

Federal product policy: initiatives regarding the chemicals sector



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Political engagement underpinning federal policies on sustainable products

■ Federal Government Agreement:

- High ambition towards the **reduction of chemical substances**.
- Stimulate innovation to **substitute or reduce the use of pesticides**
- Ambitious implementation of **EU Directives on plastics** incl. microplastics
- Examine possibilities for **waste prevention of outdoor consumption**
- Ensure a high level of **foodsafety**
- Ensure **policy coherence**

■ Policy principles of Minister Khattabi

- Precautionary principle
- A just transition
- To govern is to foresee – gouverner c'est prévoir
- Safety by design - Design4REACH

BBBC call #2 on substitution of SVHC

- EU Funds Recovery and Resilience
- Priority substances of very high concern:
 - PFAS
 - Endocrine disruptors
 - 10 or so other priority substances
- Proposals expected by 24/06/23
- For more information:
<https://www.health.belgium.be/nl/tweede-projectoproep-voor-bbbc>



Reduction Plan for Biocides

Content of the Reduction Plan

- First federal plan on the reduction of Biocides
- **Scope:** all biocides put on the Belgian market
- **Objectives:** move towards **safer biocidal products** for health and the environment
- Defines **measures, indicators** and timing of implementation
- 19 measures on 6 topics

Process

- Adoption by the federal government: 03/03/2023
- Council of state advice : 11/04/2023 - integration of the remarks ongoing
- Next step : publication (foreseen before summer break, mid-july)

Draft Royal Decree on Nano materials

Content of the draft Royal Decree

- Revision of Royal Decree of 2014 on Nanomaterials
- Objective: improve traceability of nanomaterials – via nanoregister
- Current Revision broadens the scope from substances and mixtures to Biocides, Food Contact Materials, pigments, cosmetics

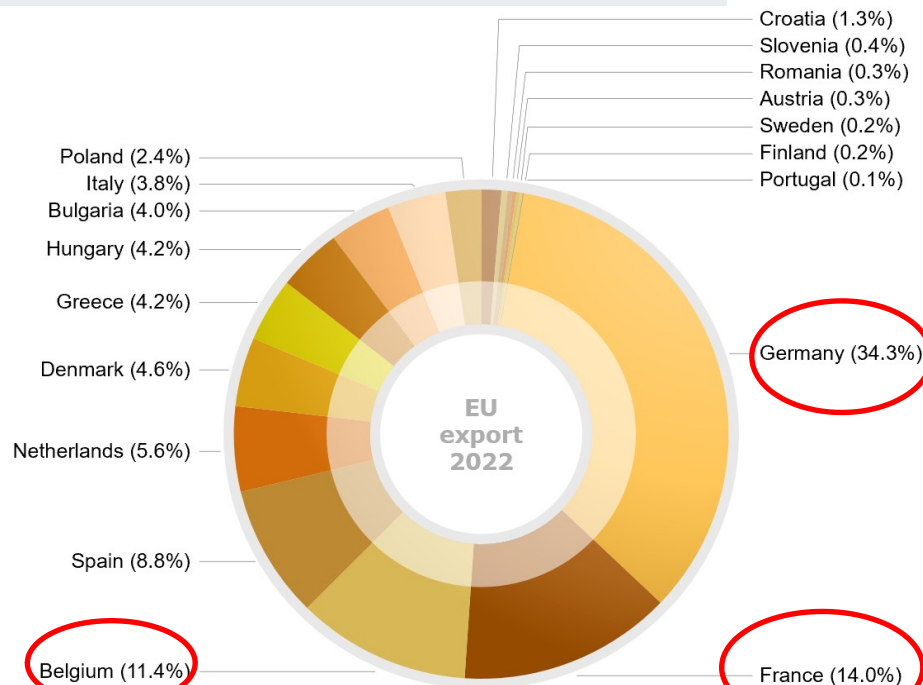
Process

- The EU Commission has been notified (TRIS procedure) and gave some comments
- The draft has been revised accordingly - Commission response expected soon
- Advisory Councils: Federal Council for Sustainable Development and Central Council for the Economy issued their advice.
- Advice of the High Council on Health is expected
- Next step: Adoption by the Council of Ministers

Draft Royal Decree on export of chemical substances

Context - what is at stake?

