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INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR AN
INTERNATIONAL LEGALLY BINDING INSTRUMENT
FOR IMPLEMENTING INTERNATIONAL ACTION ON
CERTAIN PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

Fifth session

Johannesburg, 4-9 December 2000

Item 3 of the provisional agenda *

REVIEW OF ONGOING INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES RELATING
TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

Third session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety

Final report

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat has the honour to transmit to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee the attached information provided by the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety on selected sections of the above report: Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety; Executive summary; Priorities for action beyond 2000. The information is circulated as submitted and has not been formally edited.

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In Partnership for Global Chemical Safety

FORUM III
Third Session
of the
Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety

Salvador da Bahía, Brazil
15 – 20 October 2000

Final Report
Selected Sections:
Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety
Executive Summary
Priorities for Action Beyond 2000

BAHIA DECLARATION ON CHEMICAL SAFETY

I. We, the participating partners in the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), met in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, October 15-20, 2000 for our Third Forum. Representing governments, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations from industry, public interest groups, and groups concerned with scientific and labour interests, we:

Reaffirm our commitment to the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development including the principles on sustainable development, capacity building, access to information and the precautionary approach;

Recommit to Agenda 21, Chapter 19, acknowledging the challenges for chemical safety set in 1992 at Rio;

Note the progress made since the establishment of our Forum in 1994;

Emphasize the essential role of sound management of chemicals in sustainable development and the protection of human health and the environment;

Recognize the responsibility of all sectors to work together in our shared vision for the safe management of chemicals;

Acknowledge that all countries have diverse needs in working to achieve chemical safety;

Recognize the importance of the provision of technical and financial assistance and technology transfer to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to accomplish Forum priorities beyond 2000;

Understand that our knowledge of the effects of exposure to chemicals remains very incomplete; that continued research and vigilance are needed; that new challenges will demand new responses; that cooperation and partnership are essential to the development of appropriate policies and infrastructure for chemicals management in all countries; and that an informed public is a vital support for the work that needs to be done; and

II. Accordingly, we call on governments, industry, public interest non-governmental organizations, labour unions, scientific organizations, international organizations, and the public to engage and join us in our common efforts toward the accomplishment of the priorities that we have set for review at Forum IV and Forum V and beyond:

1. Promoting global cooperation for chemicals management; for pollution prevention; for sustainable agriculture; and for cleaner processes, materials and products;
2. Increasing the flow of information about the safe use of chemicals; the risks that can be involved in their manufacture, release into the environment and disposal; and the means to avoid or reduce risks;

3. Ensuring that all countries have the capacity for sound management of chemicals, particularly through coordinated national policies, legislation and infrastructure;
4. Ratifying and implementing chemicals conventions and agreements and ensuring efficient and effective coordination between all chemical safety-related organizations and activities;
5. Marshalling resources to remedy chemical safety problems warranting concerted international response and action, such as illegal trafficking in toxic and dangerous products; and
6. Increasing access to information, knowledge, and skills development in chemical safety, recognizing that communities have a right-to-know about chemicals in the environment and to participate meaningfully in decisions about chemical safety that affect them.

III. While taking satisfaction that much has been done we, the participants, agree that much still remains to be done in order to accomplish the intent of *Chapter 19*, as:

1. Many countries are still struggling to establish the essential infrastructure for chemical safety including the creation of national coordinating mechanisms, the development of national profiles and the implementation of national action plans;
2. Standards of chemical safety across much of the world fall short of that needed to provide adequate protection of human health and the environment;
3. Insufficient international resources have been mobilized and insufficient local resources exist to properly manage and dispose of the many stockpiles of obsolete pesticides and hazardous chemicals that remain around the world; and
4. International assessments of chemicals have not reached the targets set at Forum I in 1994.

