

From: [REDACTED]@posteo.de>
Sent: Monday, July 17, 2023 4:35 PM
To: ECHA EO <executive-director@echa.europa.eu>
Cc: [REDACTED]@outlook.de>
Subject: World chemicals conference - sustainable chemicals and materials policy

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Dear Ms. Sharon McGuinness,

I am writing to you on behalf of the German section of Friends of the Earth (BUND). Though mainly responsible for European chemicals policy ECHA will have a strong role at the World Chemicals Conference in September. Preparing for this conference we revised our position on a sustainable chemicals and materials policy.

Not only UNEP Secretary-General Inger Anderson but many scientists, politicians and NGOs speak of a triple crisis: climate change, biodiversity loss and chemicals-related pressures are overburdening planetary boundaries and are interlinked. On the occasion of the World Chemicals Conference in Bonn in September, we have thoroughly revised, updated and expanded our position paper "Challenges for a Sustainable Chemicals and Materials Policy", which we first published four years ago. I am enclosing an English version, which we intend to distribute in the next few weeks. Four points are particularly significant for us:

- (i) persistence is the key hazard characteristic of chemicals. Its importance is such that even substances with no other known hazardous properties should not be released into the environment. Substitution by sustainable chemicals (safe and sustainable by design) is an important goal.
- (ii) Climate and biodiversity are closely linked to chemicals and materials pressures. We will not overcome either of these world crises unless we learn to manage substance pollution.
- (iii) Continued growth in chemical production and consumption is exceeding the planetary boundaries. We need to find ways to stop and reverse this trend and to live more sufficiently. This includes a circular economy worthy of the name.
- (iv) To achieve the global goals, we need to work towards a global framework convention for sustainable management of chemicals and materials. We have useful and important individual conventions like Basel and Stockholm and, in the future, on plastics. But unlike climate and biodiversity, we have nothing comparable on the third crisis. We know that there is currently no clear political will for a legally binding framework agreement. But it need not remain an illusion; because the pressure to act is increasing and so is the awareness that we have a global problem here. We hope that the Science Policy Panel (SPP) currently under negotiation will help generate effective pressure for action from the scientific community.

We intend to present our ideas in a side event during the World Chemicals Conference. We would be pleased if our paper is interesting for you and you can support and distribute our ideas.

In addition to our position paper I add the slides of my talk at icce23 in Venice last month that may give a short impression of our ideas.

Best regards,

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