

Accredited stakeholder workshop 2019 Proceedings



21 March 2019

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Accredited stakeholder workshop 2019 - proceedings**Reference:** ECHA-2019-R-08-EN**ISBN:** 978-92-9481-168-4**ISSN:** 2315-2818**Cat. Number:** ED-AK-19-001-EN-N**DOI:** 10.2823/611153**Publ.date:** April 2019**Language:** EN

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1. Summary

The aim of ECHA's strategic workshop for accredited stakeholder organisations is to discuss topical issues with key Agency's stakeholders and to gather feedback to improve current actions and inform future developments.

The 2019 event, held on 21 March in Brussels, focused on the implementation of ECHA's strategic plan for 2019-2023 and interaction with accredited stakeholders.

2. Participants

All of ECHA's 115 accredited stakeholder organisations were invited to the workshop. Altogether, 75 stakeholder representatives registered for the event, and 55 participated on the day. The participants came from 44 accredited stakeholder organisations, representing industry, civil society and academia.

From ECHA, the following directors participated in the event: Bjorn Hansen, Executive Director; Jukka Malm, Deputy Executive Director; Jack de Bruijn, Director of Prioritisation and Integration; and Christel Musset, Director of Hazard Assessment. In addition, Tiiu Bräutigam, Jutta Frick, Veera Saari and Johanna Salomaa-Valkamo from the Agency's Communications Unit attended the event, facilitating the breakout sessions and taking care of practical arrangements.

The list of participants is provided in Annex 1.

3. Content

The agenda and schedule of the workshop is provided in Annex 2.

Morning session: introducing ECHA's strategic priorities for 2019-2023

ECHA's Executive Director Bjorn Hansen opened the session by welcoming the Agency's stakeholders and thanking them for their excellent cooperation with ECHA so far. He presented the ECHA Strategic Plan 2019-2023 and explained how the Agency's work contributes to the big picture of sustainability and a circular economy. He also highlighted ECHA's new tasks and priority work areas, such as improving the compliance of registration dossiers.

Bjorn Hansen's presentation is provided in Annex 3.

Stakeholders asked several questions regarding a variety of topics, including: the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Goals; how ECHA supports improved communication to consumers on chemicals-related topics, e.g. label elements required under CLP; overall public trust in chemicals; the state of play of the work on the Waste Framework Directive database on articles containing SVHCs; the impact of chemicals on the circular economy; chemical recycling and the use of raw materials; climate and trade policies; the state of play in relation to alternatives to animal testing; grouping of chemicals; cooperation with

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third countries; the interface between the POPs Regulation and REACH; and how ECHA addresses vulnerable groups such as allergy patients.

Panel discussion: Our way forward - how to maintain public trust in EU chemicals management?

ECHA's Deputy Executive Director Jukka Malm moderated the panel discussion on public trust in EU chemicals management. The panelists were Tatiana Santos from EEB, Erwin Annys from Cefic, and Bjorn Hansen, Christel Musset and Jack de Bruijn from ECHA.

The panel discussion started with a question on public awareness of chemicals and on whether people's confidence in chemicals is increasing. The majority of respondents to an online poll open to all event participants said that they expect the brand value of REACH to increase in the future. The panellists highlighted that there has been an increase in public awareness of chemicals, that chemicals are a very complex and sensitive topic, and that alongside European authorities and chemicals companies, national authorities also have a key role in communication about the safe use of chemicals.

The discussion continued on ECHA's first strategic priority, **the identification and risk management of substances of concern**.

To accelerate the pace of risk management and improve the compliance of chemicals data, ECHA is increasingly working with groups of substances and will be increasing its targets for compliance checks on registration dossiers. Around June 2019, the Agency and the European Commission will publish a Joint Action Plan, which aims at increasing the percentage of registration dossiers checked for compliance and proposes further actions to accelerate the work.

Grouping of substances should bring efficiency gains in screening and substance evaluation, and accelerate the identification of substances for EU-wide regulatory risk management. The goal is to address groups of chemicals of concern through the most appropriate regulatory instrument as quickly as possible, also avoiding regrettable substitution. In April, ECHA will publish its Integrated Regulatory Strategy report. It provides an overview of the so-called universe of registered substances and of the state of play of all screening, evaluation and risk management activities.

The panel's industry representatives highlighted industry's commitment to the improvement of the quality of registration dossiers, and referred to an upcoming action plan and existing partnerships with ECHA. The NGO panellist wondered whether ECHA is too being soft towards industry on the matter of compliance, as too much safety information on chemicals is still missing. She also said that the substance evaluation process is very long and often does not lead to risk management. ECHA responded to this claim by stating that, in practice, the majority of identified cases are followed up with actions, but that indeed a number of cases are still awaiting further initiative from Member States, in particular as regards harmonised classification and labelling.

