

Sustainable chemistry: a driver of innovation

Vito A. Buonsante

Intergroup on "Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable
Development"

European Parliament

13/11/2013



An introduction to ClientEarth

- ClientEarth is a non-profit environmental law organisation
- We use law, science and policy to create pragmatic solutions to key environmental challenges
- We work with partners in government and NGOs, providing legal solutions for policymakers and holding those in power accountable
- Our work covers climate change and energy, environmental justice, biodiversity, forests and health and environment



Law as a tool for positive social change

- We work on laws from conception to implementation and enforce them when governments fail to do so.
- We help create the legal frameworks needed to make people and natural systems more resilient
- Our interdisciplinary teams include scientists, research and policy experts and world-class lawyers
- We focus not only on the months it takes to get laws passed, but on the years it takes for them make a difference on the ground

Safe by design

- EU Regulations discourage hazardous chemicals;
- Hazardous pesticides will not be authorised;
- Hazardous industrial chemicals will be under scrutiny;
- Key concepts: substitution & precaution.

Business risk of hazardous chemicals

- Impossible to plan on long term due to regulatory uncertainty;
- Reputation undermined by growing public knowledge on users and suppliers;
- Potential liability for failing to prove safe use of substances or product containing them;
- Hazardous chemicals use may increase cost of compliance.

Benefits

- Lower incidence of diseases caused by chemicals;
- Less chemicals persisting in water, soil and air.
- Safer food.
- Boost to the circular economy.
- Waste reduction and related costs.
- Higher competitiveness on non-EU markets
- ...many more

Recommendations

- Improve polluter pays principle for manufacturers and users of hazardous chemicals;
- Increase citizens' knowledge about hazardous chemicals in products;
- Identify chemicals on the basis of their hazardous properties (e.g. endocrine disruptors);
- Promote research in sustainable innovation.

Thank you

Vito A. Buonsante
Law & Policy Advisor
[+32 2 808 34 72](tel:+3228083472)
vbuonsante@clientearth.org

www.clientearth.org
www.facebook.co.uk/ClientEarth
[@ClientEarth](#)