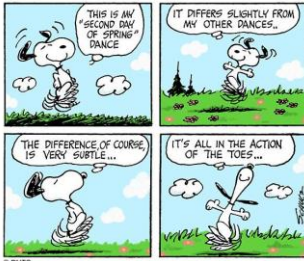


EUROMETAUX CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT NEWS



Please join us in March:

- **9 March: CSS Project Group meeting**
- **18 March: CARACAL Taskforce meeting**
- **21-24 March: Chemicals Management Spring Week**
- **31 March: Water Taskforce meeting**

Contents

COMMISSION	3
EU AGENCIES.....	4
ECHA COMMITTEES	4
EUROMETAUX CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT	4
CHEMICALS STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY	5
ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN	6
REACH REGISTRATIONS	7
RISK MANAGEMENT	7
EVALUATION	7
INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS.....	8
WATER	8
TOOLS	9
METALS ENVIRONMENT EXPOSURE DATA (MEED) program	9
OUTREACH	9
OTHERS	9
CALENDAR.....	11
GENERAL INFORMATION & ACRONYMS.....	12

Dear All,

You all know the “three wise monkeys” that are identified with the proverbial “see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil”. You can find them as figurines, prints, referred to in discourses and of course as emojis on your phone. They have been associated with a variety of meanings, ranging from being of good mind, speech and action, to a -more sarcastic-reference to those who deal with impropriety by turning a blind eye.

There are also some versions where two monkeys are peeping and listening, while the third has a finger on its lips and they rather seem to reflect the proverb ‘Hear all, see all, say nowt’ or Audi, vide, tace, si vis vivere in pace’ (translated by ‘hear, see, but be silent if you wish to live in peace’).

To avoid an immediate reaction from my kids, I will directly admit that I am a bad, not up-to-date user of emojis: I use the smiling one to say I am happy, give a hug using the smiley with 3 hearts and had not grasped before writing this editorial that the see-no-evil monkey emoji is commonly used to imply, “I can’t believe what I’m seeing”, the hear-no-evil monkey emoji suggests that people hear things they don’t want to hear and that the say-no-evil monkey can be used to express one’s reaction for saying the wrong thing in the wrong situation... OK, age?

Well, I could not refrain myself from thinking about the symbolism of the three monkeys in some recent advocacy interactions. Indeed, the distance between the different interlocutors seemed to be so large, so insurmountable that it felt that the words were simply hanging in the virtual (!) ether, being pondered on by a bunch of ‘wise apes’ (including the extra frantic ‘chat-no-evil’ ones), looking uncertain on how to transform these words into a good action ...or peace. Although the objectives were clear and common -as established during the first 5 minutes of the call- the speakers carried on afterwards by referring to different realities, stressing hurdles that were unknown to the others (and even hardly explainable), to not feeling considered because of the ‘too far from my desk syndrome’. After 90 minutes of exchanges, it seemed the discussion could last forever or should have stopped 85 minutes earlier as ‘worlds seemed to part’.

Frustrating? Sure. Useless? Maybe.

But more than that, questioning once again on how to best cope with this kind of situation.

I fully realise that reactions to these circumstances (during-after) follow a ‘moodal¹’ distribution: one will be tempted to kick hard to ‘shake and wake the apes up’, another will rather observe and get him/herself some comfort mignonettes, a third one will run away in despair...writing in follow-up angry letters with plenty of bold and colours.

But there is no generic rule as so much depends on dynamics and the actors in place.

One choice we do make in EM -and I fully acknowledge that it may irritate - is to invest in remaining in the interaction. We believe that generally, not always though, investing time - (a lot, part of which is not visible to you) in understanding the differences in realities, illustrating why some of the words hanging in the ether could become swords for one or the other - will be more of help in the longer term and better fulfil our mandate of being an interface.

Is not kicking hard a way to avoid conflicts or cowardice? Undoubtedly, there must be some element of truth in this: as most (!) other human beings, we prefer peace to war, but on the other hand I can hardly accuse the CM staff of avoiding struggles, as they continue to battle on. And maybe, it is also important here to recall one additional dimension in advocacy, one can (unfortunately) not ignore: some apes in the discussion have more power in the beginning than others and will most probably be those who draw conclusions. The power for example to keep the invitation open to join in the discussions. Unfortunately, being part of the ball, is not only a question of having credibility and good arguments: sometimes you also need the right dress and dancing shoes.

But to conclude, we may indeed diverge on some modalities and approaches: but one thing you must rest assured of: is that your interests are always what we defend first.

