LIFE-FLAREX

Mitigation of environmental impact caused by Flame Retardant textile finishing chemicals studying their non-toxic alternatives

PRESS RELEASE

Terrassa, June 10th 2019

LIFE-FLAREX held the fifth project meeting in Barcelona to assess safer flame retardants for the textile industry

LIFE-FLAREX is a LIFE Programme project that aims to reduce the impact on the environment, human health and workers' safety, of current harmful Flame Retardants used in the textile finishing industry and their alternatives, by analyzing their environmental impact and technical functionalities and promoting the best practices for the sector

The LIFE-FLAREX consortium gathered in Barcelona for the fifth project meeting on June 5th and 6th. The External Advisory Board of the project attended to this meeting as part of the project strategy to gather vital inputs during this milestone. The members present were Ms. Dunja Drmac, Sustainability Officer at EURATEX, Mr. Eric Sitters, from Flame Retardant Europe association, Prof. Monica Ardanuy, textile professor at Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya and Mr. Denis Mottet, scientific officer at the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). The project monitor delegated by the European Commission also participated to assess the status of the project.

The consortium met at the CSIC's Institute for Advanced Chemistry of Catalonia (IQAC) in Barcelona, where the consortium reviewed in depth the progress of all the actions of the project. Several points were treated with utmost detail; particularly, the recently published report on the technical performance of alternative flame retardants conducted at pre-industrial scale. The progress on the Life Cycle Assessment and the Risk Assessment and the results for analytical methodologies for quantifying the different products that will be used to assess the human toxicological profile and the skin penetration.

The industrial demonstration are planned to start in the coming weeks in the different industrial partners that have already confirmed their interest in safer alternatives for flame retardants: E. CIMA, Bonditex and Pertex in Spain, TF2000 and Giordanetto in Italy, and Inotex in Czech Republic.

LIFE-FLAREX is a project co-funded by the European Union under the LIFE Financial Instrument within the axe Environment Policy and Governance and under the Grant Agreement n. LIFE16 ENV/ES/000374

Other important aspects discussed during the meeting were the strategic plan for promoting substitution towards safer chemicals in the textile finishing process. All partners share a common vision and strategy to involve the different regions of the project and to seek regional synergies with ongoing programs and authorities. It is important to highlight best practices and experiences that companies can relate to in order to make an effective communication that can engage other companies to follow and lead.

LIFE-FLAREX team and the External advisory board during the project meeting in Barcelona

The meeting included a review of the different dissemination and communication activities that have been performed during the first half of the project. It is noteworthy the presentation of the project at several international conferences including iTechStyle 2019, AEQCT Symposium and the participation of several of the partners in Techtextil 2019.

Lastly, the consortium had the opportunity to do a tour in the CSIC-IQAC facilities that have been used in the project including the skin penetration lab and its equipment and also the thermal characterization lab where the different flame retardants were assessed for stability.

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LIFE-FLAREX team during the lab visit of CSIC-IQAC facilities

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The project coordinator is AEI TÈXTILS, the Catalan cluster of technical textiles. Six additional partners complete the consortium: two Spanish technological centers/research institutes: LEITAT and the Institute of Advanced Chemistry of Catalonia (CSIC), both members of AEI TÈXTILS, the Belgian textile research center CENTEXBEL and three technical textile clusters: ATEVAL from Spain, POINTEX from Italy and CLUTEX from the Czech Republic.

LIFE-FLAREX's objective is to reduce the impact on the environment, human health and workers' safety, of the current flame retardants used in the textile sector, and their future alternatives, by identifying which are the best technologies available, both from the performance and from the sustainability point of view. This will be achieved with the development of the analysis of their environmental impact and functionalities in order to promote the substitution amongst the manufacturers.

For more information: www.life-flarex.eu

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