Statement related to the potential ban of PTFE following REACH regulation.

With this letter Accofluor wants to address concerns regarding the potential ban on Polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) and to provide a detailed explanation of why such a ban would be detrimental to various industries and societal interests.

REACH restriction.

The REACH restriction dossier proposes a near-total ban on the use of fluoropolymers across all applications, without distinguishing them from other PFAS. This proposal does not adequately recognize the distinct toxicological profiles of fluoropolymers. Fluoropolymers like PTFE have been proven safe for their intended uses. They are non-toxic, non-bioavailable, non-water soluble, and non-mobile molecules.

PTFE, a synthetic fluoropolymer of tetrafluoroethylene that has been widely utilized for over 80 years. Its unique properties make it indispensable across a multitude of applications. Below several critical reasons why PTFE should not be banned is listed:

1. Exceptional Chemical Resistance

PTFE's resistance to a wide range of chemicals makes it invaluable in industries such as chemical processing, pharmaceuticals, and food production. It can withstand exposure to corrosive substances without degrading, thereby ensuring the safety and integrity of equipment and products.

2. Non-Reactivity and Biocompatibility

In the medical field, PTFE's non-reactive nature and biocompatibility are crucial. It is used in surgical implants, grafts, and other medical devices where materials must not react with bodily tissues or fluids. Its inertness helps prevent adverse reactions, making it a trusted material in life-saving medical applications.

3. High Temperature Resistance

PTFE can operate effectively at temperatures ranging from -200°C to +260°C. This property is essential for applications in aerospace, automotive, and industrial sectors where materials must perform reliably under extreme temperatures. Banning PTFE would challenge these industries to find alternatives that can match its performance, which is not readily achievable.

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4. Low Friction and Non-Stick Properties

The low friction properties of PTFE reduce the need for additional grease and lubricants. Capable of ensuring precise movement in hydraulic cylinders, minimizes wear and tear on mechanical parts, leading to longer lifespan and reduced maintenance costs. This makes it ideal for use in bearings, bushings, and gears. In applications requiring smooth, efficient movement, such as conveyor belts and sliding mechanisms, PTFE's low friction properties ensure minimal resistance, leading to smoother operations and less energy consumption.

5. Economic Impact and Feasibility of Alternatives

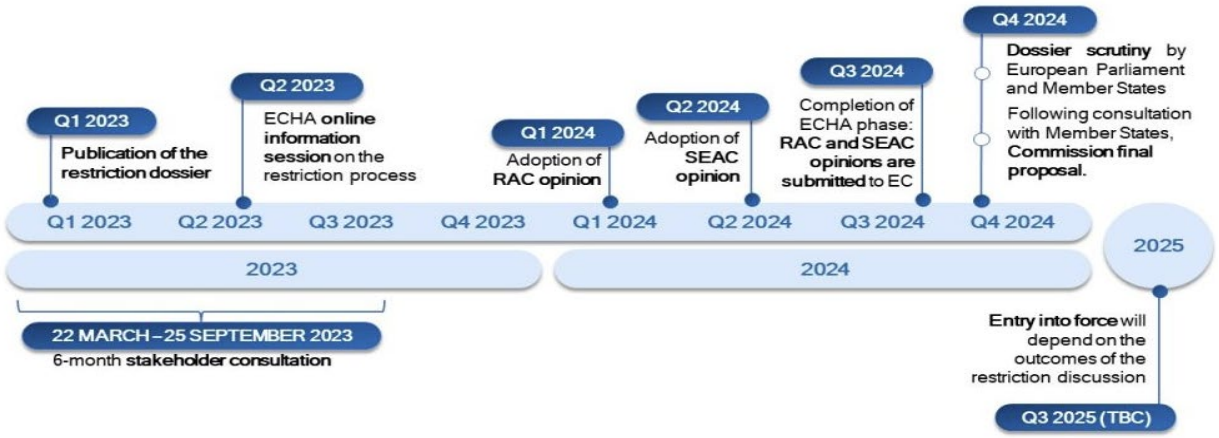
A ban on PTFE would have significant economic repercussions. Industries reliant on PTFE would face increased costs and potential disruptions as they search for suitable alternatives. Moreover, the environmental and health impact of potential substitute materials must be thoroughly evaluated, as these may not necessarily offer a safer or more sustainable solution.

6. Environmental Considerations

While concerns about the environmental impact of PTFE and related compounds (such as perfluorooctanoic acid, or PFOA) are valid, it is important to distinguish between PTFE itself and the substances used in its manufacturing. Advances in production processes have already led to the development of PFOA-free PTFE.

In conclusion, the unique properties and wide-ranging applications of PTFE make it an irreplaceable material in many sectors. A ban would not only disrupt critical industries but could also lead to unintended environmental and economic consequences.

Current timeline below.



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Accofluor firmly believe that PTFE will be exempted from the ban due to the mentioned points. With this said Accofluor continues to develop and optimize alternative materials based on PE, Polyurethane etc. We are more than happy to help review sealing applications for suitability towards these alternatives.

Related sites for further information:

https://fluoropolymers.eu/eu-pfas-restriction/

https://echa.europa.eu/hot-topics/perfluoroalkyl-chemicals-pfas

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