Mapping the chemical universe: List of substances by regulatory action published

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**ECHA has published a list of over 21 000 REACH registered substances mapped in its 'chemical universe'. The substances have been divided into five pools based on the regulatory actions in place, initiated or considered for them. It also highlights that there are still thousands of substances for which possible actions have not yet been determined.**

**Helsinki, 4 December 2019 –**The mapping of registered substances, also called the *chemical universe*, is a planning and monitoring tool that helps Member States and EU authorities focus on substances of (potential) concern and identify appropriate regulatory actions, where needed. For companies and other stakeholders, publishing the mapping provides additional transparency on the work of authorities and the progress made in regulating chemicals.

Each substance in the universe has been assigned to a pool that indicates the regulatory actions in place, initiated, ongoing or under consideration. The five pools are:

1. **Regulatory risk management ongoing**: substances with confirmed hazards for human health and the environment.
2. **Regulatory risk management under consideration:** substances that are currently being considered for regulatory risk management.
3. **Data generation**: substances that require additional information to conclude whether further regulatory action is needed.
4. **Currently no further actions proposed**: substances for which authorities have not proposed further regulatory action at the moment.
5. **Not yet assigned**: substances currently registered under REACH but not yet assigned to any of the other pools.

*Jack de Bruijn*, Director for Prioritisation and Integration says: “We are currently focusing mostly on the substances registered for volumes greater than 100 tonnes per year, where we aim to assign each substance to one of the pools by the end of 2020. For all registered substances, the work should be concluded by 2027. For many substances, further hazard data will need to be generated as non-compliant registrations are hampering progress. To that end, we have a joint action plan with the Commission to improve compliance of registrations to ensure they contain the necessary information to establish safe use.”

The chemical universe does not indicate whether a substance’s use is safe or not – it is mainly to help authorities focus their actions. The assignment to a pool is also not permanent – substances will move from one pool to another over time when new information becomes available or priorities change. Furthermore, the assignment is largely calculated by algorithms and is based on a snapshot of the data from August 2019. It is, therefore, not flawless and we encourage people to check the substances’ infocards for the latest information. The links to the infocards are available in the list of substances.

The initial numerical mapping of REACH registered substances on the EU/EEA market was published in April 2019 with the publication of ECHA’s first report on the implementation of its integrated regulatory strategy. An update of the substance list is foreseen in early 2021.