

ENER/1703 - Online conference organised by European Chemical Regions Network (ECRN), in collaboration with ChemSkills project on u-PFAS

Meeting date and place

Meeting held on 19/06/2024 10:00 online

Participating organisation(s) representative(s)

[REDACTED]	EUROPEAN CHEMICAL REGIONS NETWORK	Contact, Participant
[REDACTED]	EUROPEAN CHEMICAL REGIONS NETWORK	Contact, Participant, Requester
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Main issues discussed

Short records from the Online Conference for DG Ener hierarchy on the u-PFAs restriction.

The online conference on the Universal PFAS restriction organised by the European Chemical Regions Network on 12 July 2024.

About 80 participants online. The notes are for ENER/ JRC with cc to GROW to inform on the main points raised. EC: [REDACTED] (GROW), [REDACTED] (ENER). ENER in listening mode.

DG GROW, Martijn Beekman gave a very comprehensive presentation of the ongoing PFAs restriction:

1. There are already restrictions on certain types of the PFAs, which are governed under the Stockholm Convention. Some other types of PFAs (C8 and C6 groups) are expected to be regulated in a **separate Regulation on POP- Persistent Organic Pollution**.
2. Currently, most of the pollution is caused by the **PFAs in fire fighting foams**. The Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) and Social Economic Assessment Committee (SEAC) have finalised their opinions for the restriction on placing on the market and the COM proposal is under preparation.
3. **The U-PFAs Restriction- this is the largest restriction ever under the (current) REACH Directive**, which is a group restriction. The dossier has been submitted by 5 States (DE, NO, SE, NL). The consultation has run for 6 months in 2023 has received about 5.600 comments/ opinions and triggered very large request for meetings to DG GROW/ ENV. The largest amount of opinions were submitted in the sectors 20% (electronics/ semiconductors), 14% (transport), **12% (energy)**, 11% (medical devices), **10% (fluorinated gasses)**. [REDACTED]
4. The REA and SEAC committees evaluate the use of PFAs by sectors. In March 24 (consumer mixtures, cosmetics), June 24 (metals and metal products), September 24 (textile, food, packaging, petroleum), December 24 (F gasses, transport, construction).
5. DG GROW clarified that there **could be exemptions based on the current Directive, based on the factors such as risks during the life time, availability of the alternatives and socio economic impacts**. GROW referred also to the strategic autonomy for manufacturing some of the products.

Global situation: [REDACTED] Ecorys

- USA (together with Israel and Malaysia have not ratified the Stockholm Convention).
- Limitation of PFAs in the USA: drinking water (National Drinking Water Regulation)
- USA Environmental Agency has issued the National Roadmap 2021-2024.

-In addition, at USA state level, 28 states have adopted restrictions. Some States like Maine are moving ahead to full restrictions of PFAs

-UK: they have a UK REACH that follows the EU REACH Directive, contemplate the restriction in fire foams and in the drinking water.

South Holland oral presentation: very interesting points from the point of view of the society-

-**Minimisation obligation in the permits of substances of high concern** in the regional legislation. More stringent policy than other regions.

-For many processes, there is an alternative, **for example obligation on companies for filtering emissions, the province tightens the license.**

-Approach to genX (not sure)- **PFAs- 6200 kg/ annually- (2013)- 2kg/ year (example) to water**

-**Regional authority advised not to "eat vegetables and eggs" in the region where the disposal to water and land of PFAs were found.**

-Very strong lobby in the Netherlands to anchor practices of PFAS

-As regional authority they advise to **ban the uses that are "not essential"**- please note that this definition is currently not in the scope of current REACH Directive

-The newly elected members of the EP will act at the European level to act on the file

-**Develop the alternatives as soon as possible, referring specifically to the Energy and Medical sectors.**

Marie Dalstein, Federation of the European Cookware, Cutlery&Houseware Industries (FEC) position on the restriction of PFAs:

-General position of the FEC association is against the general risk assessment which is adopted in the evaluation of the PFA restriction dossier

-According to the FEC, there would be **no scientific basis that coated cooking and baking materials do not pose a risk to the human health during the "use phase"** as the release of polymers would take place at "much higher" temperature than cooking

-**Loss of direct jobs in Europe, and tremendous competitive advantage to the non EU countries**

-Referring to the estimation by ECHA on extrapolation of the emission losses of 100 t/year plant for food contact materials

-Additional concerns in the documents submitted to ECHA related to the Thermal processing of municipal waste (burning of waste) or to the soil disposal of waste

Chem Service referring specifically to the cooking devices

-Large application of PFAs, new technologies (electrolysers, batteries, turbines, heat pumps) but also cooking appliances

-Pledges that there would be no risk in the cooking/ baking appliances, that actually these coatings would be beneficial (less fat use, etc)

-2 ways of coating the cooking and baking: the rolling is safer (no exhaust) than spraying

-Ceramic alternative would be less/no PFAs, but only works with spraying, and could release additional metals (aluminium). Stainless steel is persistent but does not have the non stick property.

Directorate or unit

ENER.B.5.001

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