



# EEB briefing for a Chemicals Headline Indicator

## Percentage of “OSPAR chemicals” removed from the European market

### *INDICATOR TO MEASURE PROGRESS ON CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS IN EUROPE*

#### **Goal**

The indicator should facilitate measuring progress in Europe towards the prevention of environmental risks related to the production and use of hazardous chemicals in Europe. It should be related to the relevant EU policies, including the OSPAR Convention, the Water Framework Directive and the Chemicals Policy Reform.

#### **Scope**

The proposal is focussed on environmental risks caused by substances with very high concern properties (substances which are persistent, bioaccumulative, toxic or which give rise to an equal level of concern such as endocrine disrupters). There are other environmental impacts which are not covered in this approach (including ozone depletion or contribution of VOC to summer smog)

#### **Methodological Requirements**

The indicator should fulfil certain requirements. It should be easily understandable and measurable against a target. The analytical soundness must be ensured (should not give misleading information). Data should be available in sufficient quality. Hence an overall indicator related to all dangerous chemicals would not be very useful:

- *Chemicals production volume*: An increase of production in polymers (based on dangerous intermediates) for example would dominate the picture, success in substitution of PBTs in wide disperse use would not be visible at all.
- *Volume of dangerous chemicals*: During the next 10 years the amount of dangerous chemicals on the market may increase simply due to better knowledge on their hazardous properties and thus indicating a “positive trend” rather than increasing use of dangerous chemicals.

Considering these methodological requirements the options are quite limited, mainly with regard to the availability of data on volume, use and release of hazardous substances on the European Market. Very few sectors of industries have own product statistics, from which the market trends related to the use of hazardous substances and products can be easily derived. However, most producers and potential importers are known and hence at least a data source exists.

#### **Approach**

For the time being, the indicator should be based on a relatively small number of substances representing a well-defined type of environmental risk (criteria available and measurable) and for which policy target exists against which progress can be monitored. The OSPAR substances of potential concern may represent such a subset of substances (390), even though problems with data availability (related to market volumes and use pattern) exist also here and half of the number of this substance may not be market relevant at all. However, the data could be made available in a joint exercise with industry and could form the basis to monitor a trend from mid 90s to 2020.

Further, the PBT screening exercise performed by the ECB and member states could form the basis for such type of indicator, since the data collection process is in progress and industry is involved in the exercise.