



PFAS Restriction & Architectural membranes

– Prepare for the SEAC consultation –

TensiNet Association

The REACH restriction process, initiated in 2023, is entering a decisive phase.

ECHA (European Chemical Agency) is finalizing its risk assessment and will soon open the socio-economic consultation, expected in 2026. Final opinions are anticipated by the end of 2026, with a potential European Commission decision around 2028 and entry into force in the 2029–2030 timeframe.

For the tensile architecture sector, this next socio-economic consultation (April to May 2026) is critical.

The European **TensiNet Association** has organized a webinar (on 5th Feb 2026) to inform worldwide stakeholders about the importance to answer to the next consultation. Here below a summary of this webinar.

WHAT ARE PFAS?

PFAS is a broad family of more than 14.000 substances with various hazards and risks.

Fluoropolymers are a small family of solid PFAS.

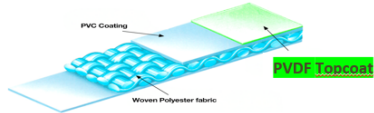
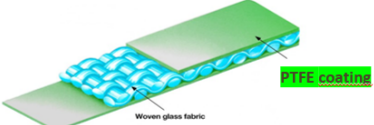

FLUOROPOLYMERS

- Fluoropolymers are essential materials for all architectural membranes.
- Fluoropolymers (solid materials) are different from other PFAS. A large majority of PFAS are liquids and gases, having greater risks of spreading in the environment depending on their use.
- Fluoropolymers have negligible risks. They are polymers of low concern according to peer-reviewed studies on them, based on “Polymer of Low Concern” criteria defined by OECD.
- CANADA and the UK decided to not restrict the use of Fluoropolymers (Polymers of Low Concern)
- In USA, PFAS are restricted in some States but mainly for consumer use. The use of PFAS for architectural membranes is not banned. It is either out of the scope or clearly exempted in States having a broader restriction scope.

FLUOROPOLYMERS IN ARCHITECTURAL MEMBRANES

In architectural membranes specifically, fluoropolymers are essential and enable:

- Long service life and structural reliability
- Resistance to harsh weathering and chemicals
- Lightweight, energy-efficient building envelopes
- Safety performance (fire, mechanical and environmental resistance)

Main Components	Where is FLUOROPOLYMER ?	Main Benefits of Fluoropolymer
Polyester/PVC/PVDF		<p><u>Longevity</u> <u>Soiling resistance</u></p>
Glass/PTFE		<p><u>High Longevity</u> <u>Soiling resistance</u> <u>Fire safety</u> <u>High Translucency</u></p>
ETFE		<p><u>High Longevity</u> <u>Soiling resistance</u> <u>Fire safety</u> <u>Full Transparency</u></p>

There are no viable alternatives to fluoropolymers for use in architectural membranes. The alternatives suggested in the restriction proposal, such as uncoated synthetic or natural fibers, are either unrealistic or older coated fabric technologies that have failed to succeed in the market for various reasons.

CONCLUSION

A broad restriction without appropriate differentiation could significantly impact the viability of tensile architecture solutions and the broader construction ecosystem.

The ban of Fluoropolymers would stop the use of lightweight architectural membranes that offer unique benefits to architecture (lighter building envelop, lower impacts, natural light input, fire safety, seismic safety).

Fluoropolymers, PFAS group of Low Concern and essential for many sectors, should be exempted from PFAS restriction.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- ECHA is expected to publish the draft SEAC opinion and open the consultation window (approx. 60 days).

- This phase will focus on socio-economic impacts: substitution feasibility, investment risks, jobs, supply chains, and sector-specific consequences.
- Stakeholder input will directly inform the final regulatory outcome.

HOW TO ANSWER TO THE NEXT CONSULTATION?

- **Collective answer through TENSINET (before 20th March 2026):**
 - All stakeholders have to send their answers to the questionnaire to ChemService
 - ChemService will collect and analyze all answers in a confidential way.
 - TensiNet will send through ChemService the global market answer to ECHA before the end of consultation (May 2026).
- **Individual answer during the consultation (April to May 2026):**
 - We recommend all actors to also answer as individual company to the consultation with specific information.
 - This will consolidate the impact of the collective answer and help ECHA to consider your individual messages.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS! LAST CHANCE TO PROVIDE SOCIO-ECONOMIC INPUT AND COMMENTS ON ALTERNATIVES.