IV. In order to build on progress to date and to meet those objectives that have been set in a number of fora and in Salvador da Bahia during Forum III we, the participants, commit ourselves to:

1. Work together as partners in this mutual enterprise, recognizing the valuable contributions that each has to make to attainment of our goals;
2. Give greater emphasis to cooperation and coordination at all levels, seeking synergies through sharing concerns and experience, and through pooling of resources;
3. Identify innovative solutions to the problems of chemical safety and pursue them energetically;
4. Seek ways of securing greater and more stable flows of resources to enable work on the pressing priorities identified, and the goals set, at Forum III; and
5. Promote the entry into force at the earliest possible time of international treaties and

agreements concerning chemical safety that are under negotiation or not yet in operation

V. So that we can focus our energies and resources and measure our progress, we commit ourselves and, where applicable, with the support of donor countries and international organizations to achieve a number of goals for review at Forums IV and V, as set out in full in our Forum III document *Priorities for Action beyond 2000*. To keep these before us we list key goals in short form:

By 2001:

- The Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants will have been adopted.

By 2002:

- Most countries, through a multi-stakeholder process, will have developed a National Profile on chemicals management, ensured national coordination for the sound management of chemicals and designated an IFCS National Focal Point.
- Seventy or more countries will have implemented systems aimed at preventing major industrial accidents and systems for emergency preparedness and response.
- Poison centers will have been established in thirty or more countries that do not have such centers and further strengthened in at least seventy more.

By Forum IV in 2003:

- The Rotterdam Convention will have entered into force.
- The Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) will have been adopted.
- An effective Information Exchange Network on Capacity Building for the Sound Management of Chemicals will be operating.
- The Forum will consider recommendations for prevention of illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products, and countries will have elaborated their national strategies.
- A report will have been prepared on the problem of acutely toxic pesticides and severely hazardous pesticide formulations and recommending sound management options.
- All countries will have reported on risk reduction initiatives they have taken on other chemicals of major concern.

By 2004:

- Recommendations to establish common principles and harmonized approaches for risk methodologies on specific toxicological endpoints will be available.
- An additional one thousand chemical hazard assessments will have been completed and made available to the public in a timely manner.
- Most countries will have procedures in place to ensure that hazardous materials carry appropriate and reliable safety information.
- Most countries will have integrated and ecologically sound pest and vector management strategies.
- Most countries will have established action plans for safe management of obsolete stocks

of pesticides and other hazardous chemicals and at least two countries in each IFCS region will have commenced implementation of their action plans.

- Following its adoption in 2001, the Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants will have entered into force.
- At least two additional countries in each IFCS region will have established a Pollution Release and Transfer Register or emissions inventory.

By 2005:

- At least five countries in each IFCS region will have full arrangements in place for the exchange of information on hazardous chemicals.
- Most countries will have developed national policies with targets for improving the management of chemicals.

Beyond Forum V (expected in 2005 or 2006)

- The Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals will be fully operational.
- Most countries in each IFCS region will have fully operational arrangements in place for the exchange of information on hazardous chemicals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Forum III agreed action items and recommendations

Priorities for Action beyond 2000

At its first meeting in Stockholm in 1994, the Forum adopted recommendations on some 40 Priorities for Action. Six years later considerable progress has been made towards these goals while new challenges have appeared. Forum III considered and adopted new Priorities for Action beyond 2000. The new Priorities update objectives in earlier areas of work and set goals in several new areas. These include targets relating to:

- data on inherent hazards in geographical areas other than temperate climatic regions;
- ensuring that relevant hazard data become available in the shortest possible time;
- ensuring that information on hazards related to export of hazardous chemicals is available;
- management of stocks of pesticides and other chemicals which are no longer in use;
- global measures against persistent organic pollutants;
- poisonings of users of toxic pesticides;
- national plans of action to address hazardous chemicals;
- taking action against illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products; and
- promoting assistance to enable all countries to work in all of the Forum's programme areas.

The Priorities for Action beyond 2000 are listed in full in Annex 6.

Prevention of Illegal International Traffic in Toxic and Dangerous Products

Forum III recognized that there is global concern for illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products. It noted that despite the diversity of problems in the different regions, there are common issues as well as potential and possible solutions. The Forum unanimously adopted several recommendations as part of the Priorities for Action beyond 2000 (Annex 6).

