

Bill to Amend the Chemical Substances Control Law

A bill to amend the Chemical Substances Control Law has been submitted to the 171st ordinary session of the Diet.

This bill is aimed at introducing a comprehensive control system to minimize adverse effects of chemical substances on human health and the environment and at ensuring international consistency of Japanese regulations on chemicals.

1. Background of the Amendment

In recent years, public interest in safety and security, including ensuring the safety of chemical substances, has increased in Japan. At the global level, an agreement was reached at the World Summit on Sustainable Development to minimize adverse effects of chemicals on human health and the environment by 2020, and a new regulation on chemical substances entered into force in Europe in 2007. In addition, it is expected that additional chemical substances will be listed under an international treaty to prohibit manufacture and use with specific exceptions. Thus, circumstances surrounding the control of chemicals have changed substantially.

Japan, however, has yet to take sufficient measures in this regard. For example, risk assessment of many of the so-called “existing chemical substances,” chemical substances that had been in the market before the enactment of the Chemical Substances Control Law in 1973, has not been completed yet. The government faces the need to take new measures to address these issues.

2. Summary of the bill

(a) Companies that have manufactured or imported any chemical substances, including existing ones, in excess of the specified amounts are newly obliged to notify quantity and other information to the government every fiscal year. This will ensure steady implementation of risk assessment and promote strict control of chemical substances in Japan.

(b) The government eliminates international inconsistencies in its regulations, for example, by reviewing regulations on substances that are to be listed under the international treaty.

Division in Charge

Chemical Management Policy Division, Manufacturing Industries Bureau

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