Commentary of the Zentralverband Oberflächentechnik e.V. (ZVO) on the Commission proposal "*Revision of EU legislation on registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals*" public consultation 04.05.2021 – 01.06.2021

The ZVO welcomes the opportunity to publicly comment on the EU Commission's plans for the revision of REACh. In this context, the ZVO expressly supports the objectives of sustainability and protection of human health and the environment on which the paper is based.
However, the ZVO urges that all measures must be demonstrably effective as well as economically, socially and technologically acceptable and feasible. This must be considered holistically and proven by objective, public studies. Risk-risk tradeoffs must be publicly evaluated.
In many of the considerations presented here concerning a revision of the "EU legislation on registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals", the ZVO has considerable doubts that the intentions and the intended measures will serve the common good.

Key statements derived from the detailed review (see attached document):

1. the further accumulation of unspecified and unreflected amounts of data will not lead to an improvement of the living conditions of EU citizens.

2. the introduction of substance-related mixing factors is nonsensical, since the behavior in mixtures does not represent a substance constant. To consider all conceivable mixtures will fail due to sheer quantity.

3. The claim that communication in supply chains is inefficient is unfounded. Criteria for this assessment are missing, comprehensible measures are not mentioned. Potential outcomes from the unstated measures are not assessed.

4. The Commission overlooks the fact that the insurmountable complexity of dossiers is caused on the one hand by its own specifications, and on the other hand by actual complexity in reality that defies regulatory simplification. The Commission must face this complexity. With the envisaged changes, the complexity already criticized today would again increase drastically.

5. The increasingly generic regulatory approaches based on potential hazards of substances indicate insufficient coverage of the technical issues. It is unacceptable to undertake far-reaching regulations out of ignorance or on the basis of pure assumptions without conducting detailed analyses of the real risk to be expected.

Zentralverband Oberflächentechnik e.V., Postfach 10 10 63, 40710 Hilden
www.zvo.org

6. the enforcement of existing laws differs in the member states. It does not make sense to tighten or expand laws and regulations without first achieving uniform enforcement. If this is not possible, all further regulatory projects will be superfluous. The Commission should urgently shift its focus here from legislative to executive unification.

7. ZVO and its member companies are also working to rebuild after the Covid crisis and support the goals of the Green Deal. However, maintaining living standards in a sustainable society requires the continuation of an industry and value chain that is strong and can implement change. Struggle for survival or relocation processes outside Europe are counterproductive for these goals - both for companies and society as well as sustainability.

8. The fact that the Commission openly announces that an undisclosed number of jobs will be lost with the hope of improvement in an undated future is, in ZVO's opinion, not compatible with the mandate of the EU Commission for the common good.

9. As an argument for an extended regulation, it must not be accepted that the financing and the continued existence or even the expansion of an authority like ECHA is secured by sufficient fees. This is a false self-image as a public servant and makes a mockery of the previously accepted job losses of the general public. Here the ZVO urgently asks to correct publicly.

Appendix: Detailed consideration

Analysis of the identified problems and their solution

For ease of comment, the ZVO has combined the problems identified by the Commission and the proposed solutions listed for them on a 1:1 basis:

Problem:
REACH is the most advanced knowledge base globally but there are still gaps in knowledge of many substances. The information required on critical hazard classes does not allow a sufficiently thorough hazard assessment, including for

carcinogenicity, neurotoxicity, immunotoxicity and endocrine disruption. The same applies to intermediates, polymers, and substances in the lowest tonnage range, and no assessment of risks is required for non-threshold substances.

Solution/Measures:

Revision of the registration requirements: *Various options for revising the registration requirements for manufacturers and importers will be analysed, including increased information on hazards of concern, documentation of safe use, registration of certain polymers, and information on the environmental footprint.*

The Commission again makes the mistake of considering a collection of data as knowledge (knowing numbers does not mean being able to solve equations!). Large amounts of data form an extended knowledge base for them. However, data taken out of context without knowledge of the cause-effect relationships or causalities and mechanisms do not lead to knowledge - and this is exactly what is now being noticed. Not only the real risk cannot be assessed, but already the hazard potential. The commission expects more data to lead to more knowledge - and thus repeats the mistake made before.