Violaine Verougstraete

¹ sum of the mood and modal distributions 😊

COMMISSION

REACH Revision: Preparation of replies to the open Public- and CARACAL Consultations

Commission has launched the Open Public Consultation (OPC) for the revision of REACH, with 15 April as deadline. Commission's objective for this targeted revision is to ensure that the provisions of the REACH Regulation reflect the ambitions on innovation and a high level of protection of health and the environment, as provided for in the CSS. The consultation covers proposed changes in the Registration (information requirements and simplification of the information in the supply chain), Evaluation, Authorisation/Restriction and Enforcement. In parallel with this OPC, several separate 'targeted' stakeholder consultations and CARACAL consultations are running in parallel, primarily seeking more detailed, technical information on the proposed options to change REACH.

Eurometaux has set up a Working Group of members interested in sharing their expertise and providing input, but also to ensure consistency between the different discussions that are ongoing (e.g., ZPAP, CSS, CLP Revision). The first meeting was held on 15 February and the group agreed on a series of guiding principles on what the chemicals management system should ideally look like. The group also reviewed the list of (technical) topics to be further addressed in the sector's contributions to the CARACAL consultation (deadline: 24 February).

The respective Taskforces on Registration, Evaluation and Risk Management had calls in follow-up to discuss and draft the input to CARACAL (also see below), resulting in a series of solid papers that were submitted on 24 February. These papers represent first inputs in an advocacy process that will last in 2022 and 2023. The technical comments will have to be complemented by thought-through outreach, communication tools to ensure the sector's positions and recommendations, but also ensure that its continuous commitment to 'safe use' and its specificities are well reflected in the REACH review proposal to come out end of 2022.

The Working Group will be reconvened to discuss these next steps in advocacy. The minutes of the first meeting were circulated on 17 February (more information: the CM team).

CASG-ED: Overview of ongoing activities

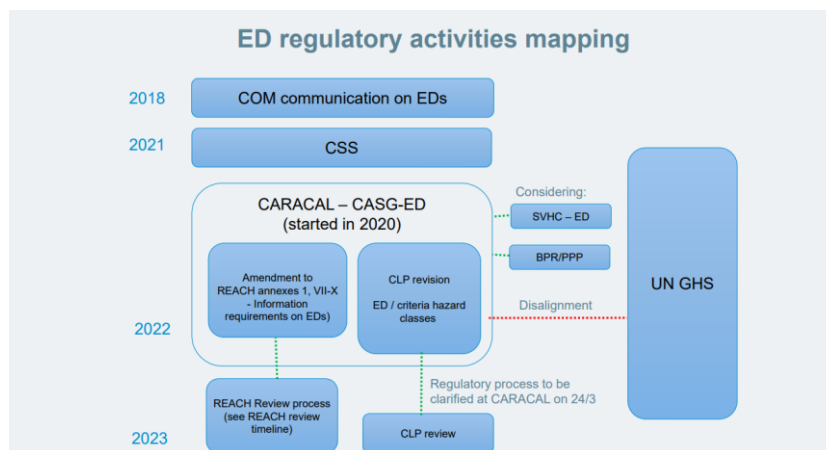
The Eurometaux Chemicals Management Steering Committee meeting was a good opportunity to provide an overview of the EU regulatory activities on Endocrine Disruptors (EDs). It was recalled that concerns on EDs already emerged in the 1990s, with discussions at EU level effectively starting in 1996. Commission recognised EDCs (Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals) as a health and environmental hazard in its "Community Strategy for Endocrine Disruptors" issued in December 1999. In 2018, in response to EU Parliament concerns, the EU Commission released a communication on EDs and in 2021 the topic was addressed as part of the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability (CSS).

A dedicated CARACAL Expert Group (CASG-ED) was initiated in 2020, aiming at revising information requirements under REACH and introducing hazard classes and the related criteria in CLP. The discussions in the CASG-ED took into account how substances had so far been identified as Substances of Very High Concern (SVHC) due to ED properties, as well as the ED identification in the biocides and pesticides regulatory frameworks.

One of the key requests, raised repeatedly by industry, was to keep the CLP classification aligned with the UN GHS. However, the EU Commission considered that this would be a too lengthy process and preferred to proceed independently from the discussions at international level.

The revision of information requirements listed in the REACH Annexes will be part of the REACH revision process, while the regulatory process to introduce ED hazards classes/criteria in CLP is expected to be communicated at the next CARACAL meeting scheduled on 24 March.