Barriers to Information Exchange

There are many barriers to timely and effective information exchange. Forum III recognized that resolution of communication gaps must assume a very high priority in the near term.

Forum III:

- Agreed to support a global effort to assure that government officials responsible for the sound management of chemicals have access to the Internet (email and Web) in the near term (e.g. 1-2 years), and the training to make effective use of it;
- Requested that IFCS participants assist in finding the needed funding and implementation mechanisms, following the roles outlined below; and

- Requested that one of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations take the lead for such an effort.

The targets for a Forum-sponsored effort are the following:

- Designated National Authorities for implementation of the Rotterdam Convention;
- National Focal Points for the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS);
- Focal Points for a future convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).
- Other relevant focal points and national competent authorities designated by countries on related issues.

IFCS participants should play the following roles:

- One IOMC participating organization should take the lead for coordinating fundraising and implementation efforts for a global project that would seek to assure that all government officials responsible for the sound management of chemicals have Internet access and other related information tools and training in their use. The designated organization should prepare and circulate a questionnaire designed to identify national requirements for Internet access and form a workgroup of interested parties who want to assist with this effort, including other IOMC participating organizations.
- Potential donors should accord priority to funding this project, either in the form of bilateral support to individual countries or as support for the lead IOMC organization.
- IFCS participants from developing countries should take a leadership role in mobilizing support within their own countries for this effort, and should serve as liaisons with the lead IOMC organization.
- Companies and organizations representing the chemical industry should provide in-kind services and they are encouraged to consider funding, as well as to investigate other financial resources, for such a project.
- All parties should encourage the participation of private charitable trust funds, particularly those established by the technology sector, which may be interested in providing resources for such projects.

Information Exchange for Chemical Production Decision Making

Forum III agreed that a mechanism is needed by which government officials, industry, and other relevant organizations in less developed countries can be provided with information about 'best practices' in the design and development of new facilities that would minimize health and safety problems and environmental risks associated with the manufacture of chemicals.

Forum III:

- Recommended that the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations take into account the information needed for decision-making aimed at preventing adverse human health and environmental impacts related to the production of chemicals, to foster timely and effective exchange of such information, and to develop and promote the mechanisms for implementation. These could include development of a chapter in the chemical management toolbox, establishment of a coordination mechanism to put government

and industry in developing countries and countries with economies in transition in contact with knowledgeable officials in government and industry in developed countries, and establishment of a repository to capture and make readily available to other users information on “best practices”, clean technologies, and impacts on human health and environmental quality, involving all stakeholders under this programme.

- Requested the chemical industry, where it has not already done so, to commit to provide advance notification about new or expanded production facilities to officials, employees, customers, and the public in the country involved, in conformity with: national laws and regulations, principles of sound management of chemicals as established by international agreements and guidelines, and product stewardship programmes and initiatives including Responsible Care[®]. The advance notification should include information on chemical-related health or environmental hazards and recommended preventative measures.
- Urged chemical companies that operate in a global environment to apply their corporate health, safety and environmental principles, standards, and “best practices” in all stages of design, construction, operations, and decommissioning, in all countries, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and to comply with local laws, regulations, and requirements. Chemical industry associations are requested to encourage their members in this respect.
- Requested IFCS National Focal Points to take a leadership role in mobilizing the means to use the information available to ensure that all appropriate measures are in place to protect workers, communities, and the environment, including contingency planning for emergencies.