The only attempt to achieve knowledge instead of data is the demand for "documentation of safe use". However, this demand goes to manufacturers and importers who, by their very nature, do not usually use the substances and mixtures themselves. The demand is equivalent to a fictitious demand on a greengrocer to document all tasty recipes with his goods - he simply does not know them but acts as an "enabler" offering options to his customers. The commission approach leads to a planned economy of documented uses.

Instead, the commission should start working out cause-effect relationships. On this basis, really priority substances would have to be identified, the use of which would lead to a real noticeable risk. For the sake of completeness, it should also be pointed out that substances without toxicological hazard properties can also pose risks (e.g. water, table salt, potassium chloride, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, lactose, sucrose). This underpins the inappropriate approach via hazard properties.

Moreover, the Commission would be well advised to first present objective, independently verifiable cost-benefit analyses of the impact to date of the "most advanced knowledge base globally." It is very likely that this costly grave of rapidly outdated data will have resulted in only negligible added value for health and the environment. The Commission can provide evidence to the contrary at any time - as a government mandated by the citizen, it would even be obliged to do so. The ZVO urges the Commission to do so!

The considerations of the EU Commission lead to a strong extension of the obligations for enterprises, which cannot be up to the bureaucratic requirements

already now any longer. The ZVO urges to work more target-oriented and not to rely solely on an all-encompassing substance database, which will be useless for the most part.
The ZVO will be happy to help in the search for causal relationships instead of continuing the further increasing accumulation of unspecified and unreflected amounts of data.

Problem:
The registrants' safety assessments do not take combination effects of chemicals into account. Individual registrants are only responsible for their own substances and do not take into account that, in reality, humans and the environment are exposed to a plethora of different substances from different sources. Thus, securing safe use Ref. Ares(2021)2962933 - 04/05/2021 2 of one substance is in itself not sufficient for protecting humans and the environment against combination effects.
Solutions/Measures:
Introduction of a Mixtures Assessment Factor (MAF): *Options for addressing the risks of exposure to several substances (combination effects) by introducing one of more MAFs in Annex I will be analysed.*

The Commission's once again all-encompassing "brute force" approach ignores reality in favor of a vision. According to ECHA, as of today (May 2021), data are being generated or risk management measures are being developed for about 2000 substances with more than 100t per year. The same applies to 800 substances with 1-100t. The theoretical number of possible mixtures is immense: for mixtures of two components it is 4 million or 640,000 respectively; for three components 8 billion or 512 million respectively. Even if only 0.1% is considered, the number still goes into the millions. In addition, it would have to be investigated whether substances previously considered unproblematic could lead to risks in one of the huge number of possible mixtures.
The concept of MAF also assumes that the mixture effects represent a substance constant, which is unlikely in view of the fundamentals of chemistry. Mixture effects make no sense in a substance evaluation. Examples: Non-toxic DMSO (dimethyl sulfoxide, CAS No. 67-68-5) increases skin absorption of other substances, which is used medicinally. On the other hand, it also affects the absorption of substances that are otherwise uncritical. For this purpose, they do not have to be present in a mixture with DMSO, but must come into contact at the appropriate time, i.e. interact subsequently.

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All in all, this once again all-encompassing claim of advance prevention of any possible danger of the commission is not only unrealistic but technically insufficient and it prevents the view of really relevant problem areas.
Here, too, the objectively verifiable prioritization of substances that have already caused risks or real dangers in real use would be promising. However, this requires dealing with real events instead of theoretical models on the green table.
The ZVO is happy to assist in the identification of real problematic substances, substance mixtures and metabolic effects.

