



Protecting paints with biocides

- **Only few biocidal active substances remain available for paints and coatings**
The use of biocides is permitted only after a complex procedure according to the European Biocidal Products Regulation. This achieves a high protection level for the health of humans and animals and for the environment. However, this procedure also reduces considerably the number of active substances that remain available for paints, coatings and printing inks. Limitations in usability are foreseeable particularly for in-can and film preservatives.
- **Biocides are indispensable for modern paints, coatings and printing inks**
Biocides are indispensable for the majority of solvent-free, water-born paints, coatings and printing inks: Biocides prolong their durability, and they prevent mould formation and growth of fungi and algae. Thus they make important contributions to consumer protection and resource conservation and, furthermore, they help cut costs. Over time, biocides are largely degraded in interaction with microorganisms, through oxidative processes and the impact of solar radiation. Given the multitude of harmful organisms and the threat of resistances, it is necessary to maintain a broad range of active substances and the possibility of combining them with each other.
- **Modern paints and coatings can be used safely**
Paints and coatings with preservatives can be applied safely in their intended use. Already now, restrictions within the approval of biocidal active substances lead to a situation where many safe and efficient products lose their functionality or are no longer available to end consumers. Additional labelling requirements can cause a flood of information; this is not in favour of consumer protection.

We are calling for the following:

1. Keep biocidal active substances available

There are only few biocidal active substances for paints and coatings which are both effective and compatible with health and environment. As these active substances (e.g. MIT) are difficult to substitute under technical and safety-relevant aspects, their availability to paint and printing ink manufacturers needs to be ensured also in the future – at least as long as no innovative alternatives are offered on the market. Instead of an isolated examination of individual chemicals, a joint European assessment of active substances should be carried out. Both a high protection level for processors and end consumers and functioning preservation can remain safeguarded in this manner.

2. Impose requirements with a sense of proportion

No disproportionate requirements should be made, neither in active substance approval or biocidal products authorisation nor for treated articles. Labelling requirements that cause a flood of warnings should be avoided.

3. Take into account the benefits of biocides

In the future, also socio-economic aspects need to have a role in the assessment of active substances and biocidal products. This is the only way to reliably prevent serious damage to national economies and concrete disadvantages for consumers.