to defining criteria for 'essential use' of the substance class, only allowing their use if necessary for health, safety or the functioning of society – and if there are no acceptable alternatives. This virtual conference will examine the potential future impact on producers and users of PFASs and engage key stakeholders in a discussion on what 'essential use' means from their different perspectives.

Sustainability

> **Energy**

- **European climate law: Council reaches agreement on large parts of the proposal**

    Source : Council of the EU

The Council reached agreement on a partial general approach on the proposed European climate law. The aim of the proposal is to set in legislation the objective of a climate-neutral EU by 2050, which was endorsed by the European Council in December 2019.

The Council has amended the part of the original proposal which would have allowed the Commission to adopt, by means of delegated acts, a trajectory for achieving climate neutrality. Instead, the Council asks the Commission to propose an intermediate target for 2040 after the first global stocktake of the Paris Agreement. The Council retains the concept of an indicative, linear trajectory only as a tool for the Commission to assess progress.

In order to ensure that in the years to come the EU will remain on track to achieve its climate-neutrality objective, the Council tasks the Commission with reporting on the operation of the European climate law within six months after each global stocktake under the Paris Agreement. The Commission may make proposals to amend the climate law.

Institutional news:

- Council of the EU: European climate law - partial general approach, 23 October 2020
- European Council conclusions, 15-16 October 2020 press release
- Council of the EU: Questions and answers about climate and environmental policy
- German Presidency of the Council of the EU press release

In the media:

- EURACTIV: EU environment ministers strike climate law deal, leave out 2030 target
- EUobserver: Ministers back EU-wide 2050 climate goal, not by country

- **Europe needs a system change to meet Green Deal, says EU chief**

    Source: EURACTIV

Europe needs a "systematic approach" to meet the climate targets in the Green Deal and create a "fair and prosperous society", said European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, in the foreword of a new report on how to achieve the new goals.

"Europe has the potential to emerge from the current crisis to become a fairer, more prosperous, more sustainable and more resilient society," von der Leyen wrote, adding that the green and digital transitions "will shape the social, economic, and ecological architecture of the continent for decades to come".

The report, published on Friday (23 October), by The Club of Rome and advisory firm SYSTEMIQ, lays out a vision for how Europe can achieve its carbon neutrality target by 2050 and use the recovery from COVID-19 to create "a more prosperous, sustainable and resilient" economy.

"What we really need is an overhaul in the way we produce and consume in our economy and the way we live and work," said Kurt Vandenberghe, European Green Deal Advisor to President von der Leyen, at a talk run by EURACTIV.

"[The Green Deal] requires that we rethink our policies, that we rethink our ways of working and, above all, it requires that we dare to change our mental frame," he said, calling it a "socio-economic agenda for modernisation".

To apply the Green Deal successfully, the report calls for a transition to a more sustainable, resilient and fair model of working, with a better balance between people, planet and prosperity.

We are in a "super year" at the beginning of a "decade of change", according to Sandrine Dixson-Declève, Co-President of the Club of Rome.

The report introduces a "System Change Compass" to roll out the Green Deal, identifying ten societal elements that need to be redefined, including political leadership, improved measurements for Green Deal targets and financial support to facilitate economic ecosystems.

- **New, improved rules for energy consumers**

    Source : [European Commission](#)

New rules providing more accurate and transparent energy bills for consumers enter into force across the EU today. The most important new provisions relate to obligations for more accurate and frequent metering of the consumed energy, as well as more transparent billing, and access to relevant information. The expected results include:

- Final users and households will have free of charge access to their bills and actual energy consumption;
- For households in multi-apartment buildings, clear rules and technical means will ensure the transparent allocation of the cost for heating, cooling and domestic hot water;
- Households connected to district heating and cooling will receive their bills more often, at least twice a year;
- For all energy users, information about the cost, taxes and environmental impact of the energy they use will be clearly and easily available;
- The same goes for information that will help energy users understand their consumption profile and how they can save energy, change provider, file a complaint, etc.;
- When feasible, newly installed heating, cooling and domestic hot water meters and heat cost allocators will be devices that can be remotely read, the information being available to the respective users;
- When feasible, new apartments connected with a central heating source or district heating for their domestic hot water supply will be equipped with individual meters.

