

POPRC-14/2: Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds

The Persistent Organic Pollutants Review Committee,

Recalling its decision POPRC-13/2, by which it recommended to the Conference of the Parties that it consider listing perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds¹ in Annex A or B to the Convention with specific exemptions as specified in paragraph 2 (a)–(c) of that decision;

Having assessed the information provided in accordance with paragraphs 3 to 5 of decision POPRC-13/2,²

Recognizing that a transition to the use of short-chain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs) for dispersive applications such as fire-fighting foams is not a suitable option from an environmental and human health point of view and that some time may be needed for a transition to alternatives without PFASs,

1. *Adopts* the addendum to the risk management evaluation for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds;³

2. *Decides*, in accordance with paragraph 9 of Article 8 of the Convention, to recommend to the Conference of the Parties that it consider listing perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds in Annex A to the Convention with specific exemptions for the following:

- (a) For five years from the date of entry into force of the amendment in accordance with Article 4:
 - (i) Manufacture of semiconductors or related electronic devices:
 - a. Equipment or fabrication plant-related infrastructure containing fluoropolymers and/or fluoroelastomers with PFOA residues;
 - b. Legacy equipment or legacy fabrication plant-related infrastructure: maintenance;
 - c. Photo-lithography or etch processes;
 - (ii) Photographic coatings applied to films;
 - (iii) Textiles for oil and water repellency for the protection of workers from dangerous liquids that comprise risks to their health and safety;
 - (iv) Invasive and implantable medical devices;
 - (v) Fire-fighting foam for liquid fuel vapour suppression and liquid fuel fires (Class B fires) already in installed systems, including both mobile and fixed

¹ The titles of decisions POPRC-12/2 and POPRC-13/2 refer to “pentadecafluorooctanoic acid (CAS No: 335-67-1, PFOA, perfluorooctanoic acid), its salts and PFOA-related compounds”, consistent with the proposal for the listing of the chemicals submitted by the European Union (UNEP/POPS/POPRC.11/5). During the intersessional period, however, the chemicals that are the subject of these decisions were referred to as “perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds”. Both terms designate the same group of chemicals, but the phrase “perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds” is more consistent with other references to these chemicals. As noted above, the Committee has used the latter name in the present decision. The latter name will therefore be used henceforth to refer to the chemicals covered by decisions POPRC-12/2 and POPRC-13/2 in documents prepared under the auspices of the Stockholm Convention.

² UNEP/POPS/POPRC.14/3.

³ UNEP/POPS/POPRC.14/6/Add.2.

systems, taking due account of the possible related control measures specified in the annex to the present decision;

(b) For ten years from the date of entry into force of the amendment for manufacture of semiconductors or related electronic devices: refurbishment parts containing fluoropolymers and/or fluoroelastomers with PFOA residues for legacy equipment or legacy refurbishment parts;

(c) For use of perfluorooctyl iodide, production of perfluorooctyl bromide for the purpose of producing pharmaceutical products with a review of continued need for exemptions. The specific exemption should expire in any case at the latest in 2036;

3. *Recommends* to the Conference of the Parties that it consider encouraging Parties not to replace fire-fighting foam that contains or may contain PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds with short-chain PFASs due to their persistency and mobility as well as potential negative environmental, human health and socioeconomic impacts.

Annex to decision POPRC-14/2

Possible related control measures for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds

Part [X]

PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds

1. The use of PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds shall be eliminated except for Parties that have notified the Secretariat of their intention to use them in accordance with Article 4.

2. Each Party that has registered for an exemption pursuant to Article 4 for the use of PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds for fire-fighting foam shall:

(a) Notwithstanding paragraph 2 of Article 3, ensure that fire-fighting foam that contains or may contain PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds shall not be exported or imported except for the purpose of environmentally sound disposal as set forth in paragraph 1 (d) of Article 6;

(b) Not use fire-fighting foam that contains or may contain PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds for training or testing purposes;

(c) By the end of 2022, restrict uses of fire-fighting foam that contains or may contain PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds to sites where all releases can be contained. Containment measures, such as bunds and ponds, shall be controlled, impervious and not allow firewater, wastewater, run-off and other wastes to be released to the environment (e.g., to soils, groundwater, waterways and storm water);

(d) Ensure that all firewater, wastewater, run-off, foam and other wastes are managed in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 6;

(e) Make determined efforts designed to lead to the environmentally sound management of fire-fighting foam stockpiles and wastes that contain or may contain PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds, in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 6, as soon as possible.