

National Chemical Inventory of China

Inventory of Existing Chemical Substances Produced or Imported in China (IECSC)

Overview of the IECSC:

The Inventory of Existing Chemical Substances Produced or Imported in China (IECSC) is a critical regulatory tool managed by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) of China. It serves as the official inventory for chemicals that were produced or imported in China before a certain cut-off date (October 15, 2003). The IECSC is a key component of China's chemical regulatory framework, ensuring that chemicals used within the country comply with environmental and safety standards.

Key Components of the IECSC:

1. Development and Legal Basis:

- The IECSC was first established under the "Measures on Environmental Administration of New Chemical Substances," initially published in 2003 by the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA). These regulations were revised in 2010, with the updated version coming into force on October 15, 2010, under Order No. 7.
- The inventory was officially released on December 6, 2010, with subsequent updates, including a significant addition in January 2013 and further updates in March 2016.

2. Inventory Composition:

- As of the latest update, the IECSC includes **45,602 chemical substances**. Out of these, **37,427 substances** have CAS (Chemical Abstracts Service) numbers, while **8,175 substances** are listed without CAS numbers due to their complex or proprietary nature.
- The inventory also includes **3,166 confidential substances**, which are protected under Chinese regulations to maintain trade secrets and proprietary information.

3. Confidentiality and Disclosure:

- Chinese regulations allow certain chemicals to be listed as confidential to protect the intellectual property and commercial interests of companies. The confidential substances are included in the inventory but are not publicly disclosed to protect business interests.

4. Updates and Additions:

- The IECSC is periodically updated to include new chemicals that meet the criteria established by the MEE. For example, in March 2016, **31 new chemicals** were added to the inventory (MEP Announcement No. 20 of 2016).
- Ongoing updates and additions to the IECSC are regularly announced on the official website of the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, ensuring that the inventory remains current and comprehensive.

5. Regulatory Significance:

- Chemicals listed in the IECSC are considered "existing substances" and are subject to different regulatory requirements than "new substances," which are not listed in the IECSC and must undergo rigorous environmental and safety assessments before they can be produced or imported in China.
- The IECSC is essential for companies operating in China, as it determines whether a substance is considered existing or new, influencing the regulatory pathway for its use, production, and importation.

Importing Chemicals Listed in the IECSC

If a chemical is listed in the Inventory of Existing Chemical Substances Produced or Imported in China (IECSC), it can generally be imported into China without requiring additional new chemical notification or registration. This means that once a chemical is included in the IECSC, it is recognized as an "existing substance," and companies can import it freely, subject to other applicable regulations.

However, it's important to note that being listed on the IECSC does not exempt a chemical from other regulatory controls. For instance, if the chemical is classified as hazardous, a drug precursor, or a chemical weapons precursor, it may still require special licenses or registrations before it can be imported or used in China.

Timeline for Including New Chemicals in the IECSC

For new chemicals that are not yet listed in the IECSC, the process to have them included typically involves a notification and evaluation process under the Measures for Environmental Management Registration of New Chemical Substances (MEE Order No. 12). After a new chemical substance is registered and undergoes necessary assessments, it may be added to the IECSC five years after the first production or importation date.

During this five-year period, the substance is managed under the new chemical substance regulations, and its continued use and importation are subject to ongoing regulatory compliance. After being listed in the IECSC, the chemical is then treated as an existing substance.

Accessing the IECSC:

- The IECSC is accessible to the public through the Ministry of Ecology and Environment's official channels. While the non-confidential substances are available for public consultation, confidential substances are protected and not disclosed to the general public.

For more information or to access the latest updates to the IECSC, visit the [Ministry of Ecology and Environment's website](#).

- FCID holds copies of all official government publications (Government Gazette) in its internal library, which can be made available upon request.