

Chemicals Strategy – update and call for evidence

27th Meeting, November 2020

Commission

The Chemicals Strategy Team (under Defra Chemicals, Pesticides and Hazardous Waste) have restarted work on the Call for Evidence development, which will be used to support the Chemicals Strategy and, in turn, the Chemicals Framework. The team requests that HSAC provides an independent **review** of the questions posed in the draft call for evidence.

When reviewing the draft call for evidence HSAC are requested to:

- Provide general comments on the questions
- Consider whether the questions allow the academic community to submit robust evidence to inform the Chemicals Strategy?
- Consider whether there are any evidence streams or subject areas that the academic community would have difficulty in submitting robust evidence for based on these questions?
- Highlight any key areas that are missing?

Delivery

The mode of delivery will be discussed at the 27th HSAC Meeting. It is initially suggested that HSAC will be sent questions from the draft call for evidence in mid-November 2020. The committee members will then provide individual written feedback to the Secretariat by email which will be collated and shared with the Chemicals Strategy team. This can then be discussed at a short ad hoc committee meeting in late November/early December 2020 to allow for clarification of any outstanding issues.

Background

In the 25 Year Environment Plan, the Government committed to publishing a Chemicals Strategy. The last Government Chemicals Strategy was published in 1999. The Chemicals Strategy will set out the Government's vision for the Chemicals Framework including details on the statutory regime, direction of travel on important policies, our work on

monitoring and how the Framework contributes to a net zero and circular economy. The call for evidence will support its development.

The Chemicals Framework will build on a robust UK statutory chemicals regime, effectively managing the new responsibilities in delivering regulatory functions repatriated from the EU and our international obligations. Its ambition is to ensure chemicals are safely used and managed, and that the levels of legacy harmful chemicals and those entering the environment are significantly reduced.

HSAC were originally asked to review a call for evidence at the 26th Meeting in December 2019 once the text had been developed by the Defra team. However, the reprioritisation of staff to support the Government response to the Covid-19 pandemic delayed its development. This provides an opportunity to refresh the narrative and build on our previous learning. The new publication date for the call for evidence is in March 2021.

Policy linkage

This commission directly contributes to the policy development of the Chemicals Strategy in pursuit of Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan actions.

HSAC's comments on the draft call for evidence supports the Chemicals Strategy team in testing the efficacy of the questions. By providing an independent review, HSAC can help ensure that the questions posed will enable the academic community to submit robust evidence to the call, generating a strong evidence base for the strategy. Feedback will be taken forward by the Chemicals Strategy team to help refine the text in the Call for Evidence.