

Meeting with Cosmetics Europe on 27 July 2017

**Participants:**

Cosmetics Europe: John Chave and Diane Watson

Commission: G. Radziejewski (CAB-Katainen); H. Braun (CAB-Timmermans); A. Mailet (CAB-Vella); J. **Morek** (CAB-Bieńkowska) and  (SG)

**Summary:**

Cosmetics Europe (CE) explained its position on possible measures to restrict use of micro-plastic in cosmetic products. The EU cosmetics industry is a world leading industry. EU rules tend to become world leading standards, thus important that any EU measures would be well designed and proportionate. CE recommended to their members in 2015 to phase out the use of plastic beads in wash-off cosmetics. CE's own survey indicated a compliance rate of 82 %. Measures on plastic beads also taken in other jurisdictions notably the US, CA and AUS, all with more or less similar scope as that defined by CE's voluntary measure. CE noted with some concern that a growing number of EU MS has introduced or intends to introduce national measures with the obvious risks to the internal market and for divergent rules as most recently seen with a proposal from IT. CE therefore supports EU level action, like a restriction via REACH, as long as the scope does not extend beyond the voluntary measure. A broader scope would have significant cost impacts on the sector, which consists of both major global players and more than 4000 SMEs. These effects would occur as developing alternatives to current use of plastic polymers would cost research money, take time and in some cases not even be technically feasible.

The Commission took note of the extended position outlined by CE and welcomed its general forthcoming position in addressing the problem. Work on how to address the problem was still in progress and any final decision would always be informed by the available evidence and the balance between cost and benefits both on firms but also societal costs from pollution. The CE position on the scope and the importance of an accurate definition of the plastic regulated was well taken, whilst the cost concerns expressed by industry was not unique to this case and always had to be seen in context of the broader picture and that of plastic in general. Legislation was not only a tool to prohibit, but also a way to encourage innovation in a desired direction. The Commission welcomed CE's to suggest additional measures that could provide positive incentives for industry to look for more circular approaches, especially for plastic. According to CE, the industry is concerned with reputational risks which act as an incentive to develop alternatives to plastic beyond the current voluntary measure.