

Media Release Tuesday 5th December 2012

LEAD BAN AVOIDED FOR NOW - Committee votes on priority substances

EFTTA is pleased to announce that on Wednesday 28 November the European Parliament's Committee on Environment, rejected two amendments of concern.

These amendments would have seen lead and its compounds change status under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) from "priority substance" to "priority hazardous substances". If that had happened lead use would have to be ceased or phased out over some years. However, the committee upheld status quo meaning **no lead ban**, and therefore no adverse effect on the tackle trade and anglers - for now.

EFTTA's Public Relations Officer in Brussels Mr Jan Kappel says: "The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is about water quality; to achieve good ecological, chemical and quantitative status for Europe's waters. The parliament's environment committee was absolutely right and in line with science, when it refrained from including "lead and its compounds" in the WFD's list of Priority Hazardous Substances. Only a tiny fraction of metals found in soils and in natural waters is bio-available, be it lead or other metals".

Last year EFTTA delivered a response to the European Commission concerning a suggestion to lower the Environmental Quality Standard (EQS) value set for lead in sea and freshwater. EFTTA supports the lowering of the EQS value (response is attached to this release) as we are worried about high emissions of bio-available lead from mining operations and urban waste water as lead is still a common material used in roofs and water pipes.

"We are happy to see that the Commission's proposal to lower the EQS value for lead and its compounds were adopted by the committee", Jan Kappel said.

The legislative process continues

The final committee report was adopted by majority (43 in favour; 7 against; 8 abstentions). The rapporteur was given a mandate to reach an agreement with the EU Council in the first reading. The Parliament plenary vote is to follow next year, date to be confirmed.

- ENDS -

Notes for editors:

Since early last year EFTTA has followed the work on this Directive when we delivered a response to the Commission's work on the draft for this Directive, which amends the WFD's list of "priority substances" and "priority hazardous substances". Earlier this year the Commission's final proposal for a Directive reached the Parliament, and MEP Richard Seeber was appointed rapporteur. Mr. Seeber called in a stakeholder meeting the on the 5th of June, which EFTTA attended. Mr Seeber's draft report was published in July and the committee members were given the 7th November as their deadline for amendments. 295 amendments were tabled, this was reduced to 70 before the vote took place.

- LINK ...: EFTTA´s response to the European Commission of 24th of March 2011: “Concerning: Review of Priority Substances under the Water Framework Directive: Invitation to provide input to substance impacts reports - lead”

- “Priority substances under the Water Framework Directive”; European Commission information page:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-dangersub/pri_substances.htm

- “Procedure file”, European Parliament / Legislative Observatory:

[www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2011/0429\(COD\)&l=en](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2011/0429(COD)&l=en)