

## PRESS RELEASE

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## Metals sector supports development of an EU Implementing Act on a simplified authorisation procedure

- As a first improvement towards a more efficient Risk Management System

Eurometaux, the European non-ferrous metals association, welcomed the Public Consultation of the Commission's REACH authorisation procedure for applications on uses of Annex XIV substances 'in low volumes' and uses in 'legacy spare parts', that runs until end of April.

*"While these first two specific uses will not be of great help for the metals and inorganic sectors we see this as the first step of a process in realigning the efficiency of the authorisation application system"* says Hugo Waeterschoot, Eurometaux's REACH advisor.

Last year, experience with the submission of authorisation applications (AfAs) and the ongoing preparations for the AfAs on chromates due later this year, demonstrate several areas where the authorisation application process can be simplified and made less bureaucratic without losing its original aim - on the contrary.

Waeterschoot further explained that *"Eurometaux is encouraging the Commission to continue developing implementing acts on the simplification of authorisation applications for uses in bio-essential applications (like nutrients in bioreactors) and uses in long term type approval product applications, like planes"*, in line with the Commission's intentions.

Building on the outcome of the recent AfA workshop organized by the Commission and ECHA in Helsinki, Eurometaux also considers that the authorisation procedure for 'process chemicals and recycling materials' is in need of simplification. Otherwise, the collateral damage for industry and society would be larger than the gains made from REACH, through exporting the uses of those substances to outside the EU, and reducing the recycling of valuable metals in the EU.

The recent AfA reviews by the ECHA committees on Trichloroethylene demonstrated that uses like "packaging and reformulation" should also be considered for simplification. Indeed, *"users will repack or reformulate a substance on demand of a downstream customer"*, and so questions on alternatives or substitutes consequently don't make sense.

On wider level, Eurometaux is also asking for a much more significant review of the REACH Risk Management Measures (RMM) identification process, in order to align the potential need for risk reduction or substitution with the reality at the workplace or the environment. *"Most of the inorganics on the candidate list for CMR reasons have been under scrutiny for decades, so uses are anyway limited to those that were not considered technically or economically substitutable"*, clarified Hugo Waeterschoot. The efficiency of a system like authorisation is therefore *"close to nil if not negative"*, while better and more relevant and efficient alternatives exist such as harmonized Occupational Exposure Limits for the workplace and others.

Hugo further states that *"the simplification process launched should therefore only be the first step in a more comprehensive review. A robust Risk Management Option analysis before deciding which generic risk management measure would be the key tool to decide how to best and most efficiently achieve a focused level of protection"*. Such RMO assessment is lacking for most inorganics presently on the candidate list (like chromates, lead compounds, borates and others). Putting them forward for Authorisation at this stage is





like “*signing a blank cheque without even knowing what you are buying*”, states Eurometaux.

On the other hand, the sector realizes that an RMOa assessment may put additional burden on member states and has therefore launched a voluntary initiative to develop an RMOa template and guidance for industry to help decide what RMM would be most effective to handle outstanding potential for risk and what data would be required to support the RMOa assessment.

### **About Eurometaux**

Eurometaux, the European non-ferrous metals association, represents the enterprises and organisations that make up the broad non-ferrous metals supply chain – from mining and refining to processing, fabrication and recycling. Europe’s non-ferrous metals industry represents 2% of EU GDP and creates 500,000 direct jobs and over 3 million indirect jobs in Europe.

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