



Pesticide
Action
Network
Europe

Biocides – Counteract the rising needless use.

Products that combat pests and which are not used as plant protection products or as pharmaceuticals are so called biocides. Since 2000, specific regulations apply to make biocide products available on the market within the European Union. Disinfectants, preservatives, protective substances, or household pesticides are subject to an authorization process.

With the introduction of the new Biocidal Product Regulation (BPR) 528/2012/EC the EU now also regulates the use phase of biocidal products and articles that have been treated with biocides. PAN Germany followed the revision process as stakeholder since 2008 and called for concrete improvements of environmental and health protection standards. PAN Germany summarized the new provisions of the BPR in the fact sheet "[The European Union's new Regulation on biocides](#)" (also available in German).

The BPR must be enacted by 1 September 2013 and consumer protection being – hopefully - improved by several new provisions. Organizations of the civil society should observe their implementation in the Member States, for example, how the administration bodies provide the general public with information on the risks of biocidal products and opportunities for use reduction or if suppliers implement the new label and information requirements accordingly. Biocides are not harmless, rather there are real risks for human health and for the environment and in addition, the use of biocidal products and biocide-treated goods for private use is unnecessary. Furthermore, many of these products are not compatible with the goal of sustainable and environmentally-sound consumption.

An example: More and more articles of daily use are treated with biocides to produce specific functions such as antimicrobial or odor-inhibition properties (e.g. textiles, shoes, bed mattresses and a great variety of plastic goods used in kitchen, bathrooms or offices). Consumer but also suppliers are not well informed and their awareness on the issue is limited. PAN Germany therefore published a brochure which summarized the new legislative provisions on biocide-treated articles, identifies important unresolved issues in implementation, and formulates recommendations for further action. An online-survey carried out by PAN Germany shows the wide range of "antibacterial" consumer products. With the brochure we aim to stimulate the discourse unnecessary use of problematic biocides such as triclosan, silver or nanoscale materials in consumer products: "[Biocide-treated Consumer Products: Markets – Policies - Risks](#)" (also available in German). A new easy-to-read consumer guide helps to raise consumer awareness about this issue (in German only): "[Giften auf der Spur – Biozide erkennen und vermeiden](#)".

We recommend the reassessment and adaptation of quality seals and certificate, among other measures. Regarding the currently review of the EU Ecolabel, PAN Germany calls for clear restrictions including an exclusion of biocide-treated textiles and bed mattresses from the

Ecolabel and an extension of the criteria list for hazardous substances in order to consider the risks of nanoscale materials and the risks of the promotion of bacterial (antibiotic) resistance (see: "[PAN Germany comments on the EU Ecolabel criteria for textiles and bed mattresses](#)").

Print versions of the materials are free of charge for NGOs and other stakeholder, please contact Susanne.smolka@pan-germany.org or by phone +49 40 399 19 10-0.

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