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## **Technology Industries of Finland's comments on Commission's Roadmap for chemicals strategy for sustainability, 19.6.2020**

Technology Industries of Finland thanks for the possibility to comment on Commission's roadmap for chemicals strategy for sustainability.

Technology Industries of Finland welcomes the European Green Deal and endeavors to ensure a toxic-free environment with the Commission's Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability. We see that REACH provides very well knowledge in general about chemicals and especially of substances of concern. This makes it possible to have a better understanding of the effects of chemicals to the environment and on the protection of human health. REACH pushes companies to substitute substances of very high concern in cases in which alternatives are available and substitution technically feasible. Furthermore, REACH has major effects to downstream users, which were not perhaps expected when REACH came in force.

We see it important that the strategy will be built based on earlier initiatives associated with the EU chemicals legislation - the second REACH Review, the Fitness Check of the most relevant chemicals legislation (excluding REACH) and the Communication on options to address the interface between chemical, product and waste legislation. Those have identified a number of gaps, weaknesses, overlaps, and challenges that the EU chemicals policy needs to tackle. In addition, we think, that it is important to consider the coherence between Circular Economy Action Plan and Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability. We also find it worrying that no impact assessment is foreseen for the strategy as a whole, in spite of the fact that the Strategy aims at transforming the way chemicals and materials are going to be produced and used in Europe for at least a decade.

Technology Industries of Finland sees that metals and metal alloys are critical to developments like low carbon mobility, wind power, solar power, sustainable construction, autonomous ships, digitalization, safe drinking water supply and healthcare. Base metals, like iron, aluminum, copper and zinc, are as such not sufficient to aforementioned purposes. They often need to be tailored with alloying elements to withstand heat and cold, heavy loads or bending, aggressive environments, wear and friction, vibration and machining and drilling. Due to alloying elements, metal alloys are safe, long lasting, economically and environmentally sustainable.

The view of metals industries is that toxic-free environment should be understood as an environment where risks associated to the use of metals are under control, without harming human health or environment. The toxic-free environment strategy should ensure that the classification of metallic alloys is based on true risk assessment and does not jeopardize the EU circular economy targets. The current concentration limits are not applicable to massive metal mixtures i.e alloys. Massive metal mixtures (particle size is  $\geq 1\text{mm}$ ) should have their own solubility based concentration limits, not the same as simple mixtures. Bioelution testing methods should be validated and implemented. Metal alloys can be recycled over and over again without losing their functional properties. Small quantities of impurities or alloying elements in metal alloys, some of which are classified hazardous in certain exposure routes as pure elements, doesn't mean that the metal alloy is hazardous.

We call for risk-oriented approach to chemical legislation's implementation. We would like to emphasize the role of RMOA (Risk Management Option Analysis). Better screening is needed for substances to be included in the Candidate List by Member States before deciding how to regulate substances. Through this analysis Member States should be able to decide whether REACH is the right instrument to address the concern linked to the substance assessed or if another piece of

legislation is more fit-for-purpose. This should be the case for example in situations where only a limited number of workers is affected by substances of very high concern and work conditions can be controlled.

Regarding the clarity, compliance and enforcement as well as rational use of limited legislative resources, it should be noted that existence of different pieces of legislation setting overlapping limit values for the same compounds does pose challenges for employers and authorities and should be avoided. As far as the industrial and professional use of chemicals is concerned, the OSH legislation has proven to be a functional and accepted legislation by industry and occupational health professionals. To our understanding there is no evidence nor examples of OSH failing to provide safety and healthy limitations for the use of hazardous substances. It is important that when the BOEL (Binding Occupational Emission Limit) value is set, the value is legally binding and commonly respected by all EU member states and EU institutions. In our view, REACH limit values for industrial or professional workplaces should not be developed when the discussion is about occupational health.