Emission Inventories

Forum III reiterated that Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)/emission inventories are effective tools to stimulate the reduction of risks from chemicals and the prevention and/or the reduction of emissions, and

- Encouraged countries without PRTR systems to take steps to initiate a process to design a national PRTR/emission inventory taking into account national circumstances and needs;
- Called for the establishment of a PRTR/emission inventory in at least two additional countries in each IFCS region by 2004;
- Called upon countries to involve all affected and interested parties in designing PRTRs/emission inventories and to ensure that all parties have the information and capacity to participate in an effective way;
- Urged countries to link reporting requirements under international agreements to national PRTRs/emissions inventories;

- Called upon the multi- and bi-lateral donor community to provide financial and technical assistance in response to national requests for PRTR/emission inventory related assistance;
- Called upon UNEP and UNITAR to increase technical and financial assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to strengthen national capacities and capabilities to design and implement national PRTRs/emission inventories;
- Requested ICCA to report to Forum IV on progress achieved in implementing ICCA policy on PRTRs/emission inventories, including possible interim voluntary public disclosure by ICCA members with facilities in countries without voluntary or regulatory PRTR/emission inventory systems; and
- Requested the IOMC PRTR Coordinating Group to:
 - 1) Prepare a report for Forum IV, summarizing the status and progress in developing PRTRs/emission inventories;
 - 2) Investigate opportunities to engage countries, which are not members of the OECD, in work of the Group;
 - 3) Prepare a report addressing the linking of reporting requirements under international agreements to national PRTRs/emission inventories; and
 - 4) Coordinate the action called for above and prepare a consolidated report for review and possible further action at Forum IV.

Awareness Raising

The Forum recognizes the need for high level political support in governments and international development agencies. Forum III agreed that IFCS should play a much more active role in advocating the importance of the sound management of chemicals at high political levels in governments and other organizations, especially those providing international aid (donors) and in potential recipient countries. To this end, Forum III:

- Requested governments and international development agencies to link the sound management of chemicals to other important health and environment topics, such as sustainable development, occupational health and safety, consumer safety, and water quality and biodiversity, as well as to other relevant development cooperation programmes in the fields of agriculture and industry.
- Recommended that each donor country should designate a contact point with respect to the management of chemicals, as agreed in the decision on an information exchange network for capacity building for the sound management of chemicals. The contact point should facilitate the exchange of information related to funding and associated issues between the donor and other donors and international organizations and programmes as well as partners in recipient countries to avoid duplication and to increase the synergistic effect of different projects.
- Recommended establishment of capacity building programmes needed by developing countries and countries with economies in transition leading to the development of

strategies and procedures for information gathering and dissemination as part of the realization of national emissions inventories, and other tools such as Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers.

- Urged the various Convention secretariats, Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations, and donors to greatly increase coordination in capacity building programmes, and to develop new synergies and opportunities for coordination in the implementation of the conventions and other related areas of sound chemicals management with a view toward ensuring a comprehensive approach.
- Strongly recommended that worker safety remain an on-going major focus for Forum activities, in particular those aimed at providing support for national worker safety programmes such as education, training, and capacity building. The Forum further recommended the strengthening of cooperation between IFCS and the International Labour Organization (ILO) and its tripartite partners (governments, industry, and labor) to ensure the highest levels of chemical safety at work.
- Emphasized that the creation and strengthening of national committees and institutions is essential for progress in further development of national profiles, awareness raising, and participation of all sectors.
- Recommended that all international organizations and donor agencies provide support to strengthen public interest non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in the field of chemical safety. Since at present charitable foundations and other donor agencies these NGOs rely on often focus their efforts in other areas such as climate change and biodiversity, the Forum encourages higher priority be given to chemical safety activities. This should occur especially at the international level and for NGOs in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.
- Urged representatives of major donor agencies and coordination groups, including the World Bank, regional development banks, Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), to actively participate in IFCS meetings and efforts.

Information Exchange Network on Capacity Building for the Sound Management of Chemicals

Forum III supported the development of an Information Exchange Network on Capacity Building for the Sound Management of Chemicals, adopted, as an interim measure, Provisional Terms of Reference for such a network as presented to Forum III, and made the following recommendations in order to initiate concrete action by Forum IV:

- Instructed the Forum Standing Committee to assist in establishing a Steering/Advisory Group for the Network, including adoption of final Terms of Reference for the Network;
- Recommended that the IFCS secretariat serve as the Central Coordinating Node for

the Network during its start-up phase;

- Requested the IFCS secretariat, in consultation with the stakeholder groups represented in the IFCS, and in coordination with the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations and the World Bank, to establish the Network taking into account work ongoing and planned in other fora;
- Encouraged countries and organizations to provide support for the start-up phase for the Network in accordance with the different options provided in section 10 of the provisionally adopted Terms of Reference;
- Requested countries and organizations to designate points of contact for the Network (in accordance with Section 9 of the provisionally adopted Terms of Reference) and to provide information relevant to implementing the objectives of the Network; and
- Requested that a report on progress made and lessons learned during the start-up phase of the Network be made available at Forum IV for consideration and possible further action.

