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News Alert:

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PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON HARMONISED CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF THREE CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

The European Chemicals Agency has today published on its website a public consultation on the proposal to harmonise the classification and labelling of three chemical substances. Comments are welcome on the proposal within the next 45 days. All comments will be taken into account in the subsequent decision-making process.

The substances in this consultation, submitted by Ireland, France and the Netherlands, are:

- **Tris[2-chloro-1-(chloromethyl)ethyl] phosphate (TDCP)** (Ireland) – which is used as an additive flame retardant (i.e. it is physically combined with the material being treated rather than chemically combined) and is proposed to be classified as a category 3 carcinogen.
- **Tetrahydrofuran** (France) – which is used as a solvent or for synthesis (e.g. motor fuels, pharmaceuticals, synthetic perfumes and insecticides) and is proposed to be classified as a category 3 carcinogen; irritating to the eyes and the respiratory system; highly flammable; and because it may form explosive peroxides.
- **Abamectin (a combination of Avermectin B1a and Avermectin B1b)** (Netherlands) – which is used as an insecticide and acaricide (a chemical that kills mites). Abamectin is proposed to be classified as category 3 for reproductive toxicity (posing a possible risk of harm to the unborn child); as very toxic when inhaled or swallowed; as toxic because of the danger of serious damage to health of prolonged exposure; and as very toxic to the aquatic environment. Abamectin has to have a harmonised classification because it is a pesticide active substance.

The Irish, Dutch and French authorities have submitted to ECHA comprehensive dossiers on these substances and asked for their classification and labelling to be harmonised across the European Union.

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Notes to Editors

ECHA

The European Chemicals Agency in Helsinki, Finland, manages the REACH Regulation and the recently adopted Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation. Together, they form the foundation for ECHA – with the aim of protecting human health and the environment, and ensuring the competitiveness of European industry. An important means to achieving this goal is to provide information which ensures the safe use of chemicals.

Why harmonise?

Suppliers of chemicals (substances and mixtures) across Europe have a legal obligation to evaluate the hazards of chemicals and to classify and label them in an appropriate way before placing them on the market.

However, individual EU Member States (via their competent authorities) or industry may ask for the classification and labelling of a substance to be harmonised across Europe. This may happen in three situations:

- Where the substance is either:
 - carcinogenic;
 - mutagenic;
 - toxic for reproduction; and/or
 - a respiratory sensitizer.
- When the substance is a biocide or pesticide (designed to control harmful organisms) or
- When there is a need to harmonise the classification at EU level, other hazard classes than those listed above may be proposed, for example when the suppliers classify the same substance in a different or an incorrect way.

Procedure

The proposal for harmonisation is submitted to ECHA along with a dossier which outlines the scientific reasons for making the request. ECHA receives these proposals and, together with its Committee for Risk Assessment, ensures that the dossier is complete and consistent. It then organises a public consultation. You will find details of all the current proposals for consultation on our website.

The consultation period lasts for 45 days, and, at the end of it, ECHA forwards all comments received to the Member State or industry who had submitted the proposal, so that they can provide their responses.

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The proposal, the comments and the responses will then be forwarded to ECHA's Committee for Risk Assessment which consists of scientific experts from all the EU and EEA Member States and observers from stakeholder organisations. The Committee will issue a scientific opinion on the proposal which ECHA will forward to the European Commission. The Commission then decides, on the basis of the advice from a regulatory committee of the EU Member States, on the classification and labelling of the substance concerned.

Publication of result

If the proposal to harmonise is accepted, the substance will be added to the list of harmonised classifications in Annex VI, part 3 of the CLP Regulation.

The harmonised classifications will also be made available on ECHA's website.

Thereafter, all manufacturers, importers and users of the substance in the EU will need to abide by the new harmonised classification and labelling, enabling the ultimate users to be better informed about the substance, its potential effects and how best to make use of it safely.

For media questions, please contact press@echa.europa.eu

Further Information

The public consultation on the proposals for harmonised classification & labelling can be accessed at:

http://echa.europa.eu/consultations/harmonised_cl_en.asp

Information about the new EU regulation on classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures, the so called CLP Regulation is available at:

http://echa.europa.eu/classification_en.asp

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