



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

INTERNAL MARKET, INDUSTRY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMES DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
Consumer, Environmental and Health Technologies

REACH Unit

Brussels, 23/02/2017

Meeting with EURATEX on the PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related substances restriction proposal 07 November 2016

Participation

- For industry: [REDACTED] (EURATEX), [REDACTED] (Fedustria) and [REDACTED] (VTB).
- For DG GROW D.1: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
- For DG ENV B.2: [REDACTED]

Background

EURATEX (European Apparel and Textile Confederation) requested a meeting to discuss the draft Commission Regulation amending Annex XVII to REACH as regards PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related substances, in particular the derogation for textiles for the protection of workers. EURATEX expressed concern that the current wording of the derogation, more restrictive than the wording suggested by SEAC, would not allow the use of PFOA and PFOA-related substances in textiles for the protection of workers against more critical threats (e.g. chemicals, oil) but only for water repellency. EURATEX also expressed concern about the change of the formula in column 1 of the draft restriction, regarding substances excluded from the scope, alleging that it would lead to market disruption favouring non-EU production.

Summary of the meeting

Industry representatives reiterated the concerns expressed in their request for the meeting. They further added that the use of C6 substances as alternatives would lead in some cases to higher emissions since, to obtain the same performance, bigger quantities of the alternative needed to be used (3 to 4 times more of the alternative than of C8 substances). Only C8 provided real durability after multiple washes since it was permanent while C6 had to re-applied. Furthermore, where the textile needs to have a combination of properties (e.g. to be fire resistant and anti-static) there is a need to use C8 substances.

COM representatives explained that the derogation had been given for socio-economic reasons and thus the analysis of alternatives played an important role.

COM added that the draft proposal had been discussed in the REACH Committee meeting on 26 October and would be discussed again - and possibly voted on - in the meeting on 7/8 December. COM invited industry to present their concerns, and the justification underpinning them, in a document to be shared with Member States.

COM representatives questioned industry about the feasibility of substituting PFOA in the timeframe envisaged by the proposed restriction (i.e. 6 years after entry into force). Industry representatives said they could not be sure but felt that in 3 years (the general deferral period) the textile industry certainly would not be ready for substitution.

COM also mentioned that PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds are being considered for designation as persistent organic pollutants ('POPs') under the Stockholm Convention and that a decision is expected to be taken in 2019. COM added that industry might also wish to follow the developments in the framework of that Convention.
