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Knowing what chemicals are all about

The "PARCopedia" online platform provides information about risks and enables professional dialogue

How do chemical substances affect humans and the environment? The EU partnership "PARC" is getting to the bottom of this question. PARC stands for "European Partnership for the Assessment of Risks from Chemicals". The extensive project also has its own forum: "PARCopedia" has recently gone online - a platform developed as part of PARC for knowledge management and the exchange of information on the risk assessment of chemicals. Registration at <https://parcopedia.eu/register> is free of charge. All what is required is your name, length of service and e-mail address.

The new platform is aimed at anyone with a professional interest in chemical assessment, whether from the perspective of research and method development, risk assessment or communication, risk management or politics. Membership of PARC is not required.

PARCopedia was set up under the joint leadership of the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) and the Portuguese partner authority INSA. The necessary IT was set up by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. Other important contributions were made by scientists from the German Federal Environment Agency (UBA), the University of Birmingham, Masaryk University in Brno and the Greek General Chemical State Laboratory in Athens.

PARCopedia provides a forum for the exchange of information on all topics relating to the risk assessment of chemicals, across all thematic and disciplinary boundaries:

- In a wiki - currently still under construction - registered members can find information on chemical substances and substance groups, test and assessment methods, ongoing projects and activities as well as regulatory procedures. A glossary explains important terms and introduces institutions and laws in the field of chemical assessment.

- On a "dashboard", members receive news from the field of chemical assessment as well as information on current events and job advertisements and are informed about new developments on the platform.
- In the social media area, members can present themselves and their work and network with others in public and private discussion groups, start discussion forums or conduct opinion polls.

As a product of PARC, PARCopedia places particular emphasis on the promotion of innovative concepts and methods of risk assessment ("New Approach Methodologies", NAMs). Major challenges need to be overcome on the way to "Next-Generation Risk Assessment" (NGRA).

The objectives of the new platform include, in particular, improving the level of knowledge about the potential of new testing and assessment methods and the understanding of regulatory processes, as well as breaking down language barriers. This is intended to create the basis for an intensive scientific and political exchange between all specialist areas and professional groups.

About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) in Germany. The BfR advises the Federal Government and the German 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.

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