*Statement*

**Expert review confirms that MTBE is not an endocrine disruptor**

*6 February 2015*

The European Fuel Oxygenates Association (EFOA) welcomes the findings of the weight of evidence analysis (WoE) to determine the potential endocrine activity of Methyl tert-butyl ether (MTBE). The analysis carried out by independent experts was published in a peer reviewed scientific journal and firmly concludes that **MTBE does not meet endocrine disruptor (ED) criteria**.

Applying a process internationally agreed within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the experts undertook the first systematic and transparent evaluation of an industrial chemical’s potential endocrine disrupting properties. Their weight of evidence analysis (WoE) focuses on hypotheses related to the potential for MTBE to interact with estrogen, androgen, and thyroid pathways, and steroidogenesis. The WoE maximises the use of existing toxicology literature about MTBE, including recent studies specifically prepared to investigate all possible hypotheses for an ED mechanism. Any potential false positive effects caused by high doses in toxicity tests were also addressed in the analysis.

MTBE is in the top 2% of the most studied industrial chemicals. Indeed, the findings of the WoE analysis are consistent with the past EU risk assessment, which gave no rise for concern regarding endocrine disrupting properties in MTBE. Nonetheless, MTBE is currently being assessed under the EU-REACH regulation process CORAP including a review of any potential for having ED properties.

Given the debate surrounding ED across the EU, EFOA supports the application of robust scientific evidence and research in evaluating the possible endocrine effects of chemicals. EFOA is confident that MTBE does not meet ED criteria and believes that the weight of evidence analysis should be the basis for a consistent assessment of MTBE by EU Member States.

The detailed review (de Peyster A. and Mihaich E. (2014). Hypothesis-driven weight of evidence analysis to determine potential endocrine activity of MTBE. Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology. 69:348-370) is available as an open access publication via the journal website: <http://www.journals.elsevier.com/regulatory-toxicology-and-pharmacology>.

The European Fuel Oxygenates Association is a sector group of CEFIC, the European Chemical Industry Council.

**For more information, please contact:**

Ms. Claire Schonbach

EFOA

Avenue E. Van Nieuwenhuyse 4

B - 1160 Brussels, Belgium

Tel. +32 2 676 7410

Fax +32 2 676 7216

E-mail: info@efoa.eu