The main remaining concerns identified by Eurometaux in relation to CLP are: i) the absence of waiving possibilities, ii) the use of *in vitro* only data for drawing conclusions on ED properties, which is not appropriate for metals, and iii) the approach proposed for classifying 'More Than one Constituent Substances' (MOCS). Eurometaux believes that a dedicated guidance for metals and inorganics will be needed. On the latter, dedicated discussions are expected to be initiated in the coming months in the Environment and Human Health Taskforces, but also with the UVCB platform (more information: Marnix Vangheluwe, Violaine Verougstraete and Lorenzo Zullo)



EU AGENCIES

ECHA COMMITTEES

RAC-60 Restriction Working Group: restriction on the use of lead in ammunition- integrated risk assessment approach

This complex and extensive restriction proposal includes interesting novelties like the combination of different risk management tools like labelling, substitution, reduction of use, environmental conditions, etc. It introduces an integrated qualitative, comparative risk assessment approach, which allows to consider different health and environmental risk endpoints like the impact of lead on groundwater, indirect bird poisoning, lead contaminated meat consumption, into one risk management approach. These aspects justify Eurometaux's active participation and close follow-up of the case. While it was expected that RAC would finalise its opinion in March, this has now been postponed to June in view of the massive number of comments received during the Public Consultation (closed in 2021). Hence, it is still unclear how RAC will consider some of the critical issues raised along the comments like e.g., on alternative materials that do not release lead. On the other hand, the RAC rapporteurs have followed the recommendations made by the metal user sector on the environmental impact assessment, such as considering different scenarios to better focus on those of higher risks. The final Working Group meeting in April and the plenary in June will be decisive on how RAC will consider and implement the new qualitative risk management approach. This approach will also be presented during the next Science Forum meeting (more information: Frederik Verdonck and Hugo Waeterschoot).

EUROMETAUX CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT

Chemicals Management Steering Committee: 1st 2022 meeting - hybrid!

It was a delight to hold this first meeting of the year as a hybrid one, hoping that the future will bring more and more in-person gatherings. The meeting started with the announcement of a new co-chair for the Science Forum (Dr David Boyle from the Cobalt Institute). This was followed by a debriefing on the first outcome of the privileged contacts exercise, with measures being taken to follow-up as well as possible to answer to all members comments & requests.

The usual culprits' -Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability (CSS), Zero Pollution Action Plan (ZPAP) – latest developments were presented. These included:

- a status update of the high-level messaging and a first discussion on whether the lack of value chain consideration (although promoted in the CSS) could create issues
- the REACH Revision and key aspects to raise as a sector, relating to Risk Management and Endocrine Disruptors
- updates on a possible Air Quality Project ([more info here](#)), on the MEED participation and its next steps ([more info here](#))
- a presentation on key issues for Water, requesting advice from the Committee on how to address procedural issues ([more info here](#)).

The meeting concluded with a welcomed discussion on the boundaries of Eurometaux's role/work vis à vis CLP advocacy and Kai-Sebastian Melzer (NI, BIAC vice-chair) kindly presenting highlights of interest for our sector of the 50 years OECD Chemicals Programme.

The draft minutes will be circulated asap (more information: Ailsa Lee and Violaine Verougstraete).

CHEMICALS STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability High-Level Roundtable Sherpas Group meeting: *focus on enforcement*

On 25 November, at the second meeting of the CSS High Level Round Table (HLRT), the members discussed the joint report on "Enforcement and compliance of chemical legislation". The HLRT approved and adopted the report, which includes a set of 10 recommendations. At the end of the HLRT meeting, it was suggested to organise a Sherpas' "breakout session" to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations. Since November, the Commission services (DG GROW) has prepared a table containing possible actions to implement each recommendation, either at EU or at national level.

The table was discussed at the breakout session of the Sherpas on 23 February 2022. The purpose of the meeting was for the Commission to present its proposals, and for the Sherpas to provide feedback and suggestions for additions and improvements. The table and its content will be modified by the Commission in view of the debate and the input from the Sherpas. The final version of the document will be presented to the next HLRT meeting scheduled for 18 May 2022 (more information: Simon Cook).

3Cs messaging sub-group: *first meeting*

The Chemicals Management team has done a lot of work on messaging over the last year, in collaboration with other Eurometaux groups. This has been driven by the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, what the proposed approach(es) may mean for metals, and how the CSS aligns with other major EU policy objectives including the Green Deal and Industrial Strategy. The idea to form a small sub-group came from an action in the Chemicals Management Steering Committee meeting in December, in order to gather ideas to elaborate improved communication visuals and build on all the work that has been done up to now. The sub-group is strategic – relating to what messages need to be developed, how they are packaged and how they are delivered and used. Group members cover several commodity associations, some industry members, a national federation, and some other Eurometaux functions and groups (e.g., Communications and Sustainability Committees, ZPAP Project Group).

