



European Chemical Industry Council

NEWS RELEASE

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Chemical Industry welcomes proposed revision of Biocidal Products Directive

Brussels, 15 June 2009 –Biocidal products play an essential role in keeping the environment healthy and hygienic. Their uses range from material preservation to disinfectants, anti-microbial soaps and mosquito control products, many of which we take for granted in our daily lives.

A major aim of the Biocidal Products Directive (BPD) 98/8/EC was to ensure a high level of protection for man and the environment. Cefic fully endorses this objective. The feedback from a variety of stakeholders, including industry, Member States and NGOs has been carefully considered and numerous proposals are made in the new Regulation including a harmonised fee-structure, and the introduction of a Central Agency to manage the evaluation of low risk products and new active substances.

The Agency would be able to grant Community-wide registrations of such products which will reduce the administrative burden on Member States while harmonising the evaluation process. This should accelerate the time to market of low risk products, thereby providing Industry with an incentive to develop new, innovative and even safer products to Europeans. A loophole, which allowed materials treated with substances that had not been approved in Europe via the BPD to enter the European market from other countries would be closed by the new Regulation.

The proposed Regulation would require companies to share data and prevent unnecessary animal testing. When linked with an equitable compensation scheme and data protection for those who have invested in conducting such tests to demonstrate product safety, Cefic supports this initiative. Measures to strengthen enforcement of the Regulation are essential because any delays allow unevaluated, or even banned, substances and products to remain on the market and potentially present unknown risks to man and the environment, which is totally inconsistent with the overall aim of the legislation.

A few biocidal active substances may be inherently hazardous. However, the benefits of their use and measures taken to minimise exposure to man and the environment can still enable these substances to be used in biocidal products that address serious threats to public health and hygiene, without compromising human health or the environment. These elements have been recognised in the draft Regulation.

In conclusion, biocides have essential uses in maintaining a healthy, hygienic and sustainable environment for Europeans. Additional measures that ensure a high protection for man and the environment must be taken within a more efficient and viable regulatory framework. Cefic looks forward to further discussions with all stakeholders as the new Regulation is refined.

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