

"Next generation risk assessment": Berlin conference discusses new testing methods for chemicals

Communication No. 021/2023 of 25 May 2023

The risk assessment of chemical substances is facing great challenges. This is due to the fact that people are coming into contact with more substances and, in addition, new types of chemicals and substance mixtures are being brought onto the market. Around 350 scientists will meet in Berlin from 29 May to 1 June 2023 to discuss new methods for hazard and risk assessment of chemicals.

The non-public meeting takes place within the framework of the European Union's "PARC" research programme. "PARC" stands for "European Partnership for the Assessment of Risks from Chemicals" and has the task of strengthening and pooling European research on the assessment of chemicals and protecting human health and the environment. To achieve this, a "next generation risk assessment" is to be developed. The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is significantly involved in PARC. Its work focuses on the development of new methods for hazard assessment.

Investigations on cells, computer-aided methods and molecular biological analyses ("omics" methods) are being tested and further developed within the framework of PARC as new approaches to hazard assessment. The decisive question is to what extent the test procedures help to uncover and evaluate possible health effects of substances. Particular attention is being paid to the influence of chemicals on the hormone and immune systems, carcinogenesis, metabolism and the developing nervous system.

The conference is organised jointly with partner institutions from France (ANSES), Sweden (KEMI) and the Netherlands (RIVM). The aim is to coordinate joint work with the partners. This is also crucial for harmonising and implementing new methods in the EU.

The seven-year PARC project is one of the largest projects of its kind. Around 200 European institutions are involved. It is coordinated by the French Agence nationale de sécurité de l'alimentation, de l'environnement et du travail (ANSES). The agency is responsible for safety and health in the areas of food, environment and employment.

Further information on the topic:

<https://www.eu-parc.eu/>

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00204-022-03435-7>

About the BfR

The Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL). The BfR advises the Federal Government and the Federal States ("Laender") on questions of food, chemicals and product safety. The BfR conducts independent research on topics that are closely linked to its assessment tasks.

This text version is a translation of the original German text which is the only legally binding version.