



Frans Timmermans

Executive Vice President of the European Commission for the European Green Deal

cc : Diederik Samsom, Sarah Nelen

Brussels, 24/07/2020

Regarding: Inter-services negotiations on the Chemical Strategy for sustainability

Dear Vice President,

We are writing to you as co-rapporteurs of the European Parliament's Resolution on the Chemical Strategy for Sustainability. We are reaching out to you in the light of the various press articles published in the past days showing the severe disagreements between the different services in the European Commission, and more especially between DG GROW and DG ENVI on the inter-services negotiations on the Chemical Strategy for sustainability.

We are very worried to see that the elements and comments brought by DG GROW are greatly undermining the priorities defined by DG ENVI for the Chemical strategy for sustainability and underlined on repeated occasions by Commissioner Sinkevičius. We welcome the draft prepared by DG ENVI and expect the final strategy to strike a balance between the positions of the different Commission services' involved in the drafting of the strategy as well as with the priorities of the European Parliament on the matter, as underlined in its recent resolution of 10 July 2020.

These recent revelations notably show how some priorities that could bring a strong shift towards a better protection of health and the environment in the EU Chemical legislation are particularly threatened. Among these are the notion of a toxic-free hierarchy aiming at prioritizing prevention of harm and safe-by-design innovations, the consideration of the combined exposure to chemicals, the promotion of non-toxic production cycles in the framework of the circular economy, the move toward a more generic assessment of risks, and the reflection around the notion of essential uses.

Should the position of DG GROW be dominant in the final version of the strategy, this would represent a dangerous change of narrative that goes against many ambitions that are strongly promoted in the European Green Deal under your leadership. This goes beyond the issue of chemicals and questions broader objectives of the Green Deal such as the zero-pollution ambition for a toxic-free environment, the new circular economy action plan and the

biodiversity strategy. Therefore, the success of the Green Deal will greatly depend on the level of ambition of the Chemical strategy for sustainability and your support will be crucial to balance the internal negotiation between the different services of the Commission.

We would like to kindly invite you for an exchange of views in the ENVI committee in early September to discuss this crucial topic before the final draft of the strategy is adopted. An official invitation will follow soon.

Sincerely yours,

MEP Maria Arena, MEP Frédérique Ries, MEP Sven Giegold