Problem:
The communication in the supply chains is inefficient. As identified and reported in the latest REACH Review, the communication up and down the supply chain on uses and necessary risk management measures lacks accuracy and clarity, which has a significant negative impact on the control of risks.
Solutions/Measures:
Simplifying communication in the supply chains: *Options for improving safety data sheets (information for downstream companies and workers on chemical risks and protective measures) will be assessed, including in particular harmonised electronic formats.*

No solution approach can be identified. Which hazard and which risk potential is the basis here? Life-threatening acute or long-term effects on humans or already the conceivable hazard of a tropical water flea? Or are we talking about data on the speed of passage through glove material? Blanket assertions of deficiencies are of no help in isolating and solving problems.
An assessment of measures, whether the risk (which exactly?) would be significantly reduced by compliance with the allegedly non-existent communication, is missing and is emphatically questioned by the ZVO. In particular, the Commission fails to recognize the fact, well known to those familiar with the practice, that supply chain communication is not just a one-way street. A risk assessment prepared by in-house or otherwise competent personnel will not accept a significant lack of data out of self-interest and will properly assess the resulting negative impact and, if necessary, demand necessary additional data. A central Brussels solution is not necessary for responsible operators - and others will not be reached by further regulations.
Not to be left unmentioned is the fact that individual workers, despite extensive training and being affected, do not comply with the given rules - this is reinforced by incomprehensible and inflated "hazard warnings". The behavior of individuals during the Corona pandemic (key words: distance, obligation to wear a mask, hygiene) should have made this clear.

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Harmonization of electronic formats does not lead to improved information along the supply chain. It does not make this information more accurate or easier to use, especially in SMEs and where digitalization is not very powerful, such as in Germany. The Commission should abandon the misconception that digital tools in themselves lead to simplification and drive substantive solutions. National enforcement is still predominantly analog (i.e. paperwork).
The Commission should re-examine the required content of safety data sheets and other information for relevance. Less more here, especially for manageability and utility. For example, the ever-increasing volume of safety data sheets is more of a hindrance. The same applies to the information in the SCIP database, whose benefit for the recycling industry is out of all proportion to the enormous effort involved.
Once again, the Commission is taking an unreflective, all-encompassing approach rather than addressing the prioritization of relevant, real-world, measurable problems and risks.
The ZVO is happy to offer its expertise here with real uses to support targeted improvements.

Problem:
The evaluation of registration dossiers and substances is too complex and insufficient. The procedures for evaluation of registration dossiers and substances are complex, with several bottlenecks delaying the request for information from registrants and the conclusions on possible hazards and risks. In addition, the procedures are insufficient to ensure compliance of all registration dossiers.
Solution/Measures:
Revision of the provisions for dossier and substance evaluation: *Various options will be considered for ensuring that registration dossiers are in compliance and that sufficient information for concluding on concerns is available. These include the possibility to revoke registration numbers for non-compliant registrations and to allow authorities to commission tests to obtain hazard information*

Once again, the Commission does not offer a solution here. It avoids the fundamental and unavoidable question of why the review is too "complex" and "insufficient"? If dossier review is too complex, the problem lies in the quantity and nature of the regulatory requirement for the dossier and in the expertise of the reviewing bodies. Thus, the intent of this paragraph is not clear.
Rejection of allegedly incorrect ("non-compliant") registrations have to be considered part of the regulatory process (fundamental duty of the Commission!), it is not an improvement option that can be chosen at will.

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The Commission should strive to create uniform criteria as well as eliminate non-target requirements and make the overall process predictable. Constant extensions and changes in the "tools" as well as permanent expansion of data generation lead to permanent rework and cause permanent non-compliance by themselves.
Here, too, the Commission must be called upon to generate actual solutions. This includes the clear, comprehensible, proportionate self-commitment to a constant definition of the relevant data of the registration over a reasonable period of time.
The ZVO offers support here.