A kick-off meeting took place on 14 February, to review the history and status of recent work, and to set a path forward. The session was productive with much valuable input from the participants. There are many actions to work through, many relating to the Sustainable Metals Concept and how it can be adjusted, improved, and used with a range of external stakeholders in the short to medium term (more information: Simon Cook).

CSS Cross Industry meeting: *Safe and Sustainable-by-Design (SSbD)*

An alignment call of this group took place on 3 February, to follow on from the previous call in November and to exchange information and compare views. Participation was relatively low, with only around half of the sectors involved in the group participating in the call. Activities on SSbD are increasing significantly, with meaningful discussions starting within the context of the CSS High Level Roundtable. On 22 March there will be a full day workshop organised by the Commission (Joint Research Centre / DG RTD – Research & Innovation) on the methodology being proposed by the Commission to set criteria for SSbD chemicals and materials. In parallel, Cefic has organised an event in the European Parliament on 24 March (Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development). Eurometaux has been invited to participate in a panel discussion on SSbD, as Cefic's value chain partner.

During the cross industry call, a tour de table took place to invite sharing of views by the sector associations participating. Cefic, Eurometaux and AISE (detergents and cleaning products) have developed positions on SSbD – but all other sector groups are either starting discussions in their value chains or are monitoring developments in a reactive manner (more information: Kamila Slupek and Simon Cook).

ZERO POLLUTION ACTION PLAN

ZPAP: Soil: *developments on soil and set-up of a sub-group*

Activities on soil, as announced in the Zero Pollution Action Plan (ZPAP), have now been launched. More specifically:

- The Commission has published a call for evidence for the [Impact Assessment of the directive on Soil Health-protecting, sustainably managing and restoring EU soils](#), to which Eurometaux will submit comments.
- A Technical Working Group meeting on soil pollution, led by the Commission/the Joint Research Centre (JRC), was held on 16 March. The meeting discussed the Clean Soil Outlook (CSO) report and was divided into two main parts: one on point sources the other on diffuse pollution. The way metals are handled in this CSO is of concern, as the JRC/EC do not seem to have all the background information on inorganics and their specificities. Aspects like background concentrations, spatial variations, anthropogenic contribution, bioavailability, etc. are not well considered in the current work. Hence Eurometaux has indicated a strong willingness to contribute.
- The Commission/JRC is also considering the development of a Watch List and a list of priority substances for soil, following a similar approach as for water under the Water Framework Directive. There is also an opportunity to contribute and follow this process.

Overall, there is a lot of work to be done on the soil file to ensure inorganics' specificities are well considered. It was therefore decided to set up a technical soil sub-group (reporting to the Water Taskforce on technical aspects and to the ZPAP project group on advocacy) to assist our EM designated expert on this topic, Koen Oorts from ARCHE. The first meeting of this sub-group is scheduled for 11 March 2022 (more information: Lara Van de Merckt)

ZPAP: Air Quality: *Stakeholder Survey and EEA briefing*

On 11 February, Eurometaux responded to the Targeted Stakeholder Survey (TSS) on the revision of the Ambient Air Quality Directives. Due to its length, Commission divided the TSS in two parts: the first part focusing on Policy Area 1 (*Closer alignment of the EU air quality standards with the latest recommendations of the World Health Organization*) and the second addressing questions on Policy Areas 2 and 3 (*Improving the current air quality legislative framework, including provisions on penalties and public information; and strengthening of air quality monitoring, modelling and plans*). The response (including the supporting documents) was circulated to the ZPAP Project Group. Overall, Eurometaux calls for improvements in air quality to be achieved in the most cost-effective approach possible, without disproportionate costs for the NFM sector.

On 16 February, the European Environment Agency (EEA) published the briefing '[Managing Air Quality in Europe](#)', together with a news article highlighting that '[Emissions from road traffic and domestic heating behind breaches of EU air quality standards across Europe](#)'. Most violations of EU air quality limits are caused by emissions from road traffic and domestic heating: the Agency found that 64% of all exceedances reported between 2014 and 2020 were linked to emissions from road traffic, which was the main cause of NO₂ exceedances, whilst domestic heating was linked to 14% of all exceedances and was the main cause of PM₁₀ exceedances. Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the U.K. reported road traffic as the only source of air pollution limit violations. Domestic heating was most often reported as a source of excess pollution in Eastern and Southern European countries including Croatia, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

This also highlights the need for our sector to have strong data and scientific evidence to quantify our "actual" contribution, also in relation to other sectors.

