Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and UK

January 2021

The EU and the UK reached a Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) on 24 December 2020. This sets the framework for the relationship between them after the post-Brexit transition period ended on 31 December 2020. The TCA consists of a Free Trade Agreement, a Partnership on Citizens' Security and an agreement on governance of the TCA.

Chemistry plays a vital role in the UK economy, in shaping our society and the environment in which we live. The chemistry-using workforce contributes £83 billion per year to UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) through its overall economic impact[1]. The TCA impacts the chemical sciences in the UK and in the EU in a

The conclusion of a Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the UK is welcome, as a no deal outcome would have been highly problematic for the chemical sciences.

We have consistently warned of the risks to the chemical sciences of a no deal outcome, for example the significant barriers to scientific cooperation and trade across a range of sectors

It is vital that the agreement delivers further scientific cooperation on research, innovation, policy and regulation, enable mobility of the chemistry workforce and students, whilst helping chemistry-using sectors and companies to grow and flourish.

High standards of human health and environmental protection must continue in the UK post Brexit and these must be informed by the best science. Formal mechanisms to ensure the best scientific evidence and advice is taken into account into decision-making for chemicals policy must be in place as soon as possible in 2021.

The Free Trade Agreement sets the framework for the UK-EU relationship going forward. It needs to facilitate the relationships and dialogues that support a broad range of scientific cooperation - research collaborations; innovation; mobility of scientists and scientific cooperation on regulation and standards.

The end of the transition period means that the UK can make rules and standards in areas of EU competence, such as chemicals, without needing to meet the requirements of future EU rules. It can also change existing rules made as an EU member. It is vital that the UK Chemicals Framework and future UK chemicals regulation are strongly informed by the best possible science. Transparent mechanisms for ensuring the best science and scientists in their fields provide strong advice to decision-makers are vital to ensure future UK chemicals regulation continues to protect the environment and human health and enable innovation. We are advocating strongly for this approach in Chemicals Filtion and (o)6 up-1 (n9af.)