Problem:
The authorisation procedure is too heavy and inflexible. The authorisation process has imposed a heavy burden on both companies and authorities. A multitude of applications for the use of small quantities of substances, unclear criteria for authorisation and information gaps (in particular for uses where competitors have already implemented alternatives), as well as unclear information in applications (in particular from applicants up the supply chain and from only representatives) have led to prolonged discussions and delays in decision making. In many cases, this has placed EU-based companies at a competitive disadvantage compared to their non-EU competitors.
Solution/Measures:
Reforming the authorisation process: *Options include clarifications and simplifications of the current provisions, national authorisation for smaller applications, removing the authorisation title from REACH, integrating the REACH authorisation and restriction systems into one and improving the interface with other pieces of legislation (complementing actions under the one-substance one-assessment action under the Chemicals Strategy)*

The Commission correctly identifies some causal problems with the authorization process, but does not assign them to the correct causes:

- There are many uses of chemicals that result in numerous authorizations <= this is a characteristic of an industrial society with medium-sized, specialized, forward-looking and innovation-oriented companies as its backbone;
- Unclear criteria <= this could have been avoided by the Commission from the beginning - and still could today without changing REACH!
- Information gaps - here the Commission wrongly assumes that there is too little information about allegedly already existing alternatives. To this it must be said that firstly, an alternative is only available when it has proven its suitability in the market, secondly, that parallel technologies with different

places of use can by no means be regarded as alternatives per se, and thirdly, that there is by no means too little information about the alleged alternatives - if they were economically and technologically feasible, it would be in the economic self-interest of the companies and supply chains concerned to introduce them as quickly as possible;

- Upstream authorizations are specifically permitted as a possibility by REACH; it must be questioned what the delays and prolonged discussions are caused by; it is plausible to assume that the information requirements of the processing bodies go beyond what is intended by REACH (see example of intermediates, e.g. acrylamide, chromium trioxide);
- The authorization process itself puts European companies at a competitive disadvantage on the world market. It makes long-term planning and contractual commitments more difficult and thus prevents necessary investments in maintenance, expansion (including risk management measures) and innovation. It ties up skilled workers permanently and therefore leads to reduced company performance or increasing costs for additional skilled workers or consultants. This puts companies in the EU at a clear disadvantage compared to regions with less stringent regulations, or at least regulations that can be assessed in the long term. Incidentally, this finding is also reflected in the REACH Report 2018 - why does the Commission not follow its own analyses?

By insufficient root cause analysis, the Commission jeopardizes the improvement of regulation as a whole:

1.) "*clarifications and simplifications of the current provisions*" are a fundamental task of the executive, i.e. the EU Commission. This is not a goal of a separate project, but above all it is not a separate, optional measure!
2.) Assigning authorizations of smaller applications to national authorities goes completely the wrong way. Additional coordination between comparable applications in different member states would be necessary. Likewise, coherent processing with the "large applications" would be necessary to ensure equal treatment. Here, the Commission is merely shifting a resource problem without considering a solution in the form of optimized processes.
3.) "*integrating the REACH authorization and restriction systems into one and improving the interface with other pieces of legislation (complementing actions under the one-substance one-assessment action under the Chemicals Strategy)*"; here the Commission wants to unite two completely different forms of regulation - this does not make sense simply because of the diametrically opposed burden of proof: in the case of restrictions, the authority has the duty,

in the case of authorizations, the applicant. If the former remains in place, authorization becomes superfluous; if the latter applies in principle, the burdens on users, especially SMEs, increase significantly once again. Here, the authority would be relieved at the expense of citizens and businesses. The competitive disadvantage in the global market would be exacerbated once again.

The restriction must be retained in order to be able to prevent targeted uses, but above all consumer risks. Authorization should be reserved for uses that directly affect the end consumer - here it makes sense to promote the search for substitution possibilities, since consumers may not have enough information to avoid risks. However, authorizations make little sense in the working environment, which has already been heavily regulated for decades, as it is easier to work with limits and regular inspections here. The latter would also relieve the monitoring authorities and free up resources for real significant risks that are perhaps not yet sufficiently controlled.