- **EU Commission: ongoing work with regard to energy labelling requirements for electronic displays, light sources**

    Source: [European Commission](#)

The Expert group meeting is scheduled to take place on 13 November 2020 regarding the EU Commission's work on energy labelling requirements under the short title "Energy labelling omnibus amendment of 2019 regulations"

In December 2019, the Commission adopted a package of energy labelling and ecodesign regulations imposing new labelling obligations for electronic displays, light sources, washing

machines, washer-dryers, dishwashers and refrigerating appliances with a direct sales function.

The Commission proposes to add a definition of declared values, as well as to amend the annexes on technical documentation to make it clear that declared values should be included. Other technical amendments are also introduced to correct clerical errors, improve accuracy, clarify measurements and make technical adaptations to some parameters. These amendments will help ensure consistency with the ecodesign regulations on the same products. Further minor technical amendments are proposed to improve accuracy, consistency and cross-referencing.

EU consumer organisation reacts to new energy labelling rules kicking in on 1 November: "what to expect?"

The Bureau of European Consumer organisations, BEUC, reacted to the new rules.*:*

As of this Sunday (1 November), consumers who buy a new fridge, washing machine, or TV set might be surprised when unpacking their new purchase. It is possible that the energy label they find inside the box will be different from the one on the package (read: its energy efficiency might actually score lower). How is that possible? Well, there is nothing to worry about, but this is part of a transition to a better label. Let's take a closer look at the changes.

Last year, the EU finally agreed give its energy label for many electrical appliances a facelift. The new law will remove the 'A+','A++' and 'A+++' classes that have appeared on the energy label over the years. Those '+' classes are where most appliances are grouped, thus leaving lower classes empty. As a result, fewer than one in four consumers understands that an 'A+' fridge is actually the least energy-efficient on the market.

To stop this confusion, the new energy label will revert to the well-understood A-G scale. Stricter standards and measurement methods to calculate the energy efficiency of appliances will also kick in. This is a great improvement for consumers, as the clearer and more accurate EU Energy Label will better help them to choose a new electrical appliance.

So, why two different labels for a same product?

Consumers will only start seeing the new labels in shops as of 1 March 2021. From 1 November 2020 until then, there will be a four-month transition period during which the old and the new labels will co-exist on the packaging and inside, respectively. This transition

period is necessary for manufacturers and suppliers to adapt, considering the duration of shipping and storage of most electrical appliances.

As a result of the rescale, an electrical appliance scoring A+++ in the current system may only be classified as a C, D or even an E appliance under the new label due to the stricter standards. These tighter standards mean the amount of electricity consumption indicated on the two labels is also likely to differ.

This might seem confusing, but consumers need not worry. Even if one appliance gets a lower grade, it remains as efficient. The change is not about the product's performance, it is only about its score. The differences between the current and the new scores are due to the refined measurement methods adopted by the European Commission. In short, the 'downgrading' of a product energy class only means that the new score is more accurate and helpful.

The rescaling of the energy label also aims to incentivise manufacturers to innovate and bring ever more efficient products to consumers. For this reason, when the new EU Energy Label will officially appear in shops next March, the A class will be empty to leave room for more energy efficient products that will be developed in the future. The new label hiding in packages might be seen as a jack-in-the-box, but let's instead see it as a blessing in disguise. When the new EU Energy Label officially takes over in March 2021, consumers will benefit from clearer and more helpful information when they buy a new electrical appliance.

