

Background note

On 19 November 2012, the European Commission requested ECHA to prepare an Annex XV dossier to assess whether the existing restriction on cadmium and cadmium compounds in plastics should be expanded from the current specific 16 plastic materials listed in Annex XVII of REACH to all plastic materials.

The plastic materials covered by the existing restriction¹ are as follows:

- polymers or copolymers of vinyl chloride (PVC) [3904 10] [3904 21];
- polyurethane (PUR) [3909 50];
- low-density polyethylene (LDPE), with the exception of low-density Polyethylene used for the production of coloured masterbatch [3901 10];
- cellulose acetate (CA) [3912 11];
- cellulose acetate butyrate (CAB) [3912 11];
- epoxy resins [3907 30];
- melamine-formaldehyde (MF) resins [3909 20];
- urea-formaldehyde (UF) resins [3909 10];
- unsaturated polyesters (UP) [3907 91];
- polyethylene terephthalate (PET) [3907 60];
- polybutylene terephthalate (PBT);
- transparent/general-purpose polystyrene [3903 11];
- acrylonitrile methylmethacrylate (AMMA);
- cross-linked polyethylene (VPE);
- high-impact polystyrene;
- polypropylene (PP) [3902 10].

The restriction does not apply to articles coloured with mixtures containing cadmium for safety reasons.

Following the request, ECHA has investigated the use of cadmium and its compounds in plastic materials for the preparation of the Annex XV dossier. The following work has been carried out:

- 1) Review of registration dossiers.
- 2) Call for evidence (held from 14 January to 11 February 2013).
- 3) Independent consultant investigation.

During the course of the investigation ECHA has received very little information on whether and how cadmium and its compounds and in particular cadmium-based pigments are used in plastic materials, with the exception of some articles coloured with cadmium for safety reasons.

Now, with the second call for evidence, ECHA seeks to collect further information on whether there is any use of cadmium and its compounds, in particular cadmium-based pigments in plastics. ECHA also seeks information on the technical and economic implications of a possible ban on cadmium-based pigments in all plastic materials. The information gathered so far is presented in a status report and made publicly available on the ECHA website. Interested parties are invited to provide comments through the specific

¹ According to paragraph 1 of entry 23 of Annex XVII of REACH as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) No 835/2012

4 July 2013

online questionnaire before 29 August 2013.