Problem:
The current restriction process is too slow to sufficiently protect consumers and professional users against risks from the most hazardous substances. The normal restriction procedure, through specific risk assessment, puts a high burden on authorities to document unacceptable risk for health or the environment. Although REACH already enshrines the use of a generic approach (i.e. assuming that the use constitutes a risk) for restricting certain carcinogenic, mutagenic or reprotoxic (CMR) substances in consumer products, this procedure cannot be used for other critical hazard classes including endocrine disruptors, persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic/very persistent and very bioaccumulative (PBT/vPvB) substances, immunotoxicants, neurotoxicants, respiratory sensitisers or substances that affect specific organs. Moreover, professional users are often using the same products as consumers, but much more frequently and during longer periods of time. Yet, they are unlikely to benefit from the same risk management as in industrial settings. Hence, they should get a level of protection at least at the level of consumers.
Solutions/Measure:
Reforming the restriction process: *Options include extending the generic risk approach to restrictions to endocrine disruptors, PBT/vPvB substances, immunotoxicants, neurotoxicants, respiratory sensitisers and substances that affect specific organs; extending the generic risk approach to products marketed for professional use; and operationalising the concept of essential use in restrictions, including the criteria for granting derogations.*

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It is not acceptable to ease the challenges to the authorities by introducing a much lower quality process of assessment. The ZVO strongly points out that, for example, the authorization as an alternative to restriction in the case of chromium trioxide for many industrial sectors lasted from 08/2010 (Annex 15 dossier) to 12/2020, i.e. more than 10 years. During this time, occupational exposure limits would have been - and are - easily defined. With two years of processing time, risk reduction measures would have been specifically achievable 8 years earlier.
Introducing a generic approach of presuming risk for entire groups of substances as a basis for regulation is tantamount to overregulation accepted in principle. Potential hazard is not a reason for regulation, especially not from ignorance. Potential hazards are ubiquitous, yet such an issue is not currently approached generically; instead, specific solutions have been successfully developed for decades. Examples can be taken from the fields of transportation, electrical engineering, pharmaceuticals, foodstuff, mechanical engineering and many others. The decisive factor is whether there is an unacceptable risk. The generic approach, on the other hand, is arbitrary and thus cannot be justified. It endangers not only existing industries and applications, but also future ones, by excluding even substances whose use is foreseen with little or no risk from further technological development. The example of boric acid has shown that although no negative effects could be identified, neither in private nor in professional use, the tightening of regulations has nevertheless been pushed forward! If existing data are wrongly evaluated and interpreted or even ignored, the overall concept is meaningless.

The concept of "essential use" has been the subject of well-founded critical negative comments from many parties. At this point, it should only be mentioned that, from the point of view of the ZVO, this generally valid "essential-use-concept" represents a planned economic instrument of arbitrary interference in free decision-making, which has already failed several times in the past. It should therefore be rejected and, if necessary, replaced by mechanisms with direct citizen participation.

Problem:
The control and enforcement is not equally effective in all Member States.
Considerable differences exist between Member States depending on available resources and different policies leading to inconsistent effectiveness of controls. The increasing import of products from countries outside the EU, including by consumers' direct purchases through online portals, allows for import of goods that are not subject to the necessary controls to ensure compliance with EU law. These

differences represent a risk for consumers and the environment and they negatively affect the competitiveness of compliant European industry.
Solutions/Measure:
Revision of provisions for control and enforcement: *Options include establishing minimum requirements for national controls and enforcement, including stricter border controls; and establishing a European Audit Capacity to audit Member States enforcement.*

It is not apparent what measures are to be taken here. The options mentioned merely reflect the need to solve the problems identified.
Another European supervisory authority to audit national supervisory authorities that may not sufficiently comply with the requirements of European supervisory authorities is absurd and a waste of taxpayers' money!
The Commission is recommended to identify why member states cannot or do not want to follow EU requirements - and to remove these obstacles instead of further expanding the bureaucratic, centralized review and monitoring apparatus. Again, historical examples show that the control state approach is doomed to failure - historically and socially - with often disastrous consequences.
The ZVO supports here as far as possible a strategy that promises success in the long term.

