Preliminary study on the use of five cobalt salts

Current investigation on uses of the cobalt salts

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Current investigation on uses of the cobalt salts

- Background
- Restriction vs. Authorisation under REACH
- Preliminary investigation on the uses of cobalt salts
- Restriction process – general overview
- Next steps

Background

- ECHA recommended five cobalt salts for inclusion in the Authorisation List (Annex XIV) in December 2011:
  - Cobalt sulphate, Cobalt dichloride, Cobalt dinitrate, Cobalt carbonate and Cobalt diacetate
- The European Commission postponed the decision on the inclusion of these substances in Annex XIV based on their assessment that:
  - The use of these substances in surface treatment poses a risk to human health not adequately controlled that needs to be addressed through the restriction process
  - There is a need to investigate whether additional uses of the substances pose risks to human health that should be included within the scope of the restriction process
- The European Commission has requested ECHA:
  - To conduct a preliminary investigation for any of the additional uses of the five cobalt salts. Based on the investigation, the European Commission will decide whether to include these uses in the restriction process
  - To assess whether the use of other cobalt salts should be included in the restriction process.

Restriction vs Authorisation (1/2)

- Restriction = any condition for or prohibition of the manufacture, use or placing on the market
- Restrictions under REACH are adopted by the European Commission when there is an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment that needs to be addressed on a European Union–wide basis
- European Union-wide action: the same requirements apply to whole EU from entry into force
- Restrictions are listed under Annex XVII

Restriction vs Authorisation (2/2)

- Authorisation= required for the placing on the market or use of any substance listed in Annex XIV after a specific date. Intermediates are not subject to authorisations
- Authorisations are nominal. They are granted by the European Commission to the company/companies submitting an application for a specific use/uses of a substance
- Authorisations are subject to a review period and may include specific conditions and monitoring arrangements

ECHA preliminary investigation (1/4)

Scope

- The purpose: to identify the sectors of activity in which there is a potential for workers to be exposed to cobalt salts during their use
- Focus on the following uses:
  - in surface treatment
  - as a pigment in PET plastic
  - as a catalyst for the production of PTA, IPA and DMT
  - as catalysts in oxygen-scavenging processes
  - in animal feed and fertilisers
  - in biogas production
  - in culture media in biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and *in vitro* diagnostics
  - in humidity indicators

ECHA preliminary investigation (2/4)

Procedure

- The primary source of the investigation is the information available from the registration dossiers for the five cobalt salts
- Additionally, ECHA has undertaken a targeted consultation with the main sectors of industry using cobalt salts:
  - Preliminary contact with all sectors of activity
  - Questionnaires sent to the different sectors to collect specific information on exposure
  - Follow-up contacts already scheduled

ECHA preliminary investigation (3/4)

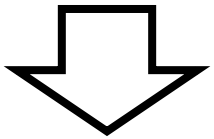
Targeted consultation with the sectors of activity

- Questionnaires sent on 7 March 2013. Deadline for submission 18 April 2013
- Basic questions focused on conditions of use of cobalt salts
- Very important:
  - to get clear answers in order to understand the potential of exposure for workers for each of the uses of cobalt salts
  - where the range of conditions differ within the same sector of activity, to specify the range in which the activities take place

ECHA preliminary investigation (4/4)

Workplan

- Work started in - Jan 2013
- Evaluation of registration dossiers: March-April 2013
- Targeted consultation: March-May 2013
- Preparation of investigation report: May-June 2013
- Investigation report submitted to Commission - mid 2013



Commission's decision whether to proceed with the restriction process

Restriction process – general overview (1/2)

