

# EU directive restricting the use of nonylphenol ethoxylate and nonylphenol products



## Situation statement – 2007

### EU Directive restricting the use of nonylphenol ethoxylate and nonylphenol products

#### Background

An EU risk assessment was made under the Existing Substances Regulation 93/793/EEC because of the large quantity of nonylphenol (NP) manufactured and used, as well as its toxicity to aquatic organisms and concerns about its biodegradability. The nonylphenol ethoxylated (NPE) products were also assessed as they are the main pathway of nonylphenol into the environment.

For NP the risk assessment showed that the main concern is the high aquatic toxicity and that it did not break down readily in ecosystems. No adverse human exposure risks during use were identified.

The environmental risk assessment indicated the need to reduce the risks associated with the production, formulation into products and end-uses of NPE and NP. It is estimated that the proposed restrictions will decrease emissions to the aquatic environment by about 80%.

#### EU Directive

The EU passed in July 2003 the directive 2003/53/EC, which restricts the marketing and use in Europe of products and product formulations that contain more than 0.1% of NPE or NP. This applies to many industries, including the textile and leather industries, except in the case of closed application systems where no release into waste waters occurs.

From January 2005 this EU Directive came into force.

#### TFL Wet-end products

The TFL range of Wet-end and Finishing products supplied from our TFL warehouses in Europe are not based on NPE chemistry.

We especially recommend the use of **BORRON DN** and **BORRON DNC** as universal alternatives to NPE-based non-ionic surfactants. Furthermore, a wide range of NPE-free surfactants with special effects are available from TFL.

#### Summary

The sale and use of products containing more than 0.1% NPE or NP is not allowed in Europe from Jan. 2005.

It should be clearly understood that in this EU Directive there is no restriction on the import of goods like leather, which have been treated with NPE products outside of Europe.

The above explains the official chemical regulations in EU. Some leather users, for example, for eco-labels, automotive manufacturers, etc., may in addition have their own restrictions regarding application and analysis of NPE products in leather. Therefore we recommend the use of the TFL products referred to above.