Comments on the assumed consequences

"*Likely economic impacts*
It is expected that some changes to the REACH Regulation will lead to increased costs for industry, including for SMEs, throughout the supply chains. This would be a result of the obligation to register certain polymers and the increased information requirements for the registration of substances, the introduction of new risk management measures and the changes to the companies' product portfolios following new restrictions or the phasing out of the use of Substances of Very High Concern subject to authorisation. The costs will most likely vary among operators depending on their position in the supply chain and their size. However, all operators will benefit of simplified, transparent and predictable provisions.
It is expected that changes will further incentivise innovation and substitution and that the European industry as a whole will rebound through the greening of the industry towards more safe and sustainable products and increased consumer confidence. In this respect, more information on the chemicals can be used for innovation purposes and the production of safe and sustainable chemicals and products for export, which

might benefit the innovative industry investing in safe and sustainable solutions. Furthermore, imposing the same requirements for imported products as for domestic products would ensure a level playing field, thus alleviating the current disadvantage for EU industry.
The revisions and the reforms of the REACH Regulation are expected to impact the future mandate of the European Chemicals Agency and the income deriving from the fees payable to the Agency by duty holders."

ZVO Comment:

EU assumption 1: Costs will increase in any case
This is to be noted as a given, since it is formulated as an established fact!

EU assumption 2: All actors will profit from simplified, transparent and predictable specifications (still increased costs!)
Since increased costs are assumed, this can only be a reduction of increased costs. The ZVO strongly recommends the Commission to first simplify the currently disproportionate existing data requirements, make them more transparent and predictable before collecting any more data.

EU Assumption 3: Innovation and substitution are expected to increase and Europe will recover through a greener industry towards safer, sustainable products and increased consumer confidence.
The connection is neither compelling nor logical: a "recovery" under simultaneous transformation with significant investments towards increased costs creates economic disadvantages - even for possibly safe and sustainable products and even with increased consumer confidence (confidence in what?); consumer acceptance of increased prices is taken for granted or not mentioned.
ZVO recommends to specifically inform EU citizens about the realistic impacts and to get the appropriate mandate to specifically worsen living conditions.

EU Assumption 4: More information can be used for innovative purposes and production of safe and sustainable chemicals and export products, which in turn could lead to benefits for investments of innovative industry in safe and sustainable solutions.
The data collected so far only lead to the exclusion of chemicals and technical solutions; they do not provide support for the long-term investment-safe selection of new or modified technical solutions. Experiences of ZVO's operations indicate that REACH has caused more innovative ideas to be discarded than pursued.

The data grave of registration is turned backwards to the supposedly problematic traditional procedures, not forwards to new solutions - above all, it is to be expected in the long term that substances or entire substance groups will continue to be arbitrarily stigmatized. The willingness to invest will be greatly reduced here - apart from rare individual cases.

EU assumption 5: Application of the same requirements for imported products leads to a level playing field and facilitates the previous disadvantages of the EU industry.
Here the EU again misses the main problem: The level playing field can only be created within Europe. The price for this is the reduction of imports of innovative products from other EU countries. Another price is an enormous administrative burden in checking all imports - the fig leaf RAPEX shows how small the capacity really is in view of the billions of imported products.
Outside the EU, competitive disadvantages remain as bad as ever.
The ZVO believes that the continuing and increasing competitive disadvantages of the EU economy prove a failure of the implementation of REACh to date. A reorientation is urgently required in order to be able to offer even a minimum of added value outside Europe.

