

Persistent organic pollutants

2021/0340(COD) - 28/10/2021 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects caused by of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and to eliminate or minimise emissions of POPs from waste.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1021](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council on persistent organic pollutants (POPs Regulation) implements the Union's commitments under the Stockholm Convention on POPs, approved by Council Decision 2006/507/EC, and the Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution on Persistent Organic Pollutants, approved by Council Decision 2004/259/EC.

All POP substances are recognised to have adverse, generally long-term effects upon living organisms. They persist for a very long time in the environment and in our bodies and can be transported unchanged to almost any remote point of the globe, far away from where they were produced or used.

Management of POP waste, including its recycling where this is possible, should be carried out in an environmentally sound manner, with minimal impact on human health and the environment. It should also minimise the extent to which toxic substances are released into the environment, and thus contribute to the zero-pollution ambition by reducing their environmental and health impact.

CONTENT: the proposal aims to implement, for the substances within its scope, the EU's international obligations under the Stockholm Convention and, more specifically, those derived from the POPs Regulation. The proposed update brings Annexes IV and V of the Regulation into line with the Stockholm Convention and Annex I of the POPs Regulation by aligning them with the substances listed therein and by introducing concentration limits for these substances.

Taking into account the amendments made to the Stockholm Convention on 15 May 2015 and in order to ensure that waste containing these substances is managed in accordance with the provisions of the Stockholm Convention, the Commission proposes to amend Annexes IV and V of Regulation (EU) 2019/1021 by including pentachlorophenol, dicofol and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds in the Annexes and indicating their corresponding concentration limits.

It is also proposed to amend the concentration limits set out in Annex IV for the following substances to adapt their limit values to scientific and technical progress: tetrabromodiphenyl ether, pentabromodiphenyl ether, hexabromodiphenyl ether, heptabromodiphenyl ether and decabromodiphenyl ether, hexabromocyclododecane, alkanes C10-C13, chloro (short-chain chlorinated paraffins), polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins and dibenzofurans (PCDD/PCDF).

Lastly, dioxin-like polychlorinated biphenyls (dioxin-like PCBs) should be included in the existing group entry for Polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins and dibenzofurans (PCDD/PCDF) in Annexes IV and V of the POP Regulation.

The proposal is consistent with the objective of ensuring an optimal balance with the Green Deal for Europe's ambitions to achieve toxic-free material cycles, increasing recycling and circularity and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.