The panellists agreed that good quality data on chemicals is in everybody's interest. They also mentioned alternatives to animal testing, referring to new approach

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methodologies under development and the challenges related to read-across. In addressing the non-compliance of registration dossiers regarding long-term endpoints, animal testing continues to be necessary.

One of the questions received from the audience was about the interface between the POPs Regulation and REACH and the synergies gained by ECHA through the new tasks under the regulation. ECHA replied that it expects the majority of future proposed POP substances to first go through a restriction process under REACH, and that therefore significant synergies can be found. The panellists furthermore discussed possible cooperation with academia for scientific input in identifying new POPs and providing scientific advice to the PBT Expert Group.

In discussing ECHA's second strategic priority – **safe and sustainable use of chemicals by industry** – the main topic was tracking substances in articles.

ECHA's management replied to audience questions regarding the database on articles containing SVHCs that ECHA will need to develop under the Waste Framework Directive. The development of the database is currently on hold due to ongoing resource discussions with the Commission, and therefore no further interaction with stakeholders is taking place at this time. Due to the delay, the first version of the database will most likely not be ready by the legal deadline of January 2020. The potential delay by ECHA would not need to impact the submission deadline in 2021 for the industry.

The panellists mentioned the upcoming AskREACH project to better track substances in articles and to help raise consumer awareness of SVHCs. Also, artificial intelligence could be used more in the future to obtain information on substances in articles.

The participants discussed how chemicals management and REACH compliance could be better integrated into companies' overall sustainability strategies. Industry needs to be proactive on keeping their registration dossiers up to date and ideally use them as their business card. Safety by design is still missing from some companies. Trainings on green chemistry and more resources for substitution would be needed.

On ECHA's third strategic priority – **sustainable management of chemicals through implementation of EU legislation** – the discussion focused on the interplay between different laws.

It was mentioned that the legislation is not aligned enough yet – for example, in how chemicals are regulated under REACH versus under legislation on food contact materials, waste or occupational health and safety. More coherence is needed to improve citizens' confidence and to reach the global 2030 sustainability goals. Also, more capacity building in third countries is needed, and industry and authorities could cooperate to achieve this.

The panellists mentioned the Commission's upcoming fitness check on chemicals legislation (other than REACH), providing more information on interlinks between pieces of legislation and on ECHA's work on the upcoming EU chemicals legislation finder EUCLEF, which will provide the user with an overview of how a substance is regulated in the EU. They also highlighted the importance of good chemicals management to a circular economy and the functioning of the internal market.

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Afternoon session: Practical cooperation with accredited stakeholders

In the afternoon session, participants discussed in breakout groups how ECHA currently interacts with its stakeholders and how this could be improved. So far, accredited stakeholders have taken part in ECHA's work through committees, networks, expert groups, events and discussion platforms. ECHA also communicates with stakeholders through the Agency's website, news products, social media and dedicated stakeholder update.

In their feedback to ECHA, stakeholders highlighted matters such as: the need for information upfront; balanced, science-based communication; the need for webinars and targeted events with web streaming on specific topics; Brussels-based events or events organised with Member States; the user-friendliness of ECHA's website and more transparency in decision-making. ECHA will use the feedback when it reviews its approach to communicating with accredited stakeholders and in developing future events.

The outcomes of the discussions are presented in more detail in Annex 4.

Communications priorities

ECHA's Head of Communications Johanna Salomaa-Valkamo gave a presentation on the challenges in communicating about chemicals, the changing communications landscape, and ECHA's new communications strategy. She mentioned increasing ECHA's visibility as a centre of knowledge on chemicals safety, striving for an understandable tone of voice, and increasing our engagement with mainstream media and key stakeholders as some of the communications priorities for the coming years. The presentation is available in Annex 3.

The discussion that followed focused on the need for public authorities to be neutral and use a balanced tone when communicating to citizens, especially regarding sensitive topics, avoiding provoking unnecessary fears while not ignoring problems. In the chemicals field, both benefits and concerns need to be highlighted. ECHA's main focus remains communicating what the EU does to improve chemicals safety and how the Agency's work contributes to this.

