

PRESS RELEASE

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Ricardo develops world-first tool to improve the assessment of chemical persistence in the environment

Ricardo has applied its 50 years of world-leading expertise in chemical safety and legislation to develop the Persistence Assessment Tool, to improve the consistency, transparency and robustness of chemical assessments required by global regulations

Ricardo, a global strategic environmental and engineering consulting company, has developed a first of its kind Persistence Assessment Tool to provide manufacturers and importers of chemical substances and products, regulators, and the scientific community with support and guidance to undertake complex persistence assessments of chemicals in the environment. The tool has been developed by Ricardo and is sponsored by Concawe and the International Collaboration on Cosmetics Safety (ICCS), with support from the Cefic Long-Range Research Initiative (LRI) and the European Centre for Ecotoxicology and Toxicology of Chemicals (ECETOC).

Increased awareness around issues of chemical persistence, including global plastic pollution and the presence of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) or 'forever chemicals' in the environment has triggered numerous global policy initiatives. Most notably the European Union's Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability has proposed new measures for persistent, mobile and toxic (PMT) substances, and introduced requirements to carry out persistence assessments under the classification, labelling and packaging (CLP) regulation. More regulatory measures have created dual challenges for the global chemicals industry: first, the significantly higher demands for chemical biodegradation testing and persistence assessments; and second, the fact that these assessments are highly complex and full of challenges, with notable gaps in available guidance.

Ricardo's software-based Persistence Assessment Tool - <https://www.ricardo.com/en/news-and-insights/insights/persistence-assessment-tool-pat> - is addressing both these issues by providing a structured and clear methodology to systematically capture and store information on persistence; evaluate data quality; carry out a robust and transparent weight of evidence determination; and assess persistence in line with global regulatory frameworks. The tool is the product of Ricardo's decades of experience assessing biodegradation and persistence of chemicals.

Chris Hughes, Head of Environmental Chemistry and Toxicology at Ricardo said: "At Ricardo we have applied our unique knowledge of and expertise in chemical assessment, safety and global regulation to develop the Persistence Assessment Tool, which seeks to address several important gaps in current knowledge and approaches for persistence assessments. We anticipate that it will be the trusted, key tool in facilitating the large number of persistence assessments requiring to be completed under global regulatory frameworks in the coming years."

Delina Lyon, Science Executive at Concawe said: "Concawe saw a need to have a transparent weight-of-evidence framework to facilitate consistency in test interpretation and that is exactly what the Persistence Assessment Tool delivers. It allows the incorporation of non-standard test data and reconciles conflicting data."

Dr Véronique Poulsen, Head of Environmental Safety at L'Oréal – ICCS Science Chair, said: "The cosmetic industry is committed to assess its ingredients using the best available science to address environmental issues. In the framework of an evolving regulatory context, addressing persistence is key for cosmetics due to the high number of diverse ingredients used to deliver the best products to our consumers. The Persistence Assessment Tool provides a transparent assessment of all available data, using the weight of evidence approach in a robust way, and leading to consolidated conclusions."

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About Ricardo

Ricardo plc is a global strategic, environmental, and engineering consulting company, listed on the London Stock Exchange. With over 100 years of engineering excellence and employing close to 3,000 employees in more than 20 countries, we provide exceptional levels of expertise in delivering leading-edge and innovative cross-sector sustainable products and solutions. Every day, we enable our customers to solve the most complex and dynamic challenges to help achieve a safe and sustainable world. Visit www.ricardo.com

About Concawe

Concawe was established in 1963 to develop a scientific understanding on the environmental impact of the European Fuel Manufacturing Industry and the use of its products, according to the principles of sound science, cost-effectiveness, and transparency of results.

About ICCS

The International Collaboration on Cosmetics Safety (ICCS) is a global initiative focused on advancing the adoption of animal-free safety assessment approaches for cosmetics, personal care products and their ingredients. ICCS brings together scientists and experts from cosmetics manufacturers and suppliers, industry associations, and animal protection organizations to drive greater global awareness to accelerate widespread use of animal-free science through research, education, and regulatory engagement.

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