

GDCh-Advisory Committee
on Existing Chemicals (BUA)

C. I. Acid Blue 9

BUA Report 242

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S. Hirzel

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on Existing Chemicals (BUA, Status 9/2002)

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für Altstoffe (BUA)



S. Hirzel

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Preface

The Advisory Committee on Existing Chemicals of Environmental Relevance, BUA for short, was established in May 1982 to help the German federal government cope with the large task of dealing with existing chemicals. In an agreement between federal government, scientific community, and the chemical industry, it was associated with the German Chemical Society (GDCh, Gesellschaft Deutscher Chemiker) to ensure objective work carried out in accordance with scientific principles. Since the beginning of 2001 the BUA has been composed of scientists from the research areas of chemistry, analytics, monitoring, toxicology, primary and secondary exposition, aquatic and terrestrial toxicology as well as the fate and behaviour of compounds in water, soil, air. The BUA is supported by experts from federal government agencies and the German Chemical Industry Association (Verband der Chemischen Industrie [VCI]).

No other national or international body has dealt with the ecological and health-related effects of as many existing chemicals as the BUA. Upon the recommendation of the federal government, the BUA has participated as a Peer-Review Group in the evaluation of ICCA-compounds (ICCA: International Council of Chemical Associations) since 2000 and also acts as the Contact Point in the OECD-HPV-Chemicals Programme (High Production Volume). The goal of the initiative is on the one hand to complete the data on the HPV chemicals and on the other to undertake an internationally coordinated evaluation of their hazard potential.

The BUA began an additional national project in 1997, which also selects and assesses existing chemicals with a lower production volume in the range of 100 - 1000 tonnes/year. The chemical industry presents about 50 datasets for such substances each year, for which the BUA sets the priority. Comprehensive reports are published on chemicals suspected of having a hazard potential. If the data available for substance assessment are insufficient, the gaps in knowledge are documented and, if necessary, investigations recommended. On the national level, the BUA has produced comprehensive reports on about 330 substances and carried out preliminary evaluation and classification (priority-setting) for approximately 200 more. The processes leading to priority-setting and the BUA reports are published to lend transparency to the Committee's work.

Moreover, BUA is increasingly addressing scientific questions and problems, which apply simultaneously to many compounds, among others: "Marine Risk Assessment: Concept and Criteria" (BUA Report 220), "Biological Impact of Synthetic and Natural Endocrine Active Substances – Effects on Human Health" (BUA Report 228), Risk Assessment of Substances in Soils" (BUA Report 230), Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) (BUA Report 232) and "Safety Factors in Toxicological Risk Assessment". For each of these themes an analysis is made of the scientific state of the art, is documented and the results published in reports such as the current volume. The aim of BUA is to develop assessment concepts, determine data gaps, point out the need for further research and, last but not least, also to reduce information deficits in the general population.

Weihenstephan
February, 2002

Helmut Greim
BUA Chairman

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