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**COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION**

**of 17.3.2022**

**granting an authorisation under Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council to SEBIA for a use of 4-Nonylphenol, branched and linear, ethoxylated**

(ONLY THE ENGLISH TEXT IS AUTHENTIC)

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC<sup>1</sup>, and in particular Article 64(8) thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) 4-Nonylphenol, branched and linear, ethoxylated ('4-NPnEO') is listed in Annex XIV to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 and a use of that substance is subject to the authorisation requirement in Article 56(1), point (a), of that Regulation.
- (2) On 11 February 2019, SEBIA ('the applicant') submitted an application in accordance with Article 62 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 for authorisation for a use of 4-NPnEO. The use for which authorisation was sought is industrial use for its detergent properties in the production of buffers and reagents in view of ensuring the positioning of specific proteins necessary for the interpretation of gel electrophoresis in vitro diagnostic tests results based on the determination of isoenzymes.
- (3) On 26 June 2020, the Commission received the opinion on the application adopted by the Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC) and by the Committee for Socio-economic Analysis (SEAC) of the European Chemicals Agency<sup>2</sup> and sent to it pursuant to Article 64(5), third subparagraph, of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006.
- (4) RAC concluded in its opinion that it is not possible to determine a predicted no-effect concentration (PNEC) for the endocrine disrupting properties for the environment of 4-NPnEO in accordance with Section 6.4 of Annex I to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 and that therefore 4-NPnEO is a substance for which it is not possible to determine a threshold for the purposes of Article 60(3), point (a), of that Regulation. As a result, Article 60(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 does not apply to that substance and an authorisation may therefore only be granted with respect to that substance under paragraph 4 of that Article.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 396, 30.12.2006, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> <https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/a4f89a1b-4c5a-386c-e95b-c19961a86089>

- (5) RAC noted that risk to the environment cannot be excluded for non-threshold substances, even at low exposure levels. Consequently, RAC takes the emissions of the substance as a proxy for the risk.
- (6) In its opinion, RAC concluded that the risk management measures and operational conditions as described in the application are appropriate and effective to limit the risk to the environment arising from the use of 4-NPnEO described in the application. However, in order to continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the risk management measures and operational conditions and to confirm that emissions are reduced to as low a level as is technically and practically possible, RAC recommended to carry out a monitoring programme as well as a feasibility study for collection of remaining liquid waste. Having evaluated the RAC assessment, the Commission agrees with its conclusion and recommendations.
- (7) In its opinion, SEAC concluded that it has no substantial reservations on the quantitative and the qualitative elements of the applicant's assessment of the socio-economic benefits and the risk to the environment associated with the use of the substance. Taking into account SEAC's assessment, the lack of scientific knowledge at present to quantify or monetise the risk to the environment associated with the use of the substance, the estimated emissions in the order of tens of grams of the substance per year, the estimated benefits due to avoided job losses at a minimum in the order of tens of thousands of euros for the entire review period, the estimated cost of avoiding releases of the substance in the order of between hundreds of thousands and tens of millions of euros per kilogram, and the qualitatively assessed additional socio-economic benefits of the continued use due to avoided profit losses as well as the availability of electrophoresis kits for the diagnosis of rare diseases, tumours and chronic diseases, the Commission concludes that the applicant has demonstrated that the socio-economic benefits of the continued use of the substance outweigh the risk to human health and the environment arising from that use.
- (8) A suitable alternative should be safer, available, and technically and economically feasible. Where suitable alternatives are available in the Union, but not technically or economically feasible for the applicant or its downstream users, an authorisation may be granted if the applicant for authorisation submits a substitution plan. An alternative that provides the functionality and level of technical performance necessary for the use applied for should be considered to be technically feasible.
- (9) In its opinion, SEAC concluded that there were no available alternative substances or technologies by the sunset date. The Commission, having evaluated SEAC's assessment and all relevant information available, acknowledges that, regarding the identified alternatives, the applicant would still need to perform extensive testing validation at industrial scale to verify the substitution, which is required to obtain regulatory approvals for the in-vitro diagnostic tests at stake. The Commission therefore considers that the identified alternatives do not allow the functionality needed for the use applied for. Therefore, the Commission agrees with SEAC's conclusion and considers that the applicant has discharged its burden of proof in demonstrating the absence of suitable alternatives both in the Union and for the applicant.
- (10) Therefore, having regard to the conditions laid down in Article 60(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006, it is appropriate to authorise the use of 4-NPnEO described in the application, provided that the risk management measures and operational conditions described in the chemical safety report, are fully applied.

- (11) The Commission has based its assessment on the relevant scientific evidence currently available, as assessed by RAC and SEAC, and, after having carried out a detailed examination, based its conclusions on the existence of a sufficient amount of material and reliable information allowing it to conclude. Nevertheless, additional scientific evidence would allow the Commission to perform its assessment on a more robust or broad evidentiary base in the future. Hence, it is appropriate to request that additional exposure and emission information be submitted.
- (12) SEAC recommended in its opinion that the review period referred to in Article 60(9), point (e), of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 should be set at 7 years. The Commission agrees with that recommendation, taking into account the relevant elements from RAC's and SEAC's assessments, and, in particular, that the operational conditions and risk management measures are expected to be appropriate and effective in limiting the risk to the environment, the low levels of emissions and the socio-economic benefits of the use, the time needed in order to develop, implement and validate alternatives, as well as the high performance requirements and specific legal requirements for medical diagnostic devices.
- (13) The language used to describe the risk management measures and operational conditions in the application for authorisation may be different from the official language of the Member State where the use takes place. Therefore, in order to facilitate supervision and enforcement of compliance with the authorisation, it is appropriate to require the authorisation holder to submit, upon request, a brief summary of those risk management measures and operational conditions to the competent authority of that Member State in an official language of that Member State.
- (14) This Decision does not affect the obligation of the authorisation holder to ensure that a use of a substance does not adversely affect human health or the environment, having regard to the principle set out in Article 1(3) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006. Furthermore, this Decision does not affect the obligation of the authorisation holder under Article 60(10) of that Regulation to ensure that the exposure is reduced to as low a level as is technically and practically possible or the obligation of the employer to eliminate or reduce to a minimum risks to the health and safety of workers at work involving hazardous chemical agents in accordance with Article 5(2) of Council Directive 98/24/EC<sup>3</sup>. This Decision does not affect the application of Union law in the area of health and safety at work, in particular Council Directives 89/391/EEC<sup>4</sup>, 92/85/EEC<sup>5</sup>, 94/33/EC<sup>6</sup> and 98/24/EC, or any national binding occupational limit values which may be stricter than the applicable Union limit values.
- (15) This Decision does not affect any obligation to comply with emission limit values or other requirements set in accordance with Directive 2008/50/EC of the European

