

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION

Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention
United Nations Environment Programme
Office Address: International Environment House 1, 11–13, chemin des Anémones, 1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland
Postal Address: c/o Palais des Nations, 8-14, avenue de la Paix, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Tel.: +41 (0) 22 917 8271 | Fax: +41 (0) 22 917 8098 | E-mail: brs@un.org

8 May 2024

Our ref.: SC/GEN/05.2024/2

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

Subject: Expiry of specific exemptions for certain chemicals listed in Annexes A and B to the Stockholm Convention

Further to the communication by the Secretariat of 11 April 2024 (SC/COM/02.2024/2), two requests for extension of exemptions have been submitted by the Republic of Korea in relation to specific exemptions for:

- (i) Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds; and
- (ii) Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride.

The reports justifying the continuing need for registration of the exemptions are attached as an Annex to the present communication.

In accordance with the revised review process for entries in the Register of Specific Exemption (annex to decision SC-3/3, as revised by decisions SC-4/3 and SC-7/1), the Secretariat hereby circulates the extension request reports to all Parties and observers. As set out in paragraph 2 of that process, Parties and observers are requested to submit other available information relevant to the reports, as far as possible in the English language, at least six months before the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, namely **no later than 28 October 2024**.

The Secretariat shall collect, translate as necessary and submit all available information together with the extension request reports to all Parties at least five months before the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. All available information shall then be reviewed by the Secretariat, including technological and economic aspects and availability of alternatives and emissions control options relevant for the decisions on the requests for an extension. The Secretariat shall also prepare and circulate a report to all Parties and observers not later than three months before the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The Conference of the Parties shall decide at its meeting on the requests for extensions of these entries in the Register prior to the expiry date of the exemption.

As stated in the abovementioned initial communication, by decision SC-11/25, the Conference of the Parties decided to convene the next meetings of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants back to back, from 28 April to 9 May 2025, in Geneva.

.../...

To: Official Contact Points of Parties to the Stockholm Convention

cc: National focal points of Parties to the Stockholm Convention
Permanent Missions to the United Nations at Geneva
Stockholm Convention Regional Centres for training and technology transfer
Admitted Observers to meetings of the Stockholm Convention bodies

Parties are invited to submit other available information relevant to the reports, as far as possible in the English language, by **28 October 2024** to the Secretariat (Ms. Kei Ohno Woodall; E-mail: kei.ohno@un.org; Ms. Yvonne Ewang-Sanvincenti; Email: yvonne.ewang-sanvincent@un.org).

The Secretariat remains available to assist Parties further as may be requested.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Payet', with a horizontal line underneath.

Rolph Payet
Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

Encl.

Reports justifying the continuing need for registration of exemptions submitted by the Republic of Korea

Annex

Requests for extension of exemptions in the Register submitted by the Republic of Korea

I. Reporting for requesting an extension of a specific exemption of PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds (Republic of Korea)

General information:

1) Information on national focal point of the Stockholm Convention in the nominating Party:

Name: Republic of Korea
Institution: Ministry of Environment
Address: Building #6, 11 Doum 6-ro, 30103, Sejong, Republic of Korea
Telephone: +82-44-201-6776
Fax: +82-44-201-6786
E-mail: chem6778@korea.kr

2) Contact information for nominating Party:

Name of contact person: Ma, Jae Jeong
Ministry: Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea
Address: Building #6, 11 Doum 6-ro, 30103, Sejong, Republic of Korea

Telephone: +82-44-201-6776
Fax: +82-44-201-6786
E-mail: chem6778@korea.kr

3) Date of request for exemption: 17/05/2021 (day/month/year)

4) Date of expiration of exemption: 02/06/2026 (day/month/year)

5) Identity of substance:

Common name: Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), its salts and PFOA-related compounds
Chemical name: Pentadecafluorooctanoic acid, etc.
CAS number: 335-67-1, etc.

6) Type of chemical (pesticide, industrial chemical, intermediate): industrial chemical

7) Justification for the exemption:

The specific exemptions that the Republic of Korea registered need more time for their production and use in order to secure alternative substances and technologies, and dispose of relevant wastes.

Also, the Korean government has made determined efforts to lead to the environmentally sound management of fire-fighting foam stockpiles and wastes that contain or may contain PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds, but it needs more time to complete such implementation.

8) Existing national regulatory controls:

The production, import, export and use of PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds are prohibited under the Persistent Pollutants Control Act, except specific exemptions registered in accordance with Stockholm Convention.

Some substances of PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds are designated as "Substance subject to Intensive Control" under the Act on Registration and Evaluation of Chemical Substances. In case of "Substance subject to Intensive Control", their content (%) shall be notified.

PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds are prohibited to be contained when manufacturing articles such as fire-fighting foam, food apparatus, food containers and food packages, which is regulated by relevant ministries such as the National Fire Agency and the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety.

9) Information on existing stockpiles of industrial chemicals and pesticides ¹⁾:

Quality: unavailable Quantity (in kg): unavailable

Quality: unavailable Quantity (in kg): unavailable

28) For pesticides, quantities should be reported as active ingredient.

