

EU Monitoring Report

1 – 8 April 2021

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➤ **REACH**

- Minutes of the 56th Meeting of the Committee for Risk Assessment (8-11 and 15-19 March 2021)

Source: [ECHA](#)

Relevant points at the agenda were:

- Microplastics - infill material and 'inorganic polymers'
- Applications for authorisation/review reports (DEHP)
- Harmonised classification and labelling: CLH dossiers.

➤ **Biocides**

- List of definition of the functions of co-formulants endorsed during the 45th Meeting of the Coordination Group (17 February 2021)

Source: [European Commission](#)

It was apparent from the discussions on product authorisations at the Biocidal Product Committee (BPC), BPC working groups and Coordination Group (CG) meetings that Member States, applicants and ECHA have different views on the interpretations of terms used to describe the functions of co-formulants.

The term “co-formulant” is not defined in the Biocidal Products Regulation. In this document the definition of “co-formulant” used is: any non-active substance or mixture that is intentionally added to a biocidal product.

This document aims to support the harmonisation of the terms and functions used to specify co-formulants of biocidal products. The document gives a list of definitions of the function of co-formulants. The definitions do not refer to chemical compounds, as a specific chemical compound may have different functions depending on the specific biocidal product.

It should be noted that the list below is not an exhaustive list but can be extended if needed to describe the co-formulants function in the biocidal product.

- Minutes of the Efficacy Working Group of the Biocidal Products Committee (24-26 November 2020)

Source: [European Commission](#)

Relevant points at the agenda were:

- Discussion of a Union Authorisation for product-family containing Peracetic Acid

- Discussion on Technical and guidance related issues: Amendment of the Appendices of the Vol. II of the Guidance on the Biocidal Products Regulation, with a particular attention to the Appendix 4: Overview of standards, test conditions and pass criteria (PT 1-5)
- Notification of derogations pursuant to Article 55 of the Biocidal Products Regulation

Source: [European Commission](#)

Article 55(1) of the Regulation on biocides allows Member States to make available on the market or use a biocidal product which does not fulfil the conditions laid down in this regulation. This limited and controlled use can be permitted by a competent authority (ECHA, Commission) after receiving a notification of derogation from the Member states.

Several notifications have been submitted in March 2021 for active substances in PT-2 such as:

- Silver
 - Active chlorine released from hypochlorous acid
 - Active chlorine released from sodium hypochlorite
 - Peracetic acid
 - Hydrogen peroxide
- Online workshop: The added value of Socio-economic analysis in regulatory procedures under the Biocidal Products Regulation (21 April)

Source: [EUAgenda](#)

As part of an online workshop cycle on “How to contribute to EU legislative and regulatory policy-making with socio-economic analysis?”, the European Training Institute (ETI) hosts a session on "Socio-economic analysis in the context of the classification and labelling of hazardous substances".

Providing socio-economic data in the context of derogation for biocides is a formal requirement on the basis of the Biocidal Products Regulation. Other regulatory processes in the context of the BPR as well as the Plant Protection Products Regulation do not formally require a specific format (as for REACH restrictions). A full-fledged SEA is however welcomed by authorities and in ETI’s experience can provide genuine added value. ETI will provide practical advice on how to prepare a solid SEA based on the experience and methodology developed under REACH.

➤ **CLP**

- New proposals and intentions listed in the registry of CLH intentions until outcome

Source: [ECHA](#)

Seven intentions have been received for a new or revised harmonised classification and labelling of substances, among which these substances falling into the category of “chemical registered under REACH”:

- calcium acetylide; calcium carbide
- captan;
- ethanethiol;ethyl mercaptan;
- sodium peroxometaborate (EC 231-556-4, CAS 7632-04-4)
- methacrylic acid, monoester with propane-1,2-diol
- 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate

One proposal has been submitted for ethylene bis[3,3-bis(3-tert-butyl-4-hydroxyphenyl)butyrate.

SUSTAINABILITY

➤ Safety

- Latest Data Reveals The Chemical Industry's Voluntary REACH Dossier Review Plan Is On Track

Source: [Cefic](#)

The second progress report on the implementation of Cefic's voluntary Action Plan for REACH dossiers update and improvement found that the number of dossiers evaluated in 2020 in the framework of this Plan increased by 55% compared to 2019.

The key results are (as of December 2020):

- 190 member companies representing 1355 legal entities holding REACH registration dossiers signed the voluntary commitment.
- 2731 REACH registration dossiers were re-evaluated in 2020, which is 55% more compared to reported re-evaluated dossiers in 2019. The number covers registrations dossiers in all tonnage bands, both lead and member registrations.
- Based on the forecasts submitted by member companies, it is estimated that 7170 REACH lead registrants' dossiers will have been reviewed by 2026, representing one-third of all substances or more than half of all non-intermediate substances registered under REACH.

Sylvie Lemoine, Cefic Executive Director Product Stewardship, said: *"The EU REACH remains the most comprehensive regulatory framework for chemicals in the world and we continue to support our membership's efforts to improve and update their REACH registration dossiers. These latest results are encouraging and reflect the chemical industry's commitment to making REACH work, despite the difficult circumstances of 2020 when unavoidable disruptions to the way many businesses operate affected labs conducting safety testing. More work will be done by participating companies over the next years to better understand potential data gaps and submit testing proposals, where needed. Cefic will continue working with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) to help companies improve the content of their dossiers in order to pass ECHA's compliance checks."*

In 2020 Cefic strengthened its cooperation with ECHA by running a joint pilot project for the chemical industry to understand better ECHA's expectations of the quality of chemicals safety data. The objective of the project was to explore different read-across approaches and testing strategies in order for companies to provide new data, where needed, and improve compliance of registrations under REACH. New testing has been or will be performed as a result. The key conclusions of this project are available for all REACH registrants on the Cefic website.

