



P13. THE COOPERATION BETWEEN EUROPEAN CHEMICALS AGENCY AND THE TURKISH COMPETENT AUTHORITIES

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The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) is responsible for ensuring effective coordination and management of certain technical, scientific and administrative aspects of the European Union's Biocidal Products Regulation (BPR). The Agency carries out specified tasks with regard to the evaluation of active substances as well as the Union authorisation of certain categories of biocidal products and related tasks. The Agency also has responsibilities under the EU chemicals legislation on Classification, Labelling and Packaging of substances and mixtures (CLP), Prior Informed Consent on the export and import of certain hazardous chemicals (PIC) and the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of chemical substances (REACH).

In this important role, ECHA is not alone. The Agency collaborates closely with the European Commission, EU Member States and countries belonging to the European Economic Area (EEA) as well as candidate countries. The EU Member States and EEA countries participate in the work of ECHA's four scientific committees that assist the European Commission in its EU level regulatory decision making. They also play a critical role in evaluating substances and biocidal products as well as in identifying substances for risk management. The national enforcement authorities take part in ECHA's Forum for Exchange of Information on Enforcement which coordinates the Member States' approaches to enforcing the CLP, PIC and REACH regulations. The Agency is also in charge of the network of national helpdesks, the HelpNet, so that companies can receive advice in their own language to fulfil their obligations under the EU legislation.

The legislation provides the possibility that non-EU countries may participate as observers in the Agency's work. In 2008, ECHA's Management Board established as principles for such participation that a) interested third countries must be on a path towards aligning with the EU chemicals *acquis*; b) the cooperation is intensified gradually and synchronised with the progress on actual alignment; and c) the decision on their participation in the work of ECHA remains a case-by-case judgment. Up to that point, ECHA can collaborate with third countries more informally in various ways, such as workshops, visits and sharing non-confidential material with public authorities and industry audiences.

The Agency has a long history of cooperating with Turkey. The Turkish Helpdesk has been part of the HelpNet from its outset in 2007. As a consequence, Turkish Helpdesk officials have for nearly a decade been able to provide the same advice to Turkish companies exporting to the EU as Member States provide to EU-based enterprises. In 2013, the Turkish Helpdesk was expanded to cover the Biocidal Products Regulation.

Since 2011, Turkey has benefited from capacity building activities that ECHA is undertaking as part of projects funded from the EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession. These projects have provided the Turkish authorities with insights into various aspects of the EU chemicals *acquis* including the new Biocidal Products Regulation.

There are also other areas in which Turkey can actively interact with ECHA. Within the REACH, CLP and biocides processes, public consultations are foreseen. This enables the Turkish government and companies to have their voice heard in relation to the substances of interest. In addition, contributions to the development and updating of guidance documents are most welcome through participation in respective consultation procedures. Turkish interested parties can also make use of the extensive material that ECHA publishes online to help stakeholders understand the EU legislation and its requirements.