10) Monitoring and inspection activities:

The Republic of Korea operates the national POPs monitoring network in 171 sites across the country. Through the national POPs monitoring network, the Korean government is monitoring the levels of PFOA in environmental media such as air, water, soil and sediment.

In case of PFOA levels in human body, the Korean government identifies such levels through the Korean National Environmental Health Survey (KoNEHS).

Information for requests concerning production:

11) Name of company(ies) / institution(s) authorized to produce: unavailable

12) Export information:

Country of destination: unavailable Volume / Quantity: unavailable Product/Formulation information: unavailable

13) Applied and planned administrative and other control measures to prevent illegal production (e.g., specific permit system, recording of production):

The Korean government may carry out sampling, investigate relevant documents, and/or inspect relevant facilities and equipment to check compliance with regulations of prohibiting manufacture of PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds.

In case where a business operator manufactures PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds by violating the Persistent Pollutants Control Act, there are penalty provisions such as imprisonment and fine.

14) Applied and planned administrative and other control measures to eliminate or reduce releases of the substances and other POPs (e.g., specific permit system):

The Korean government is planning to expand the national POPs monitoring items, especially PFAS.

15) Other measures that will be taken during the exemption period to limit the risks to health and the environment:

To be updated

Information for requests concerning use (information to be provided for all intended uses):

16) Use for which exemption is requested:

(Only for Production)

- Textiles for oil and water repellency for the protection of workers from dangerous liquids that comprise risks to their health and safety

(Only for Use)

In accordance with the provisions of Part X of Annex A

- Photolithography or etch processes in semiconductor manufacturing
- Photographic coatings applied to films
- Textiles for oil and water repellency for the protection of workers from dangerous liquids that comprise risks to their health and safety
- Invasive and implantable medical devices
- Fire-fighting foam for liquid fuel vapour suppression and liquid fuel fires (Class B fires) in installed systems, including both mobile and fixed systems, in accordance with paragraph 2 of Part X of Annex A.
- Manufacture of polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) and polyvinylidene fluoride (PVDF) for the production of:
 - o High-performance, corrosion-resistant gas filter membranes, water filter membranes and membranes for medical textiles
 - o Industrial waste heat exchanger equipment
 - o Industrial sealants capable of preventing leakage of volatile organic compounds and PM 2.5 particulates
- Manufacture of polyfluoroethylene propylene (FEP) for the production of high-voltage electrical wire and cables for power transmission
- Manufacture of fluoroelastomers for the production of O-rings, v-belts and plastic accessories for car interiors

17) Name of company(ies)/institution(s) authorized to use the substance: unavailable

18) Envisaged quantity (kg/year): unavailable

19) Country of origin: unavailable

20) Source and quality of substance or formulated product (e.g., percentage of POP, formulation type): unavailable

21) Importance of specific use to society, including consequences of not making use of the requested exemption:

The development and transition to alternative technologies and substances for PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds are actively underway. However, it is evident that more time is necessary for completing this process. Also, the Korean government has made determined efforts to lead to the environmentally sound management of fire-fighting foam stockpiles and wastes that contain or may contain PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds, but it needs more time to complete such implementation.

22) Information on use: unavailable

23) Category of persons exposed to the product: unavailable

24) Control measures to prevent or minimize environmental release, including measures to prevent illegal use and efficacy and efficiency information of release prevention controls:

The Korean government is planning to expand the national POPs monitoring items, especially PFAS.

The Korean government may carry out sampling, investigate relevant documents, and/or inspect relevant facilities and equipment to check compliance with regulations of prohibiting use of PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds.

In case where a business operator uses PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds by violating the Persistent Pollutants Control Act, there are penalty provisions such as imprisonment and fine.

The production of PFOA-contained fire-fighting foam is prohibited by the National Fire Agency. There are penalty provisions such as imprisonment and fine for a person who manufactures or imports a fire-fighting foam without approval of the government.

25) Intended steps to minimize use, including activities for development and introduction of non-POPs alternatives: unavailable

26) (a) Information on alternatives and substitutes: unavailable

(b) Information on measures which could facilitate the withdrawal of the exemption:

After submitting this report, the Republic of Korea plans to communicate with stakeholders promptly and continuously, and also conduct a re-evaluation based on current status data of PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds in Korea in order to withdraw the registered specific exemptions.

Also, the Korean government plans to complete the environmentally sound management of fire-fighting foam stockpiles and wastes that contain or may contain PFOA, its salts and PFOA-related compounds as soon as possible.

27) Waste and disposal implications:

Management of contaminated material: unavailable

Costs: unavailable

28) Other measures that will be taken during the exemption period to limit the risks to health and the environment:

To be updated

II. Reporting for requesting an extension of a specific exemption of PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride (Republic of Korea)

General information:

1) Information on national focal point of the Stockholm Convention in the nominating Party:

Name: Republic of Korea
Institution: Ministry of Environment
Address: Building #6, 11 Doum 6-ro, 30103, Sejong, Republic of Korea
Telephone: +82-44-201-6776
Fax: +82-44-201-6786
E-mail: chem6778@korea.kr

2) Contact information for nominating Party:

Name of contact person: Ma, Jae Jeong
Ministry: Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea
Address: Building #6, 11 Doum 6-ro, 30103, Sejong, Republic of Korea

Telephone: +82-44-201-6776
Fax: +82-44-201-6786

E-mail: chem6778@korea.kr

3) Date of request for exemption: 17/05/2021 (day/month/year)

4) Date of expiration of exemption: 02/06/2026 (day/month/year)

5) Identity of substance:

Common name: Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS), its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride
Chemical name: Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid, etc.
CAS number: 1763-23-1, etc.