EU Assumption 6: Changes to the REACH Regulation will affect ECHA's mandate and its funding through more fees.
This is a statement of an unacceptable basic attitude: the changes do not serve to reduce bureaucracy and the administrative apparatus; rather, it is to be secured and certainly expanded through more fees. The proposed measures thus serve to preserve the administration at least as much as they do to achieve desired goals. For this purpose, restrictions for the population are also accepted (see planned job losses below, "Likely Social impacts").
The ZVO is strongly opposed to designing regulation in such a way that the scope of government can be maintained or even expanded. The exact opposite, the reduction of the bureaucratic administrative burden of the state with simultaneous improvement of living conditions is to be seen as the mandate of the government!

"*Likely social impacts*
The initiative will increase the protection of human health by reducing the exposure to hazardous chemicals, for citizens in general, and for workers and self-employed, including via the environment. Furthermore, better control and safer use of chemicals at workplaces will reduce the risk of occupational diseases and premature retirement

of workers, as well as related health costs for society. In the short term, there may be job losses resulting from new legal requirements or increased costs for products using hazardous chemicals; however, in the long term this is expected to be compensated by growth in production of products using alternatives to the most hazardous chemicals."

Here we find again an unacceptable attitude: To achieve the wishful thinking of a changed industry and society, collateral damage has to be accepted. In the short term, jobs will be lost and thus the livelihoods and futures of popular, of course anonymous and in the number not even estimated EU citizens and families will be sacrificed! Fortunately, it is expected that this can be compensated in the long term. The EU citizens who have had to lose their prosperity in the meantime will certainly be comforted by this. How short "short-term" will be and how long we will have to wait for "long-term" is not even estimated - although this would have been of crucial importance in view of the general costs for additional unemployed (how many?)! Such almost inhuman planning of a government is not part of a democratic and solidary society and stems from a self-assessment removed from the general public, which needs no mandate!
Also technically the statements made here are questionable: Whether the initiative will have a positive effect, is to be shown only by the intended Impact Assessment - therefore this "social" argument is inadmissible here, because it sets already the "target result" for the still coming investigation. The same applies to the claim that more control of chemicals significantly reduces the risk of occupational diseases and health care costs. It is alarming that the risk reduction for the consumer is not mentioned! Should REACH finally become an occupational health and safety regulation?
The ZVO urgently asks the Commission to work out a different, realistic outlook here, based on provable facts and serving the public good.

"***Likely environmental impacts***
An improved regulation of substances, including by generating more data, will support innovation initiatives towards substituting the most problematic substances. Moreover, more efficient restrictions of the most toxic, persistent, mobile and/or bioaccumulative substances in products for consumer use and professional use, except for uses essential for society, will further reduce the emissions of these substances, thus improving the environmental protection. Safer use of chemicals will result in reduced releases of hazardous substances to the environment, thus reducing the costs of environmental remediation that not acting would entail."

Here, too, the EU Commission shows a very dangerous attitude.
First, it limits its view to dangerous substances and does not consider that potential dangers do not automatically lead to a real unacceptable risk (in which areas of life is there no risk?).
Second, it does not consider that abstaining from substances will have side effects that may lead to higher risks - possibly not in the same living environment. Only a holistic view can reveal this; tunnel vision on the potential danger of a substance is in itself a real danger for the general public.
Thirdly, the Commission should address the question of how many promising ideas have been prevented by the unpredictable, often contradictory and short-term changes in regulatory approaches and measures!

"*Likely impacts on fundamental rights*
The initiative will improve the protection of consumers and the environment as enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union."

The EU Commission makes it easy for itself here and only considers the fundamental right that suits it well. Fundamental rights such as free choice are not even discussed, although the concept of "essential uses" represents a deep intervention here in particular. With its approach, the EU Commission intends to decide in advance what the consumer is allowed and able to receive - it is not the sovereign, the EU citizen, who is to decide on his way of life by means of improved information, it is the EU administration that is to provide the EU citizen with a pre-selection of permissible life choices. Where shall the "essential use concept" lead to - because it will not remain with SVHCs, respectively the term "high concerns" is already extended, preferably generic.
The ZVO expects a consideration of the impact on all fundamental rights, not a selected single one.