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Brussels
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Subject: EurEau open letter calling for a far-reaching PFAS ban

Dear [REDACTED], Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter of 4 March 2024 to President von der Leyen, raising concerns over per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) pollution, particularly in water. President von der Leyen asked us to reply on her behalf.

The Commission shares your concerns over PFAS pollution, which is a serious human health and environmental concern, addressed in the Commission Staff Working Document on PFAS⁽¹⁾, accompanying the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability⁽²⁾. The Staff Working Document shows that the regulatory actions undertaken on individual or groups of closely related PFAS has led to their regrettable substitution by other PFAS. Because of the high number of such PFAS, it is not possible to do a substance-by-substance assessment. Initiatives treating PFAS as a chemical class have started under EU legislation on chemicals and water.

One of these initiatives is the dossier submitted in January 2023 by the national authorities of Denmark, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway, under the REACH Regulation Annex XV, to restrict the use of PFAS. The Commission is fully aware of the importance of this restriction and of its implications. This restriction dossier is currently undergoing an independent scientific assessment by the Scientific Committees of the European Chemicals Agency. In line with the applicable procedure, the Scientific

⁽¹⁾ SWD(2020) 249 final

⁽²⁾ COM(2020)667 final

Committees must finalise their opinions before the Commission can decide on the scope and provisions of this PFAS restriction.

The Commission is looking forward to the ECHA opinion and is committed to tackle the PFAS pollution while only ensuring the continued use of PFAS in applications critical for society if suitable alternatives are not available and emissions can be minimised during the entire life cycle. The Commission will also continue promoting innovation in pursuit of safe alternatives.

Yours sincerely,

(e-signed)
Kristin Schreiber
DG Internal Market, Industry,
Entrepreneurship and SMEs

(e-signed)
Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea
DG Environment