

# [ECHA's scientific committees support restricting PAHs in granules and mulches](#)



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The Committee for Socio-economic Analysis (SEAC) has adopted its final opinion supporting the proposal for restricting eight polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) found in granules and mulches used, for example, in synthetic turf pitches and playgrounds.

**Helsinki, 18 September 2019** – SEAC adopted its final opinion by simple majority, supporting the proposal by the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) and following an earlier opinion by the Committee for Risk Assessment (RAC) in June.

The restriction proposal lowers the total concentration limit of eight PAHs to **20 mg/kg** (0.002 % by weight). The concentration limits for PAHs in mixtures supplied to the general public are currently set at 100 mg/kg or 1 000 mg/kg for each of the substances. The PAHs all have been identified as causing cancer and the proposed concentration limits will be closer to the limit values for individual PAHs in articles supplied to the general public ([entry 50](#) of REACH Restrictions list).

Currently, the levels of PAHs measured in granular infill material and mulches pose, at most, a very low level of concern ([ECHA study, 2017](#)). The aim of the proposed restriction is to ensure that the cancer risk from PAH exposure **remains at a low level** for those coming into contact (inhalation and skin contact) with the granules and mulches. This includes, for example, footballers, children playing on the pitches or playgrounds and workers installing and maintaining such surfaces.

SEAC concluded that the proposed restriction is the most appropriate measure to control the risks posed by these substances, and that the measures proposed would be proportionate to the risk with limited economic impacts. The proposal does not affect existing fields but will ensure that the material used for maintaining (refilling) the fields is below the new limit. The final opinion of SEAC will be published in the coming weeks.

<b>Substance</b>	<b>CAS number</b>
Benzo[a]pyrene (BaP)	50-32-8
Benzo[e]pyrene (BeP)	192-97-2
Benzo[a]anthracene (BaA)	56-55-3

Chrysen (CHR)	218-01-9
Benzo[b]fluoranthene (BbFA)	205-99-2
Benzo[j]fluoranthene (BjFA)	205-82-3
Benzo[k]fluoranthene (BkFA)	207-08-9
Dibenzo[a,h]anthracene (DBAhA)	53-70-3

*Table: Eight PAHs with their CAS numbers.*

## Next steps

Following SEAC's adoption of its final opinion, the opinions of both RAC and SEAC will be forwarded to the European Commission. The Commission will consider if the conditions for the restriction are met, prepare a draft restriction measure to amend the REACH Restrictions list (Annex XVII) and submit this for an opinion to Member States in the REACH Committee.

## Microplastics restriction proposal

The restriction proposal on PAHs concerns risks to human health from the substances present in the infill material of artificial turfs. ECHA is also progressing with its proposal to restrict intentionally added microplastics which aims at reducing potential environmental risks. The granular infill material that is typically used in artificial turf pitches is understood to be an 'intentionally-added microplastic'. [A public consultation on this proposal](#) ends on 20 September 2019, after which RAC and SEAC will finalise their opinions to aid the Commission's decision making. In the framework of the public consultation, further information has been requested specifically on the use of granular infill material in synthetic turf to assess the implications and the possible need for a derogation.