



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
 GENERALDIREKTION BINNENMARKT, INDUSTRIE, UNTERNEHMERTUM

The General Director

Brüssel
 GROWE 1/
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Heim
 Bavarian Staatsminister für
 Wirtschaft, Land Development and
 Energy
 S0520 München
 Germany
 Qs b e en

7. Zukunftsfähigkeit der chemischen Industrie: Technische Innovationen
 Fluorpolymere - Ilustration von 3M Wyneon

Very good computer Mr. Minister of State.

Thank you for your letter to Commissioner Breton dated 20 February 2023, expressing your concern about the future development of the chemical industry in Germany in view of the high energy prices and the chemicals legislation of the EU. Commissioner Breton has not asked me. I intend to reply in this regard. and I apologize for the delay in this reply.

The chemical industry is facing unprecedented challenges as the heart of the European chemical industry. The sudden rise in oil and gas prices at the end of last year and the ongoing Russian war of aggression against Ukraine are just some of the problems that the European chemical industry has recently been confronted with. The goal of resilience defined in the updated EU industrial strategy is therefore all the more important.

Closely linked to the resilience we are striving for is the digital transformation, which has several dimensions - a pollutant-free environment, climate neutrality and the digital transition. The chemical industry must take all these dimensions into account. All these dimensions must be taken into account in order to strengthen the resilience of the chemical industry.

To support the European chemical industry, the Commission recently published the transition pathway for the chemical industry. with Member States, chemical industry stakeholders. NGOs and other interested parties. The stakeholders identified a series of measures and initiatives to help accelerate the green and digital change in the chemical industry.

and strengthen their resilience. Along with each measure, the target date for implementation and the main actors responsible for it were also named. Since March 2023, the stakeholders have been working with the Commission on operational implementation.

The Commission also recently presented its industrial plan for the Green Deal, which aims to strengthen the competitiveness of European industry and support the rapid transition to climate neutrality.

In your letter, you refer in particular to the recently submitted restriction proposal on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Norway have prepared the REACH restriction dossier for PFAS, which also proposes a list of temporary exemptions. The Commission is aware that PFAS in semiconductors, electrolysis, fuel cells, batteries and many other components that are used in numerous areas, including defense and medicine as well as net-zero technologies. Based on the opinion of ECHA's Scientific Committees, the Commission will consider amending the REACH Regulation on the manufacture and use of PFAS, taking into account the substance-related risks and the socio-economic impact of a restriction and the availability of alternatives. The Commission will consider exemptions for critical uses for which no alternatives are currently available, in addition to the need to minimize emissions of PFAS for exempted uses throughout their life cycle.

Interessenträger can get involved in two public consultations - the first of which started in March 2023 and will run until September 2023.

The Commission shares the view that it is essential for Europe to empower industry to produce key products and technologies for the green and digital transitions (e.g. semiconductors, clean energy technology solutions and medical technology) in a safe and sustainable way. She is confident that the REACH process will ensure balanced decision-making.

With regard to 3M's decision to withdraw completely from PFAS production, 3M justified this with the changing business environment with regard to PFAS in both the USA and Europe. The withdrawal is therefore not only due to the fact that the REACH restriction dossier for PFAS was submitted by the German authorities, among others. In addition, 3M has assured the Commission that it will comply with all contractual obligations and will make considerable efforts to find alternatives to PFAS.

With kind regards

(electronic signature)
Kerstin Jorna