ZPAP Air Quality: *a project to get insights on the sector's possible contribution to the impacts*

To develop proportionate and effective air quality policies, it is crucial to increase the understanding of the sector's impact on emissions, to identify the main contributions and to design actions considering the added value for economy/society. A potential project aiming at reaching this understanding was first discussed with the ZPAP Project Group in December, and revised in follow-up.

In a nutshell: the project aims at increasing this understanding by evaluating the impact of industry stack- and fugitive emissions on human exposure and health by quantifying factory emissions attributable fraction to ground level concentration levels, population attributable exposure fraction and health impact by using the Burden of Disease (BoD) concept accepted by WHO. The deliverables of the project will be instrumental to support Eurometaux in advocacy and communication activities towards evidence-based decision making. The project timeline has been defined to feed such deliverables in time for the regulatory debate, ensuring that the evidence will be available before the adoption of the legislative proposal at the end of 2022, to further support our position in the discussions of the legislative proposal in Council and Parliament.

On 22 February, following expressions of interest to contribute to the Air Quality Project from potential member sponsors, a joint online meeting was held to further clarify the added value of the project, to explore how to make use of existing data and funding. It was agreed that the Air Quality Project should maximally make use of available data, hence a first step (pre-study) was launched, and a template was circulated to gain an overview of the data already available and check its fitness against the assessment parameters (including the identification of possible data gaps). Based on the outcomes of the pre-study, sponsors and EM will review the project proposal and agree on next steps. Those interested are welcome to send back the template by 15 March (more information: Lorenzo Marotti).

REACH REGISTRATIONS

Registration Taskforce meeting: *Eurometaux response to CARACAL document CA/09/2022*

The REACH Registration Taskforce met on 22 February to review Commission's proposals on the extension of the REACH information requirements and on the increased use of New Approach Methods (NAMs).

As a general principle, Eurometaux did not support a blanket approach to increase information requirements for all substances. In particular, it was suggested that for low tonnage substances it would be appropriate to focus on those substances that 'matter most'. From this perspective, developing a tiered risk-based screening approach that initially focuses on already available uses and exposure data is seen as a proportionate way forward.

Eurometaux expressed support for the development of New Approach Methodologies as long as the test methods are robust, reliable, solidly validated (also against relevant vertebrate test data) for metals and inorganics. It was also stressed that speeding up their adoption should not compromise their quality and international regulatory acceptability (more information: Federica Iaccino, Lorenzo Zullo and Violaine Verougstraete).

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Management Taskforce meeting: *refining the input on the REACH reform for CARACAL*

The Risk Management Taskforce met on 21 February to discuss and refine the draft input on Commission's proposals for the reform on Authorisation/Restriction. Building on '8 guiding principles', the Taskforce responded to the series of questions and proposals entailed in a paper circulated to CARACAL.

While acknowledging that the Commission had selected different scenarios for the Impact Assessment phase, the Taskforce considered that none of the offered options (no change, some limited streamlining of Authorisation and Restrictions, and the merge of both tools) on its own would be the best way forward. Hence, the Taskforce agreed to select the best elements of each of the options to build a solid risk-based and efficient risk management system.

Key features in such a system would include: a risk-based selection of chemicals to manage, a 'use-based' assessment of the risks and selection of the best risk management option, a prioritisation system that includes exposure assessment as a key consideration for risk control, interactive/input possibilities for industry in the setting of the most relevant risk management measure and a regular, retrospective assessment of the implemented measures.

In addition, Eurometaux pleads that for industrial uses, no generic 'horizontal' restrictions but only the 'classical' restrictions under REACH Article 68 (1) be used. The input did not go into the details of the Essential Use Concept (EUC) or the Generic Risk Management Approach (GRA) as the workshops promised by the Commission had still to take place. The consolidated input, also circulated to the Chemicals Management Steering Committee, was submitted on 24 February (more information: France Capon, Klaus Kamps and Hugo Waeterschoot).

EVALUATION

Evaluation Taskforce meeting: *discussing the input on Evaluation for CARACAL*

On 22 February, the Evaluation Taskforce discussed a series of comments on Commission's proposals to reform the REACH Evaluation activities. Unlike on risk management, the Commission proposals were new and have not yet been discussed, either in CARACAL or in the Eurometaux Evaluation Taskforce.