➤ Industry

- **Toolbox of good practices in the European chemical, pharmaceutical, rubber and plastic industries**

Source: [European Chemical Employers Group](#)

This document was written by the ECEG jointly with the IndustriAll European Trade Union (a federation of trade unions representing manual and non-manual workers in the chemical sector among others).

These two European social partners in the chemical industry listed good practices and initiatives taken at the EU- and national level by trade unions, employers' groups or industry representatives on the following topics:

- Sustainability as part of our shared responsibility for the future of the European Chemical Industry
- Encourage age management policies
- Promote training and lifelong learning
- Stimulate Vocational Education and Training
- Develop work-life balance policies
- A diverse workforce is essential for our sector
- Career development of older workers and OHS measures
- Recognition and validation of acquired competence
- Promote voluntary mobility
- Transfer of knowledge via mentoring programmes
- Health and well-being at work are vital for all
- Future of work

➤ Plastics

- **Phasing out the use of microplastics**

Source: [European Environmental Bureau](#)

In 2019, upon request from the European Commission, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) submitted a proposal for restricting the use of intentionally added microplastic particles to consumer or professional products of any kind. This restriction has the potential to significantly reduce the quantity of microplastics emitted into the environment, with subsequent positive effects on ecosystems and human health. Beyond environmental considerations, the restriction has the potential to level the playing field for the providers of microplastic-free products, and open a new market for alternative providers.

The European Environmental Bureau believes that a truly ambitious EU restriction of intentionally-added microplastics is within reach, but critical concerns remain to be addressed. Too many derogations, some of them unsubstantiated, unclear wording or lengthy transitional periods risk jeopardising the overall effectiveness of the restriction. The review

of the restriction by ECHA's Committees is nearly finished. Once completed, the European Commission and the Member States have the power to fix the remaining issues, identified or neglected by the Committees, in line with the REACH Regulation and the Green Deal commitments.

The EEB published a position paper inviting decision-makers to defend an ambitious restriction and addresses the topics of both intentionally and non-intentionally added microplastics. It recommends the actions that the Commission and the Member States must take to secure this outcome:

1. Secure a broad scope restriction, that includes lower-sized microplastics, biodegradable, liquid and soluble polymers.
2. Reject the derogations proposed when they significantly undermine the goal of the restriction or when they are unjustified.
3. Reject unnecessary transitional periods, in particular for microplastics in cosmetics, detergents and agricultural uses, unless they cover an essential use without alternatives. In those cases, the transition periods should be strictly limited to what is necessary for developing substitutes.
4. Strengthen the reporting requirements, in particular for pellets, to make sure they support parallel regulatory supply chain measures.

This paper also recommends the EU policymakers to keep in mind, for future action, the uses not covered in the current proposal, but which are already of concern or might be of concern later on, including microplastics used at industrial sites, liquid and semi-solid polymers but also non-intentionally added microplastics.

The full version of the position paper is available through the link above. A summary of this paper is available [HERE](#).

➤ **Construction**

- **Sustainable practices in the construction industry: EU Green Deal Objectives**

Source: [The EU Parliament Magazine](#)

This article sums up the main takeaways from the 'Concrete Dialogue 2021', an event jointly organised by The Concrete Initiative and The Parliament Magazine. The event aimed at addressing the creation of more sustainable infrastructure and the green transition for the construction sector.

MEP host for the discussion, Sandro Gozi, a member of Parliament's Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee, further set the scene, arguing that Europe faces a "Darwinian moment" in its green transition strategy, where only those with the capacity to transform and adapt will survive: "Over 75 percent of European building stock is considered as energy inefficient, while only 1.2 percent of this is renovated each year. This opens a vast potential for growth, for innovative industry, and especially for renewable energy and energy efficiency gains in Europe as well as for Europe's economic recovery."

According to Gozi, the construction and building sectors have been identified by the European Commission in both the European Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan as areas with the strongest potential for reducing emissions, while also generating sustainable growth and jobs. This will take shape through the Revision of the Construction Product Regulation.

Moreover, the Fit for 55 package aims to align all economic sectors with the EU's 2030 climate target to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 percent. Fellow MEP Ciarán Cuffe, a member of Parliament's Industry Research and Energy Committee and rapporteur for the report on maximising the energy efficiency potential of the EU's building stock, explained that the Green Deal's focus on the building sector was due to several factors.

He cited the fact that buildings consume 40 percent of Europe's total energy output and are responsible for 36 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. "In a nutshell, a third of the climate change-driving emissions coming from Europe are coming from buildings", said Cuffe.

One proposed solution with potentially significant socio-economic benefits is the so-called 'Renovation Wave' – which aims to bring Europe's building stock up to the highest EU energy label rating through the renovation of existing building stock.

However, both MEPs noted that this can only happen if people are made aware of the renovation opportunities available and are given access to the tools, materials, skills, information and, crucially, finance that they need. Another crucial aspect is the need to look at the whole lifecycle of buildings, said Josefina Lindblom, who works in the European Commission Environment Directorate's Eco- Innovation and Circular Economy Unit.

"We need to look at the materials that go into buildings: how are they produced, how are the buildings being designed, what materials are they using? The circularity aspect really is important," said Lindblom. She argued that it is not simply a case of improving a building's energy efficiency, but the energy efficiency of the actual building materials involved as well as their processing.

One suggested solution, involving actors throughout the value chain, would be identifying ways to reduce a material's carbon footprint through lifecycle assessments.

The event also featured two building case studies.

The recording of the event can be found through the link above.