

EFTTA lead position

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EFTTA position on the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) restriction report¹ submitted to the European Commission March 2021 to phase out lead in sinkers and lures.

This is EFTTA's response to the public consultation with deadline 24 September 2021². After the deadline EFTTA will continue to follow and engage with ECHA until ECHA's final restriction proposal is submitted to the European Commission next year.³ EFTTA's position may be revised later dependent on outcomes during the restriction process, which continues into year 2023.

- **EFTTA supports ECHA's proposal** to phase out lead in sinkers and lures, **except** from the smallest sizes of split shots, **0.06 gram and less (No 8 to 14)** for which there are no suitable alternatives. In total these sizes present **less than 0.3%** (16 tpa⁴) of the total of lead sinkers and lures on the EU market (5 400 tpa⁵).
- **EFTTA supports ECHA's proposal to ban immediately the 'drop-off lead' practice.**
- **EFTTA does not support** ECHA's proposal that the lead in alloys limit should be only 1%. **EFTTA requests that the limit for copper alloys should be set at 4% by weight** - as is the compliant limit set in the RoHS Directive⁶. To set a lower limit than 4% would increase the production cost excessively, and the risk to humans or the environment of lures with 4% lead is negligible.
- **EFTTA supports ECHA's proposal that the restrictions should apply to both sales as well as use.** This way **imported** and **home-casted** products will be covered well by the restrictions, and the restriction will be easier to control and enforce. However:
- **EFTTA urges immediate improvement of the relevant custom code(s)**, to secure the enforceability of non-compliant import of fishing sinkers, lures and other types of fishing tackle. **ECHA estimates** that the **quantities imported** to the EU market are **two to four times more** than the quantity produced in EU. Furthermore that "...there is **no information** available on the amount of lead fishing sinkers and lures imported to the EU27-2020, **as the existing customs code 160** to identify the import of fishing tackle (#95079000) **is not specific enough** to differentiate the lead fishing sinkers and lures from all the other types of fishing tackle (e.g. poles, lines, fishing equipment)."⁷
- **EFTTA requests a small change to ECHA's proposed phase out timelines:** **ECHA proposes** 3 years for 50g sinkers and under, and 5 years for those above 50g, **EFTTA requests** 5 years for all products within the restriction scope - for reason of the industry's need for this time, and for reason of practicality/simplicity with regard to control and enforcement.

NOTE: EFTTA's members produce and/or sell tackle to recreational anglers (rod & line fishers). EFTTA takes note that the scope for restrictions is not aimed at angling tackle alone. Lead in fishing nets, ropes and lines are also within the scope⁸. And the scope includes both **recreational fishing as well as commercial fishing**. EFTTA's members rightly expects that all other fishing gear than angling tackle also will be lead restricted.

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¹ <https://echa.europa.eu/registry-of-restriction-intentions/-/dislist/details/0b0236e1840159e6>

² <https://echa.europa.eu/restrictions-under-consideration/-/substance-rev/27801/term>

³ Timetable (scroll down): <https://echa.europa.eu/hot-topics/lead-in-shot-bullets-and-fishing-weights>

⁴ Estimate provided by tackle manufacturer 'LEMER'.

⁵ ECHA estimate. P. 446: <https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/1a42c9e1-e36a-65b0-da45-bc1ca093b632>

⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:02011L0065-20160715>

⁷ 'PP. 445/446: <https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/1a42c9e1-e36a-65b0-da45-bc1ca093b632>

⁸ P. 4 : <https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/8a375d79-0362-2836-c501-1ea0169b3ec8>