



Open letter

To MEP Esther de Lange, Vice-Chair of the European People's Party

Brussels, 10 May 2022

**Subject: Putting EU chemicals law reform on hold would damage people, the environment and frontrunner companies**

Reaction to [Ms de Lange's intervention](#) on behalf of the EPP group, at the Plenary debate on "The social and economic consequences for the EU of the Russian war in Ukraine" (4 May 2022), where it was mentioned that the EU "might need a legislative embargo for new legislation", one example mentioned being the "new REACH".

Dear Vice-Chair Esther de Lange,

The level of exposure to harmful chemicals has never been more concerning. Scientists have found "forever chemicals" and plastics in human blood and in the remotest places on Earth. They also rang the alarm bell that chemical pollution crossed a planetary boundary, putting future generations at risk.

The current EU chemicals law, REACH, which dates back to 2006, has been too slow and too weak to prevent and reduce damage to people and the environment. We therefore welcome that the EPP group approved the European Parliament resolution of 10 July 2020 on the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability ([2020/2531\(RSP\)](#)), urging the Commission to accelerate action on harmful chemicals. We believe it is vital that all political groups, including the EPP, continue to support the European Commission in its endeavour to deliver a higher level of human health and environmental protection against harmful chemicals.

The revision of REACH cannot be postponed.

It is a prerequisite for a transition to a clean and circular economy, which must be done at the same time as reducing our fossil fuel dependency. This reform is also necessary in order to improve conditions in the market, supporting frontrunner companies that are currently struggling to survive. The cost of this transition will increase over time as the first-mover advantage will be lost. Delays will lead to more pollution and exposure of people and the environment to hazardous chemicals. REACH

reform is also not something that will happen overnight – the earliest any revision will be in force is 2025.

In this critical hour, European policymakers need to be consistent and determined. There is no room for delay and indecision on this matter.

We call on you to support the urgent revision and strengthening of REACH and we stand ready to engage with you on this topic.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Wates', written in a cursive style.

Jeremy Wates,

Secretary General of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Also on behalf of:

ChemSec

CHEM Trust

ClienEarth

Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)

*In view of the public interest in this matter, we intend to make this letter publicly available.*