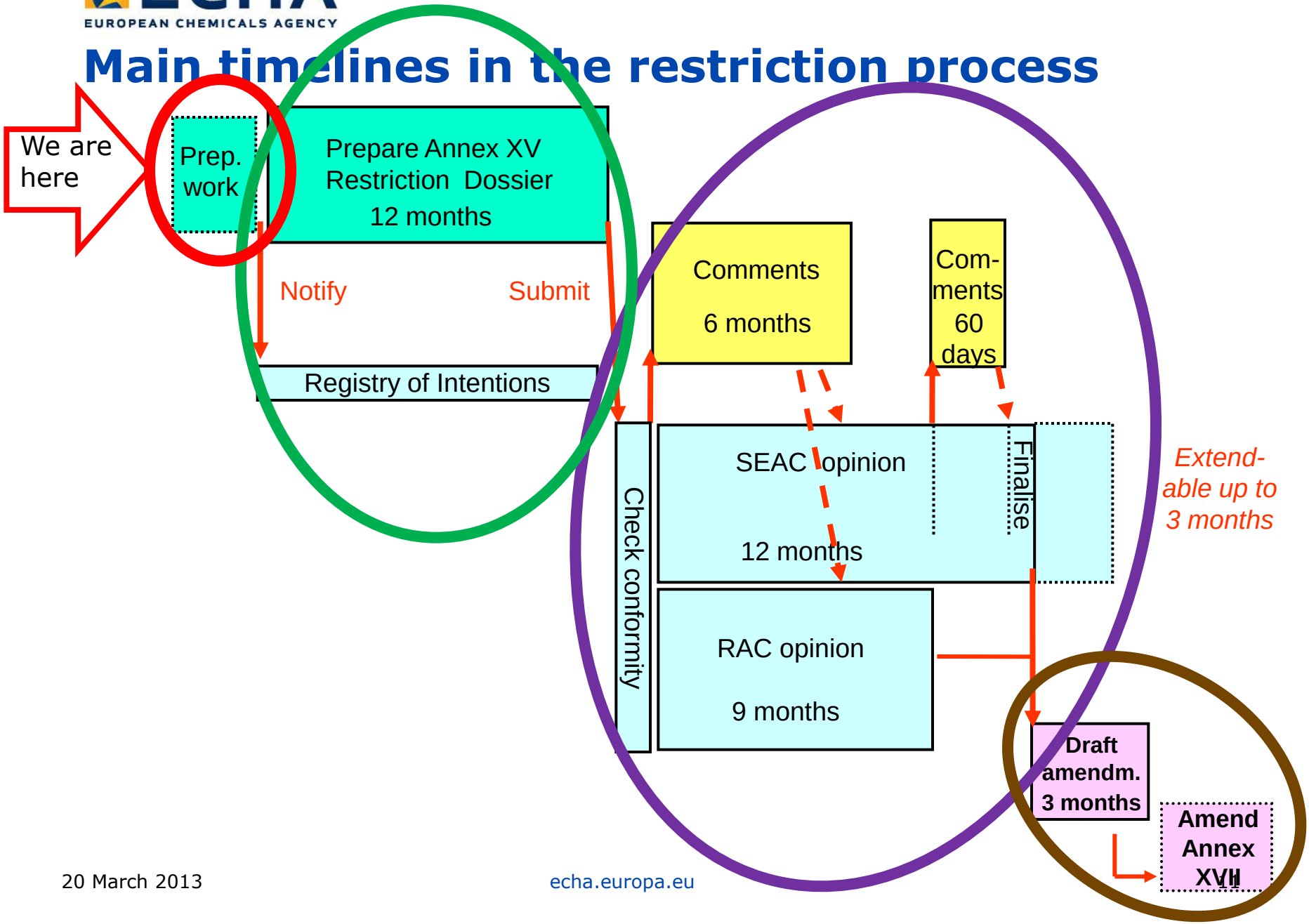
Phases of the process

- Step 0: Preparatory work

If as a result of the preparatory work, the Commission considers that there is a need to initiate the restriction process:

- Step 1: Preparation of an Annex XV restriction dossier
- Step 2: Development of ECHA's Committees (RAC & SEAC) opinion
- Step 3: Commission's decision on adoption of the restriction (taking ECHA's Committees opinion into account)

Main timelines in the restriction process



Restriction process – general overview (2/2)

Consultations of interested parties

- In the preparatory work - may consult stakeholders
- In the preparation of the Annex XV restriction dossier – may consult stakeholders
- After submission of the Annex XV restriction dossier, in the development of ECHA's Committees opinion - must hold public consultations
  - Public consultation (6 months) on the dossier after the conformity check
  - Public consultation (60 days) on the SEAC Draft opinion
- ECHA's Committees (RAC and SEAC) have to take the comments into account as appropriate

Next steps

- Consolidation of information from questionnaires
- Discussions with sectors of activity-Brussels 6/7/8 May
- Follow up as needed in May
- Preparation of the investigation report
- Report submitted to Commission-mid 2013

Comments and questions are welcomed from all stakeholders – also from those not taking part in the targeted consultation - for further contact, please refer to ECHA helpdesk

Thank you