

Brief report from the 19th PBT EG meeting (Helsinki, 25-26 September 2018)

In total 32 external participants were present at the meeting, representing 16 member states and 5 stakeholder organisations. Six substances and a substance group –phenolic benzotriazoles – had been on the meeting agenda. Thereof three substances were discussed in closed session. As further items on the agenda some approach development issues were presented and discussed.

Main points of substance discussions:

- For phenolic benzotriazoles some options were suggested to refine the assignment to subgroups and the assessment of these subgroups. One subgroup is awaiting bioaccumulation testing results.
- For bis(4-chlorophenyl)sulphone the focus of discussion was whether there is already sufficient evidence to conclude on persistency and bioaccumulation potential.
- For two of the five discussed perfluorinated substances the focus of assessment and discussion was whether there is sufficient evidence that they degrade into short-chain perfluorinated carboxylic acids (SC-PFASs). For two other PFASs repeated dose study results have been submitted this year under substance evaluation. These substances had been concluded already in 2013 to be degraded to PFHxA and PFHpA, both belonging to the group of SC-PFASs. Also the B-assessment of PFHpA was discussed.

One discussed perfluorinated substance represents a new PFASs subgroup, not yet addressed by regulatory activities. The discussion focussed mainly on the possibility to conclude the substance to fulfil the vP-criteria based on current information or whether further information would be needed.

NL presented some issues in relation to the hydrocarbon block approach envisaged by the PetCo group to be further developed and implemented for PBT assessment of petroleum and coal stream substances. Discussion of the envisaged approach will be continued at the next PBT EG meeting in October.

ECHA presented the results of the analysis of the elimination half-life database collected during 2015-2017. Based on the results it seems that detailed toxicokinetic data produced in repeated dose tests with laboratory mammals could be the most promising way to produce reliable and coherent data for B-assessment for terrestrial animals. A B/vB-threshold based on animal or human elimination half-lives can however not be derived on the basis of the available data. Nonetheless, the database could provide benchmarking data for B-assessment for air-breathing animals.

Substance discussions at this meeting and the previous meetings indicate that for certain substances toxicokinetic data and other information on bioaccumulation potential of air-breathing organisms are valuable lines of evidence in B-assessments, as described in the ECHA Guidance.

Based on ECETOC's analysis of the current WoE frameworks of EFSA, ECHA and SCHEER ECETOC advocated in their presentation to improve WoE specifically for PBT-assessment. The CEFIC-LRI project on development of a bioaccumulation assessment tool (BAT) seems in this respect to provide a promising approach for B-assessment. It was presented in the meeting and received mainly positive feedback.