



PRESS RELEASE

SIN List 2.0 launch and public hearing, Brussels, 3 May 2011

Hormone disrupting chemicals targeted to prevent chronic disease in the EU

Brussels, 3 May 2011 - The European Union should rapidly review 22 endocrine (hormone) disrupting chemicals (EDCs) because of their effects on health. These chemicals are part of a new list put out by the International Chemical Secretariat (ChemSec) supported by 11 independent, non-governmental organisations. (1)

The names of the 22 chemicals, which will be released today by ChemSec as part of the SIN List 2.0 launch (2), are linked to cancer, diabetes, behavioural and attention deficit disorders, as well as impaired fertility. (3) Many of these 22 chemicals are commonly found in toys, food packaging, and cosmetics.

The Health and Environment Alliance and the other NGOs involved in the project have also released a joint position paper on requirements for the proper regulation of hormone disruptors. (4)

"Endocrine disrupting chemicals are known to affect the human hormone system, often by mimicking or blocking natural human hormones. An exposure today is not only a health threat for the individuals themselves but also for their future children and possibly their grand-children as well," says Lisette van Vliet, Toxics Policy Advisor, HEAL, who is a member of the SIN List NGO advisory committee and will take part in the launch event.

Evidence of the harmful effects of EDCs on health, and especially of pre-natal effects as a result of parental exposure, is growing rapidly. Reducing exposure is increasingly seen as a key tool for preventing cancer and other chronic disease. (5)

The EU can and already has acted to reduce the public health risks of endocrine disruptors. In 2005, the European Commission banned the use of certain phthalates in toys and childcare articles, and most recently, the European Commission banned Bisphenol A (BPA) in baby bottles. BPA was included in the first SIN List. (6)

The SIN List 2.0 launched today serves as a challenge to European governments and EU institutions to rapidly review the 22 EDCs within it under EU chemical policy, known as REACH, and under other applicable legislation. The list includes parabens - used in shampoo; perchloroethylene used in dry-cleaning of textiles; and, certain chemicals that are used as UV filters in sun-tan lotion, such as 4-methylbenzylidene camphor.

"Concerned scientists and medical professionals are increasingly convinced that reducing exposure to toxics in the everyday environment is the most valuable approach to preventing cancer and other chronic disease. This is why we need the EU and member governments to act more quickly on more hormone disruptors," Ms van Vliet adds.

ENDS

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Notes to journalists

1. The ChemSec press release is available at <http://www.chemsec.org>. Invitation and agenda for the public hearing available at <http://www.chemsec.org/list/sin-list-20>.
The event takes place at the Stanhope Hotel, rue du Commerce 9, Brussels, 3 May 2011.
2. SIN List stands for "Substitute it now". The SIN List 2.0 update will be presented to the public hearing (see above) at 11.30, and journalists are invited to a press conference at 13.15, where ChemSec acting director Per Rosander and other speakers will be available for questions.
3. For more information about chemicals and health, visit the Health and Environment Alliance's Chemicals Health Monitor website at <http://www.chemicalshealthmonitor.org>
4. The statement from 12 non-governmental organisations, including HEAL, is available at http://www.env-health.org/IMG/pdf/ENV_Health_NGOs_andTrade_Unions_Position_Paper_-_Requirements_for_regulation_of_Chemicas_with_EDCs_April_2011-FINAL.pdf
5. HEAL position paper: Preventing cancer through environmental policy change, available at http://www.env-health.org/IMG/pdf/20110411_Heal_Position_Paper_Final.pdf
6. SIN List 1.1 - List of all substances on the original list at <http://www.chemsec.org/list/sin-list-20> (right-hand column)

Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) aims to raise awareness of how environmental protection and sustainability improves health and to empower the health community to contribute their expertise to policy making. Since its inception, HEAL's membership has grown to include a diverse network of more than 67 citizens', patients', women's, health professionals' and environmental organizations across Europe which together have a strong track record in increasing public and expert engagement in both EU debates and the decision-making process. Website: www.env-health.org

Chemicals Health Monitor Project (CHM) was launched by HEAL, CHEM Trust, Collaborative on Health and Environment and others in March 2007. It aims to improve public health by ensuring that key scientific evidence on the links between chemicals and ill-health are translated into policy as quickly as possible. Key documents about the campaign and information about the project can be found at: www.chemicalshealthmonitor.org