Finally, consumer groups will be there to help consumers navigate the process. BEUC and nine of its member organisations are part of an EU-funded project called BELT, which aims to promote the uptake of more energy-efficient products. To raise awareness among manufacturers, retailers and consumers about the upcoming rescaled label, the BELT partners are campaigning all stakeholders at the national level. If you have any questions about the new EU Energy Label, please get in touch with your national consumer association. See the full list here.

> **Environment**

- **How upgraded chemicals regulations are piece and parcel of addressing the plastics challenge**

    Source : [ECHA](#)

A tidalwave of plastic is on the horizon. According to the plastics industry, the world's plastic production reached 350 million tonnes in 2017 and current projections estimate that this number will double over the next 20 years. Taking on the plastics challenge in a way that puts health and the environment first to deliver on Europe's Zero Pollution ambition, therefore, requires upgrading European regulations, writes Natacha Cingotti, Senior Policy Officer for health and chemicals at the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) in our latest Guest Corner contribution.

- **Committee on Petitions of the EU Parliament on the environmental impacts of plastics and micro-plastics use, waste and pollution: EU and national measures**

    Source : [European Parliament](#)

This study, commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs at the request of the Committee on Petitions (PETI), focuses on the pervasive use of plastics and reviews the rising consensus on the potential eco-toxicological impacts of these materials, in particular of smaller plastic particles, dubbed microplastics. It discusses possible mitigation strategies aimed at curtailing the prevalence of (micro)plastics, as well as emerging alternatives and their environmental adequacy.

Propelled by increasing awareness of the impacts of plastics and by public opinion, in recent years a multitude of norms, regulations, laws and recommendations have been proposed and/or implemented. These vary greatly across local, national, regional and international levels, and it is not clear what the beneficial impacts of these tools are. This study assesses these existing instruments, analyses whether they are based on sound scientific data, and discusses foreseeable challenges that could restrain the relevance and suitability of existing and future legislative proposals.

- **Event: European Circular Economy Stakeholder Conference**

    Source : European Commission

On 3-4 November, the European Economic Social Committee (EESC) and the European Commission will host the 2020 European Circular Economy Stakeholder Conference, the main annual gathering of the European circular economy community. This year, in order to respect the current sanitary measures, the conference will be a digital event.

The theme of the 2020 edition will be the presentation and discussion of the new Circular Economy Action Plan to the European circular economy community, while at the same time considering and addressing the new recovery efforts – with a focus on the circular economy's potential for a green recovery.

The European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform (ECESP) is a joint initiative of the EESC and EC. The purpose of the Platform is to provide a "network of networks" to support a stakeholder-driven transition from a linear to a circular economic model.

Registrations are now closed. Please find additional information and webstreaming of many sessions on the Annual Conference page.

- **2020 Sustainability Progress Update from the European Chemical Industry Council (Cefic)**

    Source: Cefic

Cefic's Sustainable Development programme aims to accelerate the vital transition towards a safe, resource efficient, circular and low-carbon society. Our world and industry have been in transition for some time, and despite significant global disruptions faced in 2020, including COVID, sustainability still drives initiatives from governments, business and citizens around the world. The '2020 Sustainability Progress Update' gives an overview of Cefic's Sustainable Development programme journey: Starting from a Vision, then a Charter and the SDG Roadmap, and this year the start of a portfolio of Indicators.

The Sustainable Development Indicators (SDIs) will assess and drive the contribution of the EU chemical industry towards sustainability, and will reflect how it is leading the transition towards a resource efficient and circular economy within a climate-neutral Europe, which are the core objectives of the Green Deal. To do this, the SDIs must report on relevant actions and activities within the chemical sectors and are organised around the four

sustainability focus areas of the Cefic Charter: Create Low Carbon Economy, Conserve Resource Efficiency, Connect Circular Economy and Care for People and Planet.

The report also presents case studies as examples of the efforts that Cefic and its members are making to deliver on the Charter and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Roadmap.

Cefic's commitment is to progress towards a prosperous, more sustainable, healthier and inclusive Europe in 2050 as outlined in its Mid-Century Vision, with special attention to the adoption of circular economy principles to prevent and reduce waste. Partnerships have a key role to play, helping all actors to realise its potential to contribute to the SDG agenda.

