



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
 DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL MARKET, INDUSTRY, ENTREPRENEURSHIP
 AND SMES
 Ecosystems I: Chemicals, Food, Retail
 The Director

Brussels
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Subject: EU Green Deal/PFAS restriction proposal

Dear

Thank you for your email dated 8 September to Commissioner Breton in which you express concerns about possible negative consequences of a PFAS restriction to the medical technology sector in Europe. Commissioner Breton has asked us to reply on his behalf.

Pollution from PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) is a serious human health and environmental concern, considering the large number of cases of soil and water contamination across Europe – including drinking water. At the same time, PFAS are needed in critical applications, for example in the digital and energy sectors (e.g. semiconductors, electrolyzers and membranes for green hydrogen production) and the medical sector. Under the REACH Regulation, five national authorities (from the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway) have proposed a broad ban with some derogations on the use of PFAS. This proposal is currently undergoing an independent scientific assessment in the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) Committees.

The Commission continues to work with all stakeholders to ensure that the future restrictions on PFAS go hand in hand with high quality health care in Europe and with our objectives in terms of strategic autonomy. Under the current REACH regulation, derogations from restrictions can be granted based on the assessment of risk, including emissions, availability of alternatives and socio-economic impacts. Therefore, the Commission envisages that derogations will be introduced for critical uses where no alternatives are currently available, while taking into account the need to minimize emissions.

While fully committed to the objectives of the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability to phase out PFAS unless essential for society, the Commission will ensure, at the time of deciding on a restriction of PFAS under REACH, the necessary consistency with other key EU policy objectives, key in terms of strategic autonomy.

Yours sincerely,

(e-signed)
Kristin SCHREIBER