While Commission had originally stated that changes on the Evaluation chapter of REACH would be limited, their paper proposed extensive and sometimes fundamental changes.

Based on its experience in MSC and with members' testing proposals (TPE), compliance checks (CCH), and substance evaluations (SE), the secretariat proposed a set of guiding principles for the future reform of the evaluation activities as well as first reactions on suggestions made by Commission. These principles, refined by and supported by the Taskforce include a more interactive modus operandi for the drafting of evaluation decisions and recommendations. The increased interactivity would encourage the continuous improvement of dossiers, focussing on what really matters (less effects

data gap filling when unnecessary, to paying more attention to the risk-based relevance of the additional information that is requested).

Key elements in our comments to Commission address: keep the Technical Compliance Check (TCC) focused on gaps and not on the quality of the submitted info, to ensure that updates should not be hampered or minimised, maintain a risk-based trigger for substance evaluation to focus on what really matters, give better recognition of ongoing test activity when asking additional information in a CCH or SE. We also stressed that while the adoption of decisions on simple testing proposals or repetitive Dossier Evaluations may not require the MSC's full involvement, their input is critical for all substance evaluation and complex compliance checks to ensure a good balance and well thought-through decisions (as those can only be challenged at court level). Furthermore, the Taskforce heavily opposed Commission's proposal to introduce fees for input into decisions or updates of dossiers, given those are basic "rights" and needed to improve the quality of the data. On these financial aspects it was agreed to draft a separate paper covering all aspects of the financing of ECHA's additional workload. This paper will be issued when Commission provides more clarity on ECHA's basic (also named founding) Regulation (more information: Violaine Verougstraete and Hugo Waeterschoot).

INDUSTRIAL EMISSIONS

LVIC BREF: kick-off meeting of a sub-group to support the TWG representatives

On 14 February, we had the kick-off meeting of the Large Volume Inorganic Chemicals (LVIC) BREF sub-group supporting the formal Technical Working Group (TGW) members. In order to gather feedback, the questionnaire on sulphuric acid plants that was initially prepared by EM in preparation of the WGC BREF review was circulated and members of the sub-group were asked to fill in and provide any other relevant information.

On 18 February, the EIPPCB issued the Call for Initial Positions for the LVIC BREF. In order to consolidate Eurometaux's input, we asked the sub-group to provide additional information by 14 March 2022. After that date, the Eurometaux secretariat will work on merging the feedbacks received and produce a consolidated document before the deadline of the EIPPCB (22 April). If necessary, a virtual meeting will be organised to finalise the document (more information: Lorenzo Ceccherini and Lorenzo Marotti).

WATER

Working Group Chemicals: short and dense meeting on 10 February

The last Chemicals Working Group discussed the following topics:

- The 2022 Watch List: the Commission will revise the Watch List again and its adoption is planned for this summer. The Joint Research Centre (JRC) has published a report on the candidates for this fourth Watch List exercise, mentioning copper and copper oxides (CuO, Cu₂O). While it was stated that copper is not actually proposed for the Watch List, it was included in the report to attract attention. The JRC concluded (using a Predicted No-Effect Concentration (PNEC) value of 1 µg/L) that it creates an EU-wide risk and hence proposes copper and copper oxides as candidates for the next prioritisation process (i.e., potential candidates for a harmonised EU Environmental Quality Standard (EQS) derivation). This will be further discussed at the next Working Group Chemicals meeting. The sector has submitted comments to the JRC/Commission on the report. Free cyanide is also proposed for the 4th list. Although the data is not EU representative, JRC's preliminary risk assessment indicates a potential risk. Euromines has written a letter to comment on this, co-signed by several stakeholders, including Eurometaux.
- The revision of the list of priority substances and the impact assessment: on silver, the Commission was very quick to comment on silver, stating only that the final opinion of SCHEER had been published. EPMF asked about the next meeting of the expert sub-group on silver. The Commission replied that it would discuss this with the JRC and get back to us soon. On nickel: Commission/JRC are currently processing the comments received in December 2021. Subsequently, the draft EQS dossier will be forwarded to the SCHEER for comments. It was asked if an expert sub-group on nickel will be formed. The JRC said that it will keep the sector informed.
- Impact assessment of the WFD: the impact assessment is underway. The draft EQS dossiers for almost all candidates' priority substances have been sent to the SCHEER. The draft Impact Assessment (IA) is due to be completed by 11 May. A meeting of the Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB) is scheduled for 8 June 2022. Adoption is still scheduled for September 2022. The second (and final) IA workshop is scheduled for 18 March 2022. The aim of this workshop is to present the draft IA ("high-level") results and selected policy options and to gather feedback.
- The next WG Chemicals is tentatively scheduled for 4 May. This has been announced as the final WG meeting to discuss the revision of the Priority Substances List, IA and Watchlist.

