

Perspectives of The Federal Environment Ministry and The Federal Environment Agency

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Chemicals and products belong to the daily life and needs- for consumers or for professional application. The safety of these chemicals within their lifecycle is essential with respect to human health and the environment. Therefore the marketing and use of chemicals for various purposes require hazard and risk assessment concerning human health and the environment. Depending on the respective legal context specific information including data on toxicological and ecotoxicological properties is required in order to perform hazard and risk assessment. For mutual acceptance of data reasons internationally standardised and accepted testing methods should deliver these data. The majority of the testing methods in toxicology- and to a certain extent in ecotoxicology,- involve testing with vertebrate animals. The OECD has committed to the 3 R Principle already 1982, simultaneously encouraging to discover, develop and validate alternative testing systems. The Federal Ministry of the Environment supported actively the development and validation of test methods complying with both the 3R-principle and the demands on information for hazard and risk assessment. In recent years a number of in vitro test methods have been developed, validated and published as OECD testguidelines, many of them with the engagement of ZEBET, which is not limited to toxicological working areas: ZEBET supported the development and validation work e.g. for the fish embryo toxicity test, an alternative to the widely required test on acute fish toxicity as representative organism for aquatic species. ZEBET is encouraged to further support and advice the expert group "testmethods in ecotoxicology" lead by UBA- especially with regard to increasing demand on methods for identification of endocrine disruptors and PBT-substances.