

Environment and health : polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in extender oils and tyres (27th amend. Directive 76/769/EEC)

2004/0036(COD) - 13/02/2004 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to restrict the placing on the market and use of extender oils and tyres containing PAHs above certain thresholds and to amend Directive 76/769/EC. **PROPOSED ACT** : Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council. **CONTENT** : This proposal aims to improve the conditions for the functioning of the Internal Market, while ensuring a high level the protection of health and the environment. Certain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) are classified as carcinogenic, mutagenic and reprotoxic (c/m/r) substances. Benzo(a)pyrene (BaP) can be a qualitative and quantitative marker for the presence of PAHs. BaP is classified as c/m/r category 2 in the framework of Directive 67/548/EEC, and it can pose unacceptable risks to human health or the environment. Furthermore, PAHs are regarded as Persistent Organic Pollutants under the UN ECE Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (the 1998 Protocol to the 1979 Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution on Persistent Organic Pollutants) and are subject to obligation to reduce total annual emissions. PAHs can be constituents in oils. Some of these oils are used as extender oils in the production of tyres. The extender oil is incorporated into the rubber matrix and remains there locked in the rubber of the final tyre. Consequently, the extender oil can also be present in the tyre debris. Technical processes allow the content of certain PAHs in extender oils to be reduced to low limits. Tyre producers have been willing to work towards a high level of protection of health and the environment by phasing out high aromatic extender oils. This proposal will introduce harmonised provisions on the placing on the market and use of certain PAHs in extender oils and tyres. The objective to reduce the emission of tyre debris that contains carcinogens into the environment to an acceptable level, and to control the possible risks to health and the environment can only be ensured by restricting the marketing and use of PAH-rich extender oils and tyres produced with these oils. The Directive will be applied to economic operators from 1 January 2009, except with regard to racing tyres, to which the Directive will apply from 1 January 2012. There are particular provisions concerning air craft tyres.