- **Top 5 things from the Chemical Strategy that will affect your company**

    Source : [ChemSec](#)

Here are five things from the strategy that us folks at ChemSec think will matter the most to businesses. The aim here is to help you to quickly get an idea of what the strategy is and, more importantly, the actual consequences it will have for your company.

(Spoiler: If your company produces or sells products that contain chemicals – which in practice means every company that makes money out of physical products – you should keep reading.)

The Chemical Strategy is a kind of guidance document, put out by the EU Commission. It outlines the future of chemicals regulation within the union and details how officials, agencies and authorities should approach the topic.

A strategy like this isn't published very often – maybe once every other decade – so it's kind of a big deal. Furthermore, the level of ambition of this particular strategy is actually quite high. If it is to be fully realized, it will demand a lot of changes from the industry.

At this point, nobody knows exactly what these changes are. But we obviously have a pretty educated guess. So without further ado, here are five things from the strategy that us folks at ChemSec think will matter the most to businesses.

- **EU consumers should enjoy a "right to repair" and enhanced product safety**

  Source : [European Parliament](#)

The Internal Market Committee proposed a series of measures to strengthen consumer protection and enhance product safety and sustainability.

In a resolution on sustainable Single Market approved by 20 (2 voted against, 23 abstained), MEPs call on the Commission to grant consumers a "right to repair" by making repairs more appealing, systematic, and cost-efficient.

They also ask the Commission to consider labelling products and services according to their durability (e.g. a usage meter and clear information on the estimated lifespan of a product). This would support second-hand goods markets and promote more sustainable production practices. To reduce electronic waste, MEPs [insist again](#) on a common charger system.

To tackle planned obsolescence, restricting practices that intentionally shorten the lifetime of a product should be considered. According to MEPs, the corrective updates for certain digital devices must continue throughout their estimated lifespan and not diminish their performance.

According to Eurobarometer, [77%](#) of EU citizens would rather repair their devices than replace them and [79%](#) think that manufacturers should be required to make it easier to repair digital devices or replace their individual parts.

➢ Water

- **Safe and clean drinking water: Council adopts strict minimum quality standards**

  Source: [Council of the EU](#)

The EU is ensuring that tap water across the EU is safe to drink. Today, the Council formally adopted its position at first reading to revise the drinking water directive, based on the compromise reached in the negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament.

Under the new rules, the quality standards for drinking water are brought up to date, and a cost-effective risk-based approach to monitoring water quality is introduced. The Council also introduced hygienic requirements for materials in contact with drinking water, such as

pipes. The aim is to improve the quality of such materials to ensure that human health is protected and no contamination takes place.

"Safe and clean drinking water is essential. I am pleased that we were able to propose an update of water quality standards, introduce a risk-based approach to the monitoring of water, improve water quality information that is provided to consumers and improve the access to water for EU citizens." Said Svenja Schulze, Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany

The Council's position also addresses growing concern about the effects of endocrine disruptors, pharmaceuticals and microplastics on human health by introducing a watch list mechanism. The watch list will allow the EU to follow up, in a dynamic and flexible way, on new knowledge about these substances and their relevance for human health.

Background and next steps

The revision is a direct result of the first-ever successful European citizens' initiative 'Right2Water'. The Commission adopted its recast proposal for the drinking water directive on 1 February 2018. The Council adopted its position on the proposal on 5 March 2019. Negotiations between the co-legislators followed. On 18 December 2019, a provisional agreement was reached between the Council and the European Parliament, which was confirmed by the EU ambassadors of the member states on 5 February 2020.

The Council position at first reading on the drinking water directive adopted today reflects the compromise reached in the negotiations between the Council and the European Parliament, facilitated by the Commission. Once adopted, the modifications to the current drinking water directive will address all the shortcomings identified in its REFIT evaluation and considerably increase the level of protection of the environment and of human health from the adverse effects of contaminated drinking water.

