

EPDLA's comments on the on proposal for new criteria for Nordic Ecolabelling Paint and varnishes

The EPDLA (European Polymer Dispersion and Latex Association, a Cefic Sector Group) is dedicated to promoting the safe manufacture, transportation, distribution, handling and use of waterborne polymer dispersions and redispersible powders made thereof in compliance with regulatory requirements and industry guidelines.

EPDLA members are committed to Responsible Care® principles and have implemented risk management according to the precautionary principles.

O4.

Related to criterion O4 on Environmentally harmful substances that “ingoing substances classified as environmentally harmful with hazard phases H410, H411 and/or H412”, EPDLA has noted the change in the formula from 9 to 6% in the

proposed formula: $M \cdot 100 \cdot H410 + 10 \cdot H411 + H412 \leq 6\%$.

Our members see a potential issue for producers of high-quality paint formulation with good wet adhesion: the reduction from 9 to 6% would affect the use of certain wet adhesion promoters/crosslinkers classified with H 411. Due to their chemical reactivity, such crosslinkers are firmly bound in the final dried paint film, so that leaching becomes virtually impossible.

As an example: This is the reason Adipidic acid dihydrazide (ADH) as wet adhesion promoter with an unsurpassed application profile has received an exemption in the EU Ecolabel for Indoor and outdoor paints and varnishes up to 1% - in the Nordic Ecolabel such derogation was not needed as long as the factor was at 9%.

We see the risk, that going from 9 to 6%, the Nordic Ecolabel might get out of reach for such high-quality paints.

O6.

Version 3.10 of the Nordic Ecolabel for Indoor paints and varnishes refers to a maximum level of formaldehyde (10 ppm, or if due to the use of formaldehyde releasers 0,0025 weight percent). The proposal in version 4.0 is to have a limit based on an emission test (EN 16516). For the paint industry this means that they will have to do an expensive test for all their final paints to proof compliance. This test will not be a standard testing method by the paint producers and the test capacities have so far been limited in availability.. By using the absolute level as mentioned in version 3.10, the paint

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producers can analyse the incoming raw materials and do calculations for their final paints which will be a much lower effort and far less costs. Further the proposal to use a chamber test would potentially open doors for paints and varnishes that have a higher level of formaldehyde than allowed in the still current version 3.10. As long as the emission of formaldehyde in the final paint will stay within the to be set limits, the added level can be significantly higher and the total emission of formaldehyde into the environment can be higher accordingly. People might be exposed to a higher level of formaldehyde in the first weeks after applying.

In appendix 2 the suppliers of raw materials should mention the theoretical level of formaldehyde, but to our opinion this value no longer can be used by the paint producer, because now no longer the absolute level, but the result from the emission test is binding.

O13.

Similar to our comments re. O6 we want to address that the obligation using the emission test for compliance and no longer the absolute levels will cause a potential of higher absolute emission of VOC's and/or SVOC's. Here again the chamber test is considered not readily available for the paint producers and TVOC/TSVOC data given by the suppliers of raw materials no longer can be used, because a TVOC/TSVOC level does not per definition guarantee low emission data after 28 days. A higher TVOC/TSVOC than allowed in version 3.10 can still lead to a compliant paint or varnish.

O16.

Requirement Acrylic resins (binders)

According to the proposed criteria, the goal of this requirement is to increase the use of raw materials with less climate impact. In order to achieve this goal, Acrylic resins must comply with certain criteria, as described in requirement O16. Acrylic resins suppliers should fill in Appendix 4, where the option is given to state whether or not the Acrylic resin contains renewable raw materials. Details on the very limited availability of suitable renewable raw materials are outlined below. The proposal therefore effectively precludes the use of acrylic binders in Nordic Ecolabel paint formulations. Clarification is required as to whether this is the intended consequence of the draft proposal.

The use of palm oil including by-products, residues, waste fractions, is banned by this requirement. On the one hand, this fact makes the increase of biobased components in Acrylic resins highly demanding, since the availability at industrial scale of suitable raw materials is not high enough at this point in time, so that such monomers have to be considered to be (very) special monomers in terms of price and availability. Secondly, palm oil and/or its derivatives may currently be used in the





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production of many raw materials utilized in the manufacturing of Acrylic resins (e.g. defoamers). In those raw materials palm oil and/or its derivatives are part of the whole product, which is not always declared to contain renewable or biobased components. The question in this case would be, how the Acrylic resins supplier should evaluate those raw materials concerning requirement O16.

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About EPDLA

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