6) Type of chemical (pesticide, industrial chemical, intermediate): industrial chemical

7) Justification for the exemption:

The Korean government has made determined efforts to lead to the environmentally sound management of fire-fighting foam stockpiles and wastes that contain or may contain PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride, but it needs more time to complete such implementation.

8) Existing national regulatory controls:

The production, import, export and use of PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride are prohibited under the Persistent Pollutants Control Act, except specific exemptions registered in accordance with Stockholm Convention.

Some substances of PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride are designated as "Substance subject to Intensive Control" under the Act on Registration and Evaluation of Chemical Substances. In case of "Substance subject to Intensive Control", their content (%) shall be notified.

PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride are prohibited to be contained when manufacturing articles such as fire-fighting foam, food apparatus, food containers and food packages, which is regulated by relevant ministries such as the National Fire Agency and the Ministry of Food and Drug Safety.

9) Information on existing stockpiles of industrial chemicals and pesticides¹⁾ :

Quality: unavailable Quantity (in kg): unavailable

Quality: unavailable Quantity (in kg): unavailable

1) For pesticides, quantities should be reported as active ingredient.

10) Monitoring and inspection activities:

The Republic of Korea operates the national POPs monitoring network in 171 sites across the country. Through the national POPs monitoring network, the Korean government is monitoring the levels of PFOS in environmental media such as air, water, soil and sediment.

In case of PFOS levels in human body, the Korean government identifies such levels through the Korean National Environmental Health Survey (KoNEHS).

Information for requests concerning production:

11) Name of company(ies) / institution(s) authorized to produce: unavailable

12) Export information:

Country of destination: unavailable Volume / Quantity: unavailable Product/Formulation information: unavailable

13) Applied and planned administrative and other control measures to prevent illegal production (e.g., specific permit system, recording of production):

The Korean government may carry out sampling, investigate relevant documents, and/or inspect relevant facilities and equipment to check compliance with regulations of prohibiting manufacture of PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride.

In case where a business operator manufactures PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride by violating the Persistent Pollutants Control Act, there are penalty provisions such as imprisonment and fine.

14) Applied and planned administrative and other control measures to eliminate or reduce releases of the substances and other POPs (e.g., specific permit system):

The Korean government is planning to expand the national POPs monitoring items, especially PFAS.

15) Other measures that will be taken during the exemption period to limit the risks to health and the environment:
To be updated

Information for requests concerning use (information to be provided for all intended uses):

16) Use for which exemption is requested:

(Only for Use)

- Fire-fighting foam for liquid fuel vapour suppression and liquid fuel fires (Class B fires) in installed systems, including both mobile and fixed systems, in accordance with paragraph 10 of Part III of Annex B.

17) Name of company(ies)/institution(s) authorized to use the substance: unavailable

18) Envisaged quantity (kg/year): unavailable

19) Country of origin: unavailable

20) Source and quality of substance or formulated product (e.g., percentage of POP, formulation type):

unavailable

21) Importance of specific use to society, including consequences of not making use of the requested exemption:
The Korean government has made determined efforts to lead to the environmentally sound management of fire-fighting foam stockpiles and wastes that contain or may contain PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride, but it needs more time to complete such implementation.

22) Information on use: unavailable

23) Category of persons exposed to the product: unavailable

24) Control measures to prevent or minimize environmental release, including measures to prevent illegal use and efficacy and efficiency information of release prevention controls:

The Korean government is planning to expand the national POPs monitoring items, especially PFAS.

The Korean government may carry out sampling, investigate relevant documents, and/or inspect relevant facilities and equipment to check compliance with regulations of prohibiting use of PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride.

In case where a business operator uses PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride by violating the Persistent Pollutants Control Act, there are penalty provisions such as imprisonment and fine.

The production of PFOS-contained fire-fighting foam is prohibited by the National Fire Agency. There are penalty provisions such as imprisonment and fine for a person who manufactures or imports a fire-fighting foam without approval of the government.

25) Intended steps to minimize use, including activities for development and introduction of non-POPs alternatives:
unavailable

26) (a) Information on alternatives and substitutes: unavailable

(b) Information on measures which could facilitate the withdrawal of the exemption:

The Korean government plans to complete the environmentally sound management of fire-fighting foam stockpiles and wastes that contain or may contain PFOS, its salts and perfluorooctane sulfonyl fluoride as soon as possible.

27) Waste and disposal implications:

Management of contaminated material: unavailable

Costs: unavailable

28) Other measures that will be taken during the exemption period to limit the risks to health and the environment:

To be updated