In general, most of our comments/questions were brushed aside by the Commission, still under pressure to finalise the process and hence not following the agreed procedure. This means that the procedural concerns we had last year are still unaddressed. Eurometaux will draft a letter outlining the general issues encountered and aim at having it co-signed by as many stakeholders as possible involved in the WG Chemicals (industry, NGOs,...), to send to DG Environment and the Secretary General.

These topics will be further discussed during the next Water Task Force meeting on 31 March (more information: Lara Van de Merckt).

TOOLS

Bioelution: more discussions at OECD Expert Group level and a 'testing proposal'

A revised draft Test Guideline 'on the determination of relative metal/metalloid release using a simple simulated gastric fluid' (in other words, the protocol of the gastric bioelution test) was circulated mid- December to the OECD Working Group on Test Guidelines for comments by early February. Once again, we received a series of comments (>100) and some of the issues raised by the National Coordinators/Experts were discussed during a call on 18 February. A key issue is the selection of the sample to be tested. Several questions were posed regarding the particle size, foreseeable uses, lifecycle, and the matching between the tested material and the reference sample. Some of these aspects relate much more to the applications of the data than to the protocol itself and should be discussed in the CASG Bio but a clear line between the test and its applicability is difficult to draw. Other technical issues that were discussed included the set-up of the physical repository, the generation of data for proficiency materials and the pH of the test solution. The NL also came up with a proposal for further testing to better understand a possible effect of the particle size on release. They consider that to date the amount of data on this issue is limited. The challenge is to design a test that addresses the question posed, while remaining pragmatic and useful for the test protocol itself. A bilateral discussion will take place with NL to define a possible way forward. EURL ECVAM and industry are preparing a RCOM and the next gathering with the OECD Expert Group is scheduled for June (more information: Adriana Oller and Violaine Verougstraete).

METALS ENVIRONMENT EXPOSURE DATA (MEED) program

MEED program: 2nd day MEED Workshop focussing on the launch of projects

The first day of the first MEED workshop was held in January and hence the report on its outcomes, i.e., the identification of metals and inorganics that contribute the most to the potential risk stress on the EU environment was covered in last month's newsletter.

The "January outcomes" allowed to discuss on 1 February the launch of the next tiers of the MEED program and more specifically 4 projects: the two that aim at achieving a better level of understanding on the mixture toxicity approach (concentration addition, independent action, etc.) for metal mixtures and metals/organics, the project updating the regional monitoring evidence and the project focusing on Sewage Treatment Plants (aiming to improve the assessment of consumer and professional releases by substituting for modelled release estimates).

The consultants explained how the first (literature) phase for each of these projects would be run, and ideas and complementary suggestions from the participants were collected.

The dates of the next workshops were defined with the participants as well as the resulting actions. The detailed draft minutes were circulated to the sponsors on 9 February (more information: Violaine Verougstraete, Diana Dobre and Hugo Waeterschoot).

OUTREACH

OTHERS

Innovation in the chemicals industry: Recent webinars

Innovation is a key growth engine for the European Union moving forward, and an important part of the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability, the European Green Deal, and the Industrial Strategy. From the point of view of chemicals, Safe and Sustainable by Design (SSbD) is an innovation / design philosophy that will be applied to chemicals and materials. Eurometaux participated in two recent webinars that dealt with different aspects of innovation and some of the

influences on speed and time to market (positive and negative). Both incentives (which can be both “stick” and “carrot”) and barriers to innovation were discussed.

The first was organised by **ChemSec** and looked at how chemical legislation can move the industry with the help of economic incentives. According to ChemSec, substitution of hazardous chemicals has not taken place at the expected pace under REACH. Regulatory tools are needed to drive and reward the production of safe and sustainable chemicals. Industry should be incentivised to prioritise innovation for substituting substances of concern. Frontrunners often encounter major economic barriers which need to be overcome in order to justify investments. ChemSec’s position is derived by applying the principles of “substitution” and “polluter pays” which gives a weighting more towards “stick” rather than “carrot” incentives.

