



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP
Secretary of State for Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs

T 03459 335577
defra.helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Our ref: MC2020/23624/SB

30 March 2021

Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your email of 9 September to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on behalf of your constituents about repeat animal tests for chemicals. I am replying as this issue falls within the remit of my Department. Please accept my sincere apologies for the considerable delay in responding. Defra is currently dealing with high volumes of correspondence due to COVID-19. Thank you for your understanding during this challenging time.

Following the end of the transition period, under the EU Withdrawal Act, existing EU legislation has been carried over into UK law. This includes the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) Regulation. The UK has been at the forefront of opposing animal tests where alternative approaches could be used. This is known as the "last-resort principle", which we will retain and enshrine in legislation through our landmark Environment Bill.

Under UK REACH, we will recognise the validity of any animal testing that has already been done and therefore avoid the need for duplicate animal testing. The 'grandfathering' of all existing UK-held EU REACH registrations into the UK system will further avoid the need to duplicate animal testing associated with re-registration. We are determined that there should be no need for any additional animal testing for a chemical that has already been registered under EU REACH, unless it is subject to further evaluation that shows the registration dossier is inadequate or there are still concerns about the hazards and risks of the chemical, especially to human health.

Now that we have left the EU, we will have our own independent chemicals regulatory framework. This gives us the opportunity to do things differently and the freedom to take decisions that are in line with what is best for those exposed to harmful chemicals, as well as protecting the environment and promoting animal welfare.

RT HON GEORGE EUSTICE MP