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Annex 1 - List of participants

	Last name	First name	Organisation
1	Annys	Erwin	Cefic
2	Arregui	Cristina	IFRA
3	Buijs	Nathalie	MedTech Europe
4	Carlander	David	Nanotechnology Industries Association
5	Carrier	Lara	APPLiA
6	Chaslaridis	Panagiotis	European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients Association
7	Detragiache	Maria Chiara	AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe
8	Dewulf	Bart	EFPIA
9	D'haese	Alain	FEA - European Aerosol Federation
10	Di Discordia	Paola	European Special Glass Association
11	Drmac	Dunja	EURATEX
12	Drohmann	Dieter	Only Representative Organisation
13	Dyekjær	Sidsel	chemtrust
14	Elliott	David Elliott	CETS
15	Gayral	Blandine	Medtech Europe
16	Giacomazzi	Marco	Stena Recycling International
17	Gomez	Divina	FEICA
18	Grange	Emma	Cruelty Free International
19	Gryspeirt	Celia	IMA-Europe
20	Guy	Thiran	Eurometaux
21	Hannebaum	Peter	EUROFEU
22	Hanneman	Maryke	ENPC

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23	Harte	Shane	European Electronic Component Manufacturers' Association
24	Hartmann	Rola Azzi	MedTech Europe
25	Hedberg	Marianne	European Construction Industry Federation
26	Hualde	Patricia	European Commission - DG GROW
27	Keranen	Hannu	Concawe
28	Ketelslegers	Hans	Concawe
29	Lemoine	Sylvie	Cefic
30	Leonhardt	Thomas	EUROFEU
31	Linkova-Nijs	Maria	Cefic
32	Marc	Naomi	APPLiA
33	Mihai	Camelia	Cefic
34	Mittelham	Stéphanie	Orgalim
35	Moos	Pelle	BEUC,
36	Mulot	Nadine	EFEU
37	Phillips	Elsie	BP Oil UK Ltd
38	Robinson	Janice	CEPE
39	Rowe	Rocky	ECPA
40	Santos Otero	Tatiana	EEB
41	Sarrazin	Florence	Amfori - Foreign Trade Association
42	Scalia	Mauro	EURATEX
43	Sejourne	Valerie	A.I.S.E.
44	Serrano Ramon	Blanca	Cefic
45	Setien	Elisa	EUMEPS
46	Sevenster	Arjen	VinylPlus
47	Skentelbery	Claire	Nanotechnology Industries Association

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48	Slijkhuis	Peter	ATIEL
49	Vaiopoulou	Eleni	Concawe
50	Van Luijken	Irene Cefic	Cefic
51	Vinck	Nadia	Euroalliages
52	Visser	Lara	DIGITALEUROPE
53	Vitali	Elise	EEB
54	Wallace	Heather	ECETOC
55	Wellens	Wendy	European Copper Institute

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Annex 2 – Agenda

Accredited stakeholder workshop 2019

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MCE Conference and Business Centre, Rue de l'Aqueduc 118, Brussels

9:30-11:00 ECHA's new strategy 2019-2023 – what does it mean in practice?

Bjorn Hansen, Executive Director, ECHA. Presentation and Q&A session.

- Our mission and working together with partners, new strategy and vision
- Strategic priorities for 2019-2023 and ECHA's new tasks
- Maintaining the brand value of REACH by improving data compliance – key priority for 2019
- How our work relates to the 'big picture' – 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, circular economy

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-12:45 Panel discussion: Our way forward: how to maintain public trust in EU chemicals management?

Moderator: Jukka Malm, Deputy Executive Director. Panellists: stakeholder representatives and ECHA's management.

- How do ECHA's new priorities impact stakeholders?
- How can we together improve chemicals management?

12:45-14:00 Lunch break

14:00-15:15 Practical cooperation with accredited stakeholders

Our cooperation with accredited stakeholders includes formal collaboration through participation in the work of our committees and various expert groups, as well as informal collaboration through joint initiatives and discussion platforms.

- How can we develop our ways of working to ensure efficient cooperation in the future?
- What would you like us to do more, less or keep the same?
- How can we improve our communications towards stakeholders?
- Feedback on the annual workshop.

15:15-15:45 Coffee break

15:45-16:30 Communication priorities

- Introduction of ECHA's new communications strategy and its priority areas.
- Stakeholder organisations' communications projects and potential cooperation.

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Annex 3 – Presentation

https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/5575006/presentation_aso_workshop190321_en.pdf/363c41dc-36bc-2352-a97a-a39bdcfd1429

Annex 4 – Outcomes of the breakout group discussions

https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/5575006/aso_workshop_feedback190321_en.pdf/de17fa10-c8ce-a1e2-b2d5-8dc2ef4da3ad

Annex 5 – Feedback summary

<https://infographics.sli.do/?i=OTIKZTEzNDItYTRkNS00ZTI2LWJhOGYtMGQ3ZDI2NGMxOTg0>

Overview:

Did we meet your expectations?

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Very well



Somewhat



Was expecting something else



Whole workshop

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Score: 3.9 ★

