

POP

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POP – Statutory regime on persistent organic pollutants in the EU

Persistent organic pollutants (POPs for short) are organic substances with certain properties that can be harmful to humans and the environment. They are regulated at EU level by the POP Regulation as well as worldwide by the Stockholm Convention. The aim: production, marketing, and use of POPs should be banned or at least restricted.

What are the characteristics of POPs?

Persistent organic pollutants are organic compounds that are characterised by the fact that they:

- remain in the environment for a long time (persistence),
- accumulate via the food chain (bioaccumulation),
- may harm human health and the environment (bio-toxicity),
- have the ability to be transported in the environment over long distances.

Due to this latter property, the ability to disperse widely in the environment, POPs can be detected in remote regions such as Antarctica, even though neither production nor use of the substances has taken place in that region. The transport can take place by water, air or also by migratory species. Therefore, not only regional but also global risk management is necessary.

In addition to various industrial chemicals (e.g. polychlorinated biphenyls or perfluorooctanoic acid) and pesticides (e.g. DDT) that are or were produced for commercial purposes, POPs also include unintentional by-products from industrial production, degradation or combustion processes (e.g. dioxins and furans).



Agreements at international level - Stockholm Convention and CLRTAP

There are two international agreements regulating the handling of POPs:

- the Stockholm Convention,
- the Geneva Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).

You can find more information about the conventions on the respective websites.

Statutory regime at European level - Regulation (EU) 2019/1021 (POP Regulation)

At European level, the two aforementioned international agreements are transposed into European law by "Regulation (EU) 2019/1021 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on persistent organic pollutants" (POP Regulation).

Due to the legal form "regulation", the provisions contained therein are directly applicable in all Member States without the need for further implementation. This way, it is ensured that the obligations and measures resulting from the international conventions are regulated and implemented uniformly across the EU.

Regulatory areas of the POP Regulation

The provisions of the POP Regulation apply to substances included in its Annexes I and II. Annex I contains the list of prohibited substances. Annex II contains the list of substances that are subject to restrictions.

Article 3 of the POP Regulation prohibits the production, placing on the market and use of substances listed in Annex I. These prohibitions also include mixtures or articles containing such substances.

Stockpiles consisting of or containing substances listed in Annex I or II are also regulated (Article 5 POP Regulation). These provisions also apply to mixtures and articles.

Provided no specific use is permitted for stockpiles, they are managed as waste.

- The persistent organic pollutants they consist of, contain or are contaminated with must be destroyed or irreversibly transformed. Recycling, recovery, reclamation or reuse of corresponding substances is prohibited. In the area of waste management, the POP Regulation goes beyond the requirements of the international agreements.
- Where the use is permitted as an exemption, the owner must inform the enforcement authority responsible for the company of his EU Member State annually about the nature and size of stockpiles of more than 50 kg.

GROHE

To the best of our knowledge and belief, GROHE does not use any substances that are on Annex I ("List of Prohibited Substances").

Likewise, GROHE takes into account all substance restrictions documented in Annex II ("List of Substances Subject to Restrictions").

GROHE is also not active in the manufacture, placing on the market or use of substances listed in Annex I. These prohibitions also include mixtures or articles containing such substances.