



Protecting Paints with Preservatives

Preservatives are indispensable for modern paints, coatings and printing inks

Preservatives are indispensable for most solvent-free, water-borne paints, coatings and printing inks: they prolong their shelf life and prevent microbial growth. They thus make important contributions to consumer protection and the conservation of resources within a circular economy. In the sector of wall paints, preservative-free paints have become established on the market, especially in Germany, which can dispense with preservatives due to high operational hygiene in conjunction with increased alkalinity. For most other coating technologies, however, there are currently no technical alternatives to preservatives.

Future of water-borne paints in danger

The use of preservatives is only permitted after a complex procedure according to the European Biocidal Products Regulation. This achieves a high level of protection for consumers and the environment. However, the current evaluation practice causes a situation where only few active substances remain available for paints, coatings and printing inks which are effective while meeting the relevant regulatory conditions. Also, the regulatory hurdles are so high that no new active substances can be expected. This development is increasingly endangering the future of water-borne paints.

Modern paints and coatings can be used safely

Paints and coatings with preservatives can be applied safely when used as intended. However, the rigid, formalistic evaluation process and the unnecessary coupling to the hazard-based classification procedure of the CLP Regulation lead to unintended consequences in the approval process: Many safe and efficient products lose their functionality due to restrictions or are no longer available to the end consumer at all.

This is what we are calling for

✓ Preservatives must remain available for paints and coatings

The few remaining preservatives relevant for paints and coatings must be maintained. The discussion started at EU level with the participation of the Commission, ECHA and member states must be continued and led to concrete results.

✓ Avoiding unnecessary predefinitions during active substance approval

A complete risk assessment takes place as part of the biocidal product authorisation process, which makes it possible to define targeted restrictions on use. The definition of restrictions purely based on the hazard-based classification of the CLP Regulation already at the level of active substance approval is unnecessary, not in the spirit of the legislation and leads to unintended and detrimental consequences.

✓ Take into account the benefits of preservatives

In the assessment of active substances and biocidal products, their benefits must be given a greater role. The corona crisis shows that biocides and their availability are highly relevant to society. Only within the framework of a holistic approach a high level of protection for processors and end consumers can be guaranteed while at the same time ensuring effective preservation.



Preservatives have different effects,

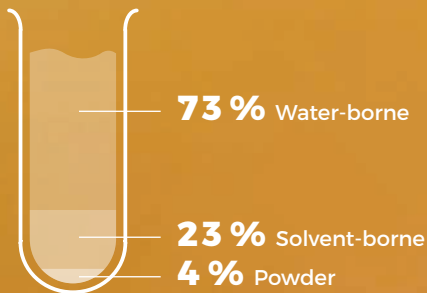
Therefore, a modular system with different active substances is needed!



Coatings need Preservatives

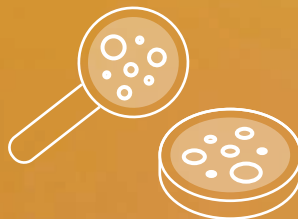
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Paints and varnishes are predominantly water-based



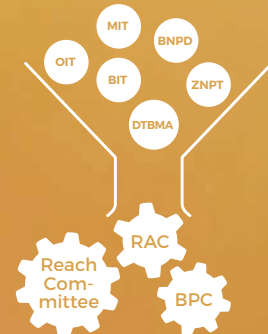
Total production DE 2017:
2.1 million tonnes

Water-based products are susceptible to microbial infestation

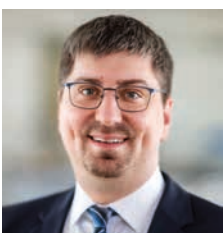


Coatings need protection:
Solvents
pH value
Preservatives

Shortage due to regulatory processes



Restrictions for existing active substances
Inhibition of innovation (no new active substances)



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