This position will now be transmitted to the European Parliament for announcement at the EP Plenary, vote at the Environment Committee and then, as a final step, vote by the EP Plenary. In accordance with the letter of 18 February 2020 sent by the Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety to the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the European Parliament should, at second reading, approve the Council's position at first reading without amendment.

This directive enters into force 20 days after its publication in the Official Journal of the EU.

- **Ever-better protection for water consumers**

    Source : [EurEau](#)

EU's new Drinking Water Directive addresses new challenges to deliver improved quality to consumers and the environment

It's been a long journey from the Commission's initial proposed revision of the Drinking Water Directive in 2018 until now. The outcome? Water remains safe and affordable, while Member States will improve access for all.

There were three goals in revising the directive: adapt the legislation to new challenges by updating the list of quality parameters, implementing WHO's Water Safety Plan approach and increase the transparency of water services.

The revision came about as part of the Commission's response to the European Citizens' Initiative 'Right2Water' and as a means to meeting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

Europe's drinking water suppliers are satisfied with the final text of the directive - which will be voted upon by the Council today and which represents an improvement of the European Commission proposal.

When it enters into force at the end of this year, the directive will:

- protect human health by updating quality parameters in line with WHO recommendations and by developing EU-wide hygienic requirements for the materials in contact with drinking water
- enable authorities and operators to better deal with risks to water resources and water supply with the introduction of the compulsory Risk-Based Approach (RBA)
- contribute to the realisation of SDG6 targets
- streamline the information to citizens and customers on the quality of drinking water and other aspects of the water supply in order to enhance the trust of consumers in tap water
- promote the consumption of drinking water in public spaces.

The final text of the directive is more complex compared to the current legislation since different deadlines are related to the various new obligations. At the same time, the new

directive lacks uniform definitions that are at the basis of some obligations: this may grant Member States more flexibility in the implementation process.

What consumers will not see but will most certainly benefit from are the additional measures that different players from national authorities to property owners will enact.

First of these is that the new legislation makes the risk assessment and management proposed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) compulsory, thereby establishing a link between the Water Framework Directive - that safeguards the quality of water resources – and the proper maintenance of the domestic installation. This makes the protection of human health as guaranteed by the Drinking Water Directive a reality.

Second of all, the Commission will adopt a Watch List to monitor contaminants of emerging concern – another important tool to protect, or where necessary to, restore drinking water resources. Water suppliers need the support of the competent authorities to rely on drinking water resources of good status.

It remains to be seen however if the Watch List can be an interesting tool for the monitoring of water resources; it is not clear on which basis the substances will be selected.

It is a pity though that there will be no automatic review of authorisations under chemical legislation (pesticides, pharmaceuticals) or automatic restrictions under REACH if a substance is detected with a parametric value higher than the guidance value. This would have facilitated a source-control approach to pollutants in line with the EU Treaties and with the Water Framework Directive's Art.7.3.

The new directive set thresholds for the complex group of PFAS. Given their mobility and persistence, they are likely to accumulate in water resources over the next years. With this in mind, EurEau calls on policy makers to swiftly implement the group restriction under REACH as announced in the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability. EurEau recommends the appropriate and reasonable implementation of the quality standards by Member States taking into account the technical risk management solutions to tackle PFAS substances.

But it's not just the water in our pipes that is targeted. All materials and products that carry our water to us are included thanks to the establishment of EU-wide hygienic requirements for the materials that come into contact with drinking water. EurEau had advocated for these requirements since the revision process was announced in 2014. It is a major achievement for the protection of our health, for ensuring that public money is spent by

water operators on products that are fit-for-purpose and for the creation of a single market for these products.

The new directive is fit for purpose and will significantly contribute to consumer and environmental protection for years to come if it is properly implemented and ambitiously supported by the Member States.

