

Summary of the bill to amend the Chemical Substances Control Law

To comprehensively control chemical substances, the government reviews the measures for risk assessment of chemical substances and the scope of the regulated chemical substances, while taking measures to rationalize regulations in view of international trends.

Background and necessity of the amendment

1. Increasing public interest in chemical substances (public safety and security)
2. Need to achieve international goals on chemicals management
 - There is a need to minimize adverse effects of all chemicals on human health and the environment by 2020 (agreement in the World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002).
 - In Europe, a new regulation (REACH) entered into force in 2007.
 - Since the enactment of the Chemical Substances Control Law (in 1973), every new chemical substance has been subject to pre-marketing evaluation.
 - On the other hand, the government has been conducting safety assessment of part of the existing chemical substances (chemicals in the market before the legislation) and not all of them have been assessed yet.
3. Inconsistency with the international treaty
 - Under the international treaty (Stockholm Convention), an agreement is expected to be reached this spring to accept certain exceptional uses of the newly prohibited chemicals.
 - The existing law, which is more restrictive on exceptional uses, may fail to ensure the uses essential to Japan.

Summary of the Amendment

(1) Measures for existing chemical substances

- Companies that have manufactured or imported any chemical substance, including existing one, in excess of the specified amounts are newly obliged to notify applications containing quantity and other information to the government.
- Upon receipt of those applications, the government screens and prioritizes substances subject to detailed risk assessment. For these substances, the manufacturers/importers may be required to submit information on hazardous properties for government evaluation.
- Based on the evaluation, the government decides whether to regulate the manufacture/use of the substance and its product, etc.

(2) Ensuring international consistency

- The government ensure that substances newly listed under the international treaty can be used under strict control.
 - Uses for semiconductors, fire fighting foam, etc.

(For reference) 1973 Enactment of the Chemical Substances Control Law

Related moves

2002	World Summit on Sustainable Development	→	2020	Completion of safety confirmation by respective countries
2004	Entry into force of the Stockholm Convention			
2007	Entry into force of REACH (Europe)	→	2018	REACH registration deadline