

SABIC & REACH: Sharing our futures

When it comes to REACH compliance, SABIC prefers to focus on the broad opportunities created by this legislation, rather than lingering on the challenges it produces.

We believe that the EU chemical industry – including SABIC – only stands to benefit from a single regulatory system for new and existing chemicals. REACH will encourage our industry to innovate, either by replacing potentially harmful substances with suitable alternatives, or by dramatically reducing the risk posed by the use of these chemicals.

Because REACH mandates that all chemical substances in the EU be comprehensively documented, knowledge and expertise regarding these substances will increase, for the benefit of society as a whole. And since the legislation also covers chemicals that are imported into the EU, REACH will have a positive global impact as well.

Pragmatic approach

SABIC fully endorses the REACH objectives. As a responsible manufacturer and importer of chemicals, we care for the safety and health of people and the environment, and compliance with REACH is merely a logical step. Yet we also see REACH as a serious business topic. This fact is underscored by our pragmatic approach to REACH compliance.

We have assembled a professional corporate Program Management Office (PMO) to centrally guide the timely delivery of high-quality dossiers for all our products. Although independent from business and Safety, Health and Environment functions, the PMO aims to cover both needs. To help our team achieve on-time registration, we recently signed a 4-year strategic partnership with TNO, a highly respected scientific research institute. With the people and processes thus in place, SABIC is well on its way to meeting its REACH goals.

Sharing is key

To help lessen the burden of animal testing, the REACH regulation mandates that all producers and importers of a chemical substance should work together by sharing toxicology data and jointly submitting dossiers. Beyond its humane spirit, this requirement also offers a clear financial benefit to producers.

“The expense of testing can be shared among groups of substance producers”, says Harrie Camps, Program Manager REACH at SABIC Europe. “SABIC has already joined pre-consortia groups of producers established by the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC) through its sector groups.”

“SABIC’s commitment to sharing goes beyond self-interest and beyond the minimum requirements set by the REACH legislation, however. We openly share REACH-related knowledge and best practices with others who can benefit from this information. At conferences and via industry networks, we discuss and compare relevant work processes with our co-producers. We will also share information on the progress of the registration process of SABIC substances with customers and other

stakeholders via our regular communication channels, such as our website and newsletters,” Camps confirms.

Accomplishing more

Why is sharing so important, according to SABIC? The scope of REACH is so complex – and its impact so large – that cooperation is the surest way to produce the best results. By working together, industry and authorities will increase their knowledge and expertise regarding chemical substances, and contribute to a healthier future for our children and our planet.