

EuPIA Interview

Paolo Bonamigo

Chairman of the EuPIA Technical Committee



What is your job at EuPIA Technical Committee and what does your remit look like?

The ETC, together with PIFOOD, is one of the two senior technical committees of EuPIA. In its remit, the ETC maintains the EuPIA Exclusion Policy and deals with a broad range of regulatory-driven topics like substance classifications, impact of various regulations (e.g. REACH, cosmetics and biocides). Put simply, the ETC deals with topics not related to food contact materials. In my role as ETC Chairman I have to coordinate the discussions and work on these topics, especially during the two ETC sessions (March and November) and this is also the case for the periods in between and in preparation for such sessions. It is a broad portfolio of topics, and this is also because various task forces and groups (e.g. paper recycling, plastic recycling, OSRA, LSDS) report to the ETC and share their interesting proceedings during the ordinary sessions.

What are the topics you are working on right now?

Currently the most important area of focus for the ETC is the revision of the EuPIA Exclusion

Policy and it has formed a big part of the ETC discussions for almost two years. I am pleased that we have completed the final draft of the Policy and related documents, thanks to the valuable help of a small group of dedicated members. This is an important step towards our discussion on the EuPIA Exclusion policy in November and I hope that we can conclude the process by then.

Additionally, other important topics on which we will focus are the impact of classification changes of a number of substances under observation, the upcoming restriction for diisocyanates and the microplastics dossier.

Have the topics changed in the last years and how have they changed?

In general, I can say that the topics have certainly changed in recent years because we are seeing less and less room for manoeuvre in the European regulation landscape for chemicals. Some examples of that are the increasingly restrictive classifications (or proposal thereof), which limit our toolbox of raw materials in the context of the EuPIA Exclusion Policy. Additionally, restriction proposals are



EuPIA Interview

more frequent. This forces us to focus more and more on certain substances, to understand the impact of the modification and advocate on specific issues. This drives strongly the development of products and impacts on technological evolution. Since last year, we have also been observing some significant initiatives connected to the “The European Green Deal”. The Commission is producing a vast number of strategic documents like a chemical’s strategy for sustainability, which will surely occupy our discussions in the coming years. Chemicals in general, but also printing ink as packaging constituents will be ever more the focus of the regulators, and I fear there is already a measure of negative bias against the chemical industry. Our association activities will surely become more and more interesting, let alone challenging.

What is on the agenda for next year?

I hope that the proposed revisions to the Exclusion Policy meet with approval in the next ETC session so we can present the new Exclusion Policy to the EuPIA members for their approval early next year. Once we have received approval, ETC can begin the implementation of the new requisites of the Exclusions Policy, some of which will be very interesting and, more than likely, challenging.

Other than that, the ETC’s agenda will remain

pretty full following dossiers like the diisocyanate restriction, microplastics restriction, and a number of specific dossiers on proposal for classification changes. In my opinion, one of the most relevant and the most surreal, is surely the proposed reclassification of ethanol as reprotoxic.

What makes this task special for you personally?

This is my first role in a trade association at European level, so this alone is enough to make it special for me personally.

But there is more to it than that. This helps me considerably to understand the intricacies of European lawmaking process and administrative structure; certainly it increases my awareness as a European citizen. Even if sometimes it is disappointing to see good and reasonable principles being significantly distorted in the regulatory implementation. Another stimulating aspect is the exchange, contact and discussion with highly specialized colleagues from other companies and from other associations; it is a very stimulating and continuous learning process. And it is also refreshing to be there in the meetings when we find a way to cooperate on specific topics with the colleagues of the same industry sector.