

Press release

European Industrial Hemp Association (www.eiha.org)
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Pre-review of CBD by the World Health Organization (WHO) with favorable results – next step in May

Researchers, producers and consumers advocating for the commercialization of Cannabidiol (CBD) have crossed a second important hurdle as a preliminary evaluation of the substance by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva in November 2017 produced positive findings.

For the first time, CBD has been under pre-review by WHO as a potential psychotropic substance, with the risk WHO could propose restrictive control measures similar to those applying for THC. WHO's expert's recommendations eventually have to be voted by the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND).

“This round has ended up favorably, but the second part of the review of CBD will happen in May” said Boris Bañas from the The Hemp Cooperative (Slovakia) and board member at the European Industrial Hemp Association (EIHA). EIHA joined the Foundation for Alternative Approaches to Addiction - Think & do tank (FAAAT) in drafting a joint statement of guidance ahead of the first part WHO evaluation. www.hemptoday.net/eiha-takes-cbd-statement-before-who/

The next and final part of the review is expected to take place at WHO's 40th Expert Committee on Drug Dependence (ECDD) meeting in May 2018.

EIHA lauded the work of independent WHO experts, that gave a green light to pure CBD in early November. They conclude that there is no justification for pure CBD to be included in the anti-drug treaties, and precise that there are no case reports of abuse or dependence relating to the use of CBD in its own right. As well, no public health problems (e.g. impaired driving) have been associated with the use of the CBD molecule. Further on, no evidence could be found that CBD as a substance is liable to similar abuse and similar ill-effects as substances scheduled under the 1961 or 1971 Conventions (including cannabis and THC). CBD products are being actively scientifically explored for a range of therapeutic applications and have demonstrated effectiveness in treating some forms of epilepsy.

Beyond the pure CBD, WHO experts found that CBD-products are being manufactured for pharmaceutical purposes as extracts or tinctures of Cannabis, which are included in the 1961 Convention on Narcotic Drugs. They therefore recommended "that extracts or preparations containing almost exclusively CBD [...] be subject to critical review" (ref: www.who.int/mason/entity/medicines/news/2017/letter-DG-39thECDDrecommendations.pdf) in May to potentially change the scope of its scheduling.

Present at the WHO meeting on CBD, 6 November 2017: In addition to Boris Bañas, EIHA was represented by associate member Hana Gabrielová (Hempoint, Czech Republic). FAAAT was represented by Kenzi Riboulet Zemouli, Farid Ghehiouèche and Amy Case King. Other CBD proponents present were Michael Krawitz (Veterans for Medical Cannabis Access, USA), Raul Hector Elizalde Garza (Por Grace, Mexico), Dusan Nolimal and Tanja Bagar

(International Institute for Cannabinoids, Slovenia) and Marie Nougier (International Drug Policy Consortium).

The following companies supported a campaign backing the EIHA-FAAAT statement and advocacy effort before WHO: Bluebird Botanicals, Buddingtech, CannaWell, CBD life UK, CBD oils UK, CBDepot.eu, Deep Nature Project, Greenindustries.shop, Hemp and humanity, HempConsult GmbH, Hempflax, Hempire Ltd., Hempoint.cz, Hempura, MCU Botanicals, MeetHarmony, MH medical hemp GmbH. As well, the DC-based NGO StopTheDrugWar.org and the European coalition ENCOD endorsed the statement.

(see the full EIHA-FAAAT Joint Statement: www.eiha.org/document/joint-eiha-faaat-contribution-to-the-39th-ecdd-evaluation-of-cannabidiol/)

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The European Industrial Hemp Association (EIHA) is a consortium of the hemp-processing industry. It represents the common interest of industrial hemp farmers and producers, both nationally and on a European level. EIHA is the only European consortium in the industrial hemp sector. This sector includes, amongst other things, the use of hemp fibres, shavings, seeds and cannabinoids. Originally founded as an association for the European hemp industry, a quarter of the 130 EIHA members are based in countries outside the EU.