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**Norway acting in isolation from the EU on chemicals**

Just days after adoption of a new EU law on chemicals (REACH), Norwegian regulators have once again called for restrictions on chemical substances ignoring EU science and due legal process. Though not an EU Member State, the Norwegian authorities are obliged – and indeed have extensive opportunities - to act within the EU regulatory and scientific processes. Instead, Norwegian government representatives pursue an isolationist approach, seeking to act outside the EU process.

Following recent unilateral actions on other chemicals, the Norwegian Environment Ministry is now targeting the flame retardant HBCD and advocating the extreme position of a global ban on its various uses. As a result, Norway seeks to bypass an EU regulatory process and scientific risk assessment of HBCD which is due for completion in the first half of 2007. In so doing, the Norwegian Ministry does not take account of the importance of how HBCD contributes to ensuring fire safety. It also ignores the fact that industry has reduced emissions to the environment from production of HBCD by 95% in Europe. EBFRIP is also working with HBCD users down the supply chain to reduce emissions to the environment from all applications.

EBFRIP calls on Norway not to contradict or prejudge EU science, to follow the existing EU processes of chemicals risk assessment and to act within agreed European regulations. REACH will not be able to work in practice if individual Member States try to pre-empt EU-level decisions.

*Brominated flame retardants enable a wide range of materials to meet fire safety standards in the home and public places across the Europe Union.*