

Dangerous preparations: classification, packaging and labelling

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Provisions restricting tests on animals in a Commission proposal on dangerous chemical preparations were toughened by the Committee. The committee amended and adopted a proposal for a European Parliament and Council Directive on the approximation of national laws on the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous preparations. The rapporteur was Mrs Monica BALDI (UPE, I). The amendment on animal tests stipulates that where tests on animals are provided for they may be carried out only if the toxicological properties of a preparation cannot be established in any other way, eg using a validated alternative method which does not involve animals. Another amendment says: "If a preparation is advertised on television, radio, in the printed media, posters, by mail shots or other marketing methods, there must be a clear reference to every hazardous property of the preparation." Moreover, information such as "environmentally-friendly", "eco" or any other statement indicating that the preparation is not dangerous or which might lead to an underestimation of its hazards must not appear on the packaging or labelling of preparations covered by the directive. The aim of the directive is to bring together in one document all existing EU legislation on dangerous preparations involving mixtures of two or more chemical substances. It will affect hundreds of thousands of products intended for both the general public and professional users. The directive will replace the Dangerous Preparations Directive (88/379/EEC), extending its scope to cover environmental classification and labelling, pesticides and biocides, safety data sheets, explosives and certain sensitizers which can cause an allergic reaction. Preparations classified as "dangerous to the environment" will have to carry a warning symbol consisting of a dead fish beside a dead tree.