➢ Safety

- **More than a million workers affected by the revision of the directive on cancers**

    Source: [European Trade Union Institute](#)

On 22 September 2020, the European Commission published a [proposal for amending the directive](#) on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work. The proposal kicks off the fourth step of the revision process started in May 2016. The opening of this fourth step will allow the European Parliament and the Council to again take the initiative on the subject.

The Commission's proposal includes the introduction of two new occupational exposure limit values (OELs), one for [acrylonitrile](#) (some 33,000 workers are estimated to be exposed to it in the European Union), the other for [nickel](#) compounds (79,000 workers exposed). The adoption of European OELs for these two carcinogens was originally announced in 1980 in [Directive 80/1107](#).

Moreover, the existing OEL for [benzene](#) is going to be reduced to 0.2 ppm (0.66 mg/m³). This level will apply four years after the directive enters into force. From two years up to four years after entry into force, a transitional limit value of 0.5 ppm (1.65 mg/m³) is to apply. It is reckoned that more than one million workers are exposed to [benzene](#) in the European Union.

It is expected that the new directive will be adopted in the first half of 2021. The legislative process will allow the Parliament and the Council to amend the Commission proposal. Consensus must be reached between the co-legislators.

This fourth revision is part of the overall process of revising the CMD, the original version of which dates back to 1990. The revision should have taken place in the early 2000s but was blocked by the Commission under the two Barroso presidencies (2004-2012) in response to

employer pressure. Occupational cancers are the prime cause of death associated with insufficient workplace protection, accounting for some 100,000 deaths each year in the European Union.

In 2015, following a decade of legislative paralysis, the Commission announced its intention to revise the directive, with the target of introducing 50 new limit values by 2020. This commitment was given by Marianne Thyssen, at that time European Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs, in a letter sent to Belgian unions on 14 December 2015.

- **Lead Paint Still Widely Available Despite Global Phase-Out**

  Source : IPEN

A new report from IPEN, with data on lead in paint from almost 60 countries, shows that in 25 out of 27 countries that adopted protective legal limits on lead in paint since 2008, the work of non-governmental organizations was key in moving forward standards, regulation, and enforcement. Countries without enforced regulations in place still had lead paint available on the market, posing health risks to children and other vulnerable groups.

A survey from the World Health Organization shows that lead paint is still not regulated in a majority of countries, despite a global goal to phase out these paints by the year 2020. As of 31 May 2020, only 39% of countries had confirmed that they have legally binding controls on lead paint. In addition, many of these regulations are not protective enough since they include exemptions, lax limits, or are not enforced.

During the eighth annual International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action, beginning October 25, 2020, activities by NGOs in 36 countries will celebrate success and highlight urgent needs for additional action.

Over the past 12 years, NGOs have led national campaigns and provided momentum to the process of developing new or strengthened legislations in almost 50 countries. A key conclusion based on the IPEN analysis of more than 3,500 solvent-based paints is clear: NGOs in collaboration with country stakeholders from government, industry, and civil society, are very effective in supporting country action to adopt lead paint regulations and ultimately eliminate lead paint.

"It is encouraging to see countries adopting new, strong laws to ban lead paint and the critical role that public interest groups have played in facilitating fruitful collaboration with

other stakeholders. NGOs bring a unique citizens' perspective and experience to the table and have been instrumental in moving the goal of eliminating lead paint forward nationally, regionally, and globally," said Manny Calonzo, IPEN Advisor, and winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize for his alliance work in the Philippines with the NGO EcoWaste Coalition.

- **Health & Safety at Work – EU Strategic Framework (2021-2027)**

    Source : [European Parliament](#)

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the crucial importance of health, including health & safety at work.

This initiative builds on the previous EU Strategic Framework 2014-2020. It aims to maintain and improve the high health & safety standards for EU workers - also in light of new circumstances, and will help to prepare for new crises and threats.

It will identify key objectives and set out a strategic framework to encourage EU countries and stakeholders to work together on common priorities.