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<sup>3</sup> Council Directive 98/24/EC of 7 April 1998 on the protection of the health and safety of workers from the risks related to chemical agents at work (fourteenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) (OJ L 131, 5.5.1998, p. 11).

<sup>4</sup> Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work (OJ L 183, 29.6.1989, p. 1).

<sup>5</sup> Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding (tenth individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) (OJ L 348, 28.11.1992, p. 1).

<sup>6</sup> Council Directive 94/33/EC of 22 June 1994 on the protection of young people at work (OJ L 216, 20.8.1994, p. 12).

Parliament and of the Council<sup>7</sup> or Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>8</sup>, nor any obligation to comply with emission limit values set to achieve compliance with the environmental quality standards established by Member States in accordance with Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>9</sup> or the environmental quality standards established in Directive 2008/105/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>10</sup>. Compliance with the provisions of this Decision does not necessarily imply compliance with emission limit values or environmental quality standards under any other provisions of Union law, which may include further or more onerous requirements.

- (16) The measures provided for in this Decision are in accordance with the opinion of the Committee established by Article 133 of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

#### *Article 1*

An authorisation is hereby granted in accordance with Article 60(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 for the following use of 4-Nonylphenol, branched and linear, ethoxylated (4-NPnEO):

Authorisation number

Authorised use

REACH/22/8/0

Industrial use for its detergent properties in the production of buffers and reagents in view of ensuring the positioning of specific proteins necessary for the interpretation of gel electrophoresis in vitro diagnostic tests results based on the determination of isoenzymes

The authorisation is granted subject to the risk management measures and operational conditions described in the chemical safety report<sup>11</sup>.

#### *Article 2*

1. The review period shall expire on 4 January 2028.
2. The authorisation shall cease to be valid on 4 January 2028 with respect to any holder of the authorisation who has not submitted the review report for that use in accordance with Article 61(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 by 4 July 2026.

#### *Article 3*

1. The monitoring arrangements referred to in paragraphs from 2 to 6 shall apply.

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<sup>7</sup> Directive 2008/50/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 May 2008 on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (OJ L 152, 11.6.2008, p. 1).

<sup>8</sup> Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) (OJ L 334, 17.12.2010, p. 17).

<sup>9</sup> Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327, 22.12.2000, p. 1).

<sup>10</sup> Directive 2008/105/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on environmental quality standards in the field of water policy, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directives 82/176/EEC, 83/513/EEC, 84/156/EEC, 84/491/EEC, 86/280/EEC and amending Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 348, 24.12.2008, p. 84).

<sup>11</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/42062>

2. The authorisation holder shall carry out a monitoring programme of 4-NPnEO and its principal degradation products in the wastewater prior to release to the local sewage treatment plant. That monitoring programme shall:
  - (a) be carried out at least four times per year and during the time of operation. The frequency of measurements shall be such as to capture the variability in concentrations of the substance and its principal degradation products in the wastewater due to changes or operational fluctuations in the process;
  - (b) be based on an analytical method capable of adequately characterising the substance and its principal degradation products in wastewater, with appropriately low limit of quantification;
  - (c) be recorded so as to include details of the sampling point, the analytical method, the concentrations detected and the corresponding environmental release values.
3. The authorisation holder shall use the information gathered in the measurements referred to in paragraph 2 and related contextual information to regularly review, at least annually, the appropriateness and effectiveness of the risk management measures and operational conditions and, if needed, to introduce measures to further reduce emissions of 4-NPnEO to a level as low as technically and practically possible.
4. The authorisation holder shall assess, by 17 March 2023, the feasibility to collect the remaining liquid waste from rinsing reusable equipment for adequate treatment and act in accordance to the outcome of that study.
5. The authorisation holder shall document and keep the information obtained from the monitoring programme referred to in paragraph 2, as well as the outcome and conclusions of the review and of any action taken in accordance with paragraph 3, together with the information pursuant to paragraph 4. The authorisation holder shall submit that information, upon request, to the competent authority of the Member State where the authorised use takes place.
6. In the event that the authorisation holder submits a review report as referred to in Article 61(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006, it shall include the information referred to in paragraph 5.

*Article 4*

Upon request, the authorisation holder shall submit a brief summary of the applicable risk management measures and operational conditions described in the chemical safety report to the competent authority of the Member State where the authorised use takes place in an official language of that Member State.

*Article 5*

This Decision is addressed to SEBIA, Parc Technologique Léonard de Vinci, 91090, Lisses, France.

Done at Brussels, 17.3.2022

*For the Commission*  
*Thierry BRETON*  
*Member of the Commission*

