

# EU tells Stockholm Convention meeting of PFOA ban proposal

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The EU has announced its intention to back a global ban on perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and its compounds, during the plenary session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) ([CW 25 March 2015 \(https://chemicalwatch.com/23284\)](https://chemicalwatch.com/23284)). It said, yesterday, that it plans to submit a proposal to add the compounds to Annex A of the Convention, after the COP.

It takes at least five to six years to complete the procedures to list a chemical under the Stockholm Convention – or longer if there are delays in getting all the information requested, or parties ask for additional information about a chemical.

Jessica Bowman, executive director of the Fluoro Council industry group, says: “While we have not seen this proposal, we generally support a PFOA POP nomination to the Stockholm Convention that is based on sound science and meets the criteria of the Annexes to the Stockholm Convention.” She adds that the group's members no longer produce or use PFOA globally: “[They] have developed alternative processing aids with improved environmental and health profiles that have been approved by regulatory authorities globally and are available for use.”

However, she notes, producers in some countries continue to manufacture and use PFOA, so a nomination to the Stockholm Convention would be an important step in addressing the remaining use and emissions of the substance.

PFOA compounds are used in consumer products for their water and oil repellent properties, and in industrial applications. According to the EU, the fluoropolymer market is growing by 5-6% a year. Traditional markets in the US, Japan and EU have been significantly reduced, but manufacture is growing in China and Russia.

Mariann Lloyd-Smith, senior policy adviser for the NGO International POPs Elimination Network (Ipen), welcomed the EU's announcement: “PFOA can be seen as a gatekeeper for many other perfluorinated chemicals. It is the basis of thousands of industrial compounds that now contaminate most living things from the Arctic to every woman's breast milk.”

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