

Middelfart, February 20<sup>th</sup> 2019.

Following are KRS ApS's comments to the proposal for harmonised classification and labelling as presented in CLH report for boric acid and borates version number 2 of 2018-11-02.

If the proposal is accepted a GCL of 0.3% will replace SCL of 5.5% for boric acid. Hazard Code H360FD will then be required for products with at least 0.3% boric acid.

KRS manufacturers, markets and sells borate products for remedial wood preservation. Our products are used in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, Italy, Norway, Spain and Sweden. They are used by professionals as well as non-professionals.

Our comments point to the effects of the proposed changes on society and the environment, as opposed to comments submitted separately by EBA that are of a technical nature and specifically address issues directly related to the assumptions, data and methods that the proposal is based on.

1. H360FD Code precludes use by non-professionals of borate products with 0.3% and higher content of boric acid.
2. Borates below 0.3% have no wood preservative effect.
3. As a result of points 1 and 2 a limit of 0.3% precludes use of borates by non-professionals for wood preservation in the EU.
4. Non-professionals will have three alternatives when they can no longer use borate products for wood preservation:
  - a. Pay to have it done by professionals; or
  - b. Use non-borate products; or
  - c. Do nothing.
5. Borates are uniquely effective for wood preservation, because:
  - a. There is strong evidence that wood destroying organisms don't develop resistance to boron, which is probably due to the way boron interferes with their metabolism; and
  - b. boron diffuses into moist wood and reaches the parts of the wood which are vulnerable to wood destroying fungi; and
  - c. with glycol as solvent borates also penetrates into wood that is too dry to permit diffusion.
6. As a result of point 5, point 4 b and c mean less effective or no wood preservation by non-professionals.
7. It follows that a limit of 0.3% for borates means less wood preservation.

8. Less wood preservation means more decaying wood which is harmful to society and the environment, because:
  - a. Decaying wood releases the CO<sub>2</sub> which it stored in it as a result of the photo synthesis; and
  - b. Less wood preservation is a drain on the world's resources of wood, resulting in more energy-consuming logging and transporting of trees that would otherwise extract CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. Also, energy-consuming processing of the logged wood into manufactured products which will need transport to reach distributors, retailers and end users.
  
9. A reduction of the market for wood preservation will result in loss of jobs and will add to unemployment which in some EU countries is already a problem.

Conclusion: The proposed GCL of 0.3% for boric acid will result in less wood preservation which will have negative consequences for the environment and society and will increase unemployment in some countries. We hope that the committee will take these effects into account when a decision is made.

Respectfully



Hanne Berg  
General Manager  
KRS ApS