The second webinar was from the **European Regulation and Innovation Forum (ERIF)**. They explained very clearly that innovation is in society’s interest as a growth engine (the Green Deal depends on a “tsunami” of innovation), but industry must be able to achieve an acceptable economic payback in order to justify the investment. A major factor in this payback is “time to market” – where a delay of as little as one year in meeting mandatory requirements for new or improved products can turn an economically viable project into a failure. The source of delays can often be the regulatory environment – e.g., lack of transparency and predictability, changes in requirements, lack of coordination between Member States. According to ERIF the EU is failing in this respect compared to other regions, and this should be addressed through better regulation (more information: Simon Cook).

Human biomonitoring :Industry statement for the HBM4EU project newspaper

In the framework of the Human biomonitoring for Europe project (HBM4EU), in which Eurometaux is involved as stakeholder, we have been given the opportunity to provide a statement/quote to be included in the printed HBM4EU newspaper for the final HBM4EU conference to be held in Brussels on 27-28 April 2022.

In cooperation with the International Cadmium Association, we have submitted two statements to highlight the importance of human biomonitoring data in understanding exposure and related impacts and the need to use them correctly (more information: Lorenzo Zullo, Violaine Verougstraete).



“Metals play a crucial role in society. They enable existing and emerging technologies and represent a strategic and recyclable resource. Managing the potential risks associated with their manufacturing and uses is a key priority. This requires in-depth knowledge on exposure and understanding the possible impacts. HBM provides very useful information to achieve this and identify where to further reduce exposure, if so needed”. [Violaine Verougstraete,

Chemicals Management Director at Eurometaux]



“The biomonitoring data collected and processed by the HBM4EU project support the conclusion that the actual levels of cadmium exposure in the general population are not likely to cause adverse health effects. This is also the result of the EU policies that regulate cadmium, enabling its production and uses while controlling the risks. The HBM4EU project monitored body excreted levels but not actually known effect indicators like kidney Retinol Binding Protein. It is therefore important to underline that these data should not be used in isolation to propose cadmium effect health indicators.” [Mik Gilles, Director International Cadmium Association]

CALENDAR

Please find here below a non-exhaustive list of the meetings that are planned for Q1 – Q2 2022.

For meetings at Eurometaux

The MCC has been opened to allow hybrid meetings with sanitary measures put in place (maximum n° of participants), **we will inform our members if our meetings will be held as hybrid or online only** (links to join will be sent ahead of the meetings).

New regulations should be put in place in March, we will keep you posted!

For those travelling to Brussels: more details on <https://www.info-coronavirus.be/en/>

For meetings at ECHA

ECHA meetings, including those of formal ECHA bodies, will be held remotely until further notice.

ECHA will keep the situation under review and will provide any further information as appropriate.

This information is published on ECHA's [website](#)

Further information on the COVID-19 situation information can be found on the [ECDC website](#)

- 3 March: stakeholder workshop on the Essential Use Concept (EUC)
- 8 March: Li CLH
- 9 March: CSS Project Group
- 7-8-9 March: stakeholder workshop on NAMs for DNT
- 07-11 March: ECHA RAC-60 Plenary & SEAC-54
- 14-18/19 March: ECHA RAC-60 Plenary (reserve) & SEAC-54
- 18 March: CARACAL Taskforce
- 21 March: stakeholder workshop on the extended generic risk management approach (GRA)
- 21-24 March: Chemicals Management Spring Week
- 23-24 March: CARACAL Meeting (TBC)
- 22 March: SSbD Commission Workshop (TBC)
- 24-25 March: ECHA MB
- 31 March: Water Taskforce
- 19-22 April: ECHA RAC-61 CLH WG
- 25 April: 2nd Zero Pollution Stakeholder Platform
- 25-29 April: ECHA RAC-61 AfA WG
- 04-05 May: ECHA RAC-61 REST WG
- 04-06 May: Metals Academy (TBC)
- 10 May: MEED Workshops 2+3
- 16-19 May: SETAC 32 (Copenhagen)
- 18 May: CSS High-Level Roundtable
- 25 May: Chemicals Management Steering Committee
- 30 May-03 June: ECHA RAC-61 Plenary (reserve) & SEAC-55
- 06/07-10 June: ECHA RAC-61 Plenary & SEAC-55
- 08-09 June: Helsinki Chemicals Forum
- 13-17 June: ECHA MSC-78
- 15-16 June: ECHA MB
- 21 June: Risk Management Taskforce
- 22 June: MEED Workshop 4

GENERAL INFORMATION & ACRONYMS

Follow the logo and check out our new Metals Gateway website.



This website is a one stop information source for regulators & risk assessors dealing with metals/metal compounds and is tailored to the specific needs of the metals industry sector.

A continuously updated list of acronyms is available under the Reach Metals Gateway (RMG)