- Currently, chemical substances that are:
 - **prohibited for use in the EU** because of negative impacts environment and health
 - can still be **exported to non EU countries**, under the PIC Regulation
- Around 25 companies notify the SPF Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment of their exports of those substances to around 120 countries outside the EU
- Problematic in many ways:
 - from an ethical perspective – double standards
 - for health, biodiversity and environment impacts in non EU countries
 - for safe working conditions in non EU countries
 - for rebound effect from contaminated imported food products for EU consumers
 - for level playing field of EU farmers



France, Germany,
Belgium: the 3 largest
exporting countries in
the EU

ECHA 2022 export Notification Pesticides (n=2255)

Numerous substances/mixtures which are mainly used as non-agricultural biocides (e.g. DDAC n= 388 and Permethrin n= 339) were excluded. It is important to know that ECHA does still not make a distinction between agricultural pesticides, flea collars, disinfectants and biocides, ship paints - ECHA counts them all as pesticides.

Context

- France introduced a ban in 2022
- Germany currently prepares own national measures
- EU Commission:
 - Considers a proposal for **revision of PIC** at the earliest in Q4 2023.
 - Formal legislative process at EU level takes between **2-3 years** average.
 - June 2024: **EU elections** bring a new Commission and new Parliament
- Minister Khattabi and Minister Vandenberg decided to take initiative

Content of the draft Royal Decree

- **Annex 1:** Substances prohibited in the EU market will also be prohibited for export by Belgian exporters to non-EU countries
- **Annex 2:** substances for certain uses still authorized in the EU, are also authorized for export

Process

- TRIS notification finalised in 01/03/2023- No remarks from the Commission
- Advice of 4 advisory bodies received in March and April 2023
- Draft Royal Decree adapted in accordance with some remarks and questions
- Decision at Council of Ministers before summer

(Draft) Royal Decree on Single Use Plastics

Royal Decree 9/12/21 (SUP1)

- First step in the implementation of the Single Use Plastics Directive
- Royal decree on single use products and promotion of reusable products

Since 24/1/22

- Ban on single use plastics such as cutlery, plates, straws, EPS food containers
- Recycled content for PET-bottles
- Requirements for non detachable caps for beverage containers

Since 24/1/23

- Ban on single use plastic cups (paper cups with plastic coating excluded)
- Ban on plastic carrier bags

Content of the draft Royal Decree

- Second step in the implementation of the Single Use Plastics Directive
- further measures to reduce consumption of single use plastics used **for consumption of food and drinks on the go and on site**
- measures to reduce single use plastics for **unaddressed advertising material**
- further measures to step up **recycled content** of plastic products

Process SUP2

- The EU Commission has been notified (TRIS procedure) and gave comments
- The draft has been revised accordingly and since approved by the Commission
- The Advisory Boards have issued their advice
- The revised proposal will be presented very soon to the stakeholders
- Discussions in the government foreseen in June/July

Debate on the future of packaging policy

Invitation to have a broad reflection on future packaging policies

- **European evolutions:** new Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation: enhanced focus on waste reduction, eco-design
- **International evolutions:** negotiations on a UN Treaty to end plastic pollution with binding upstream and downstream measures
- **Minister Khattabi requested advice from the federal council on sustainable development (28/11/22) on the future of our packaging policy and the role of the federal government**
 - Call for stakeholders to participate in a constructive manner with a view on a long term strategy

National Action plan Endocrine Disruptors (2022-2026)

Some examples

- **Belgian participation in EU PARC initiative**

- Develop next-generation chemical risk assessment tools to protect human health and the environment



- **Belgian roll-out AskREACH Scan4Chem App**

- raising consumer awareness about substances of high concern (SVHC) in articles
- enabling consumers to make responsible purchasing decisions,
- raising supplier awareness of obligation to comply with REACH information duties
- improving the information flow on SVHC between consumers and suppliers
- improving supply chain communication processes with the aim of substituting SVHC with safer alternatives

- **Communication and sensibilisation campaigns**





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