



CH-3003 Bern, FOEN, HBI

Associazione per le Malattie da Intossicazione  
Cronica e/o Ambientale  
Francesca Romana Orlando, Vice president of  
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ITALY

Reference: K303-0696  
Your reference:  
Our reference: HBI  
Contact person: HBI  
Bern, 8 August 2011

### **Restricting or prohibiting the use of amalgams as dental fillings**

Dear Ms Orlando

Thank you for your letter on the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) concerning "Health hazards of heavy metals and other metals". Switzerland, as a member country of PACE, whole-heartedly supports this resolution.

According to the Swiss legislation on chemicals (Ordinance on the Risk Reduction of Chemicals ORRChim<sup>1</sup>, the placing on the market and use of dental amalgam is allowed under certain conditions. The Federal Office for the Environment FOEN, has worked over the past 10 years with the Federal Office for Public Health FOPH, the Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products Swissmedic as well as the Organisation of Swiss Dentists SSO to minimize the use of mercury in dental fillings, to promote a safe working environment in the dental practices and to ensure safe waste disposal of the dental amalgam. To this date, amalgam fillings account for less than 10% of all dental fillings in Switzerland.

Furthermore, as you are aware, Switzerland was instrumental in the initiation of the mandate of the UNEP Governing Council for the new legally binding instrument on mercury. During the negotiations, Switzerland is committed to a restrictive handling of mercury-added products and thus in principle supports the inclusion of dental amalgam in Annex C. Moreover, we favour an approach that would prohibit its use, allowing for specific and time-limited exemptions.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.admin.ch/ch/i/rs/c814\\_81.html](http://www.admin.ch/ch/i/rs/c814_81.html)

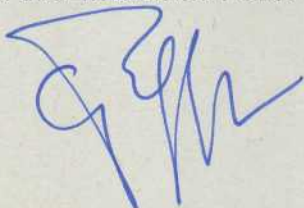
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Kind regards

Federal Office for the Environment FOEN

Gérard Poffet  
Vice Director



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