Priorities for Action beyond 2000

1. The Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS or Forum) is a non-institutional arrangement whereby representatives from governments and non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations consider and provide analysis and advice on the environmentally sound management and reduction of risks from chemicals. Where appropriate, IFCS makes recommendations to other organizations that have mandates to implement activities to improve the management of chemicals.

2. Recommendations for *Priorities for Action beyond 2000* follow. These recommendations deal with:

- Priorities for Action by governments;
- Work by which international bodies may develop effective tools for use by governments; and
- Ways in which stakeholders may demonstrate their commitment to chemical safety.

The Forum actively supports cooperation between international organizations and governments, and the implementation of international agreements nationally. It also encourages cooperation between countries, particularly within regions and sub-regions of the world.

The Forum encourages international organizations participating in the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) to continue their efforts to enhance coordination of their activities aimed at strengthening capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition and in the framework of an explicit demand-driven process to these countries for strengthening and integrating their chemicals management.

3. The efficient coordination of chemical safety endeavours by all participatory and concerned sectors is a prerequisite for successful results at the national level. The active participation of employers and workers, the mobilization of the non-governmental sector, and the strengthening of community 'right to know', are important facets in increasing chemical safety. Manufacturers, importers, formulators and industrial users should have the main but differentiated responsibility for generating and assessing data, as well as providing adequate and reliable information to users, governments and the public on the safety and safe use of their products for that part of the life cycle to which they contribute. Public authorities are responsible for establishing the general framework for the risk assessment procedures and controls.

4. Sound management of chemicals depends on a variety of factors including research, training, information and communications, implementing control measures,

capacity building, financial and technical assistance, and the transfer of technology to developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

It is recommended that additional educational programs and training courses be arranged at national and regional levels in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to provide a core of trained technical staff and policymakers. Specific efforts should be made to improve the coordination of activities in education, training and technical assistance.

5. Control of chemicals and pollution control initiatives should be closely integrated and the precautionary approach, as outlined in principle 15 of the Rio Declaration, should be applied¹. The full range of risk reduction options should be considered, including encouraging, in particular, replacing more dangerous chemicals with less dangerous ones or using alternative processes.

6. To protect the health of workers, special attention should be paid to occupational health and safety concerns caused by chemicals. To protect the health of the general public, chemical safety issues regarding susceptible groups (e.g. persons of fertile age, pregnant women, foetuses, children, the sick and elderly) need to be clearly addressed in the assessment and management of risks.

Public interest non-governmental organizations have a valuable role as conduits of information, being well positioned to disseminate industry and government information to their communities and also to transfer the community concerns about toxic substances back to regulators and policy makers.

7. It is recognized that technical and financial assistance and technology transfer to developing countries and countries with economies in transition is important to accomplish the IFCS “Priorities for Action beyond 2000”.

Whilst recognizing that there are established mechanisms for bilateral and multilateral assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, there is a strong need to strengthen and broaden these arrangements in order to achieve effective management of chemical safety. Technical and financial assistance should be provided in a non-discriminatory way.

8. The order in which the following recommendations are presented is not intended to suggest their degree of importance.

¹Some countries preferred the word “*considered*”, the majority of participants adopted the word “*applied*”.

**Programme Area A:
Expanding and accelerating international assessment of chemical risks**

1. Common principles for harmonized approaches for performing and reporting health and environmental risk assessments should be developed as soon as possible. Such principles must be internationally accepted, thus permitting the full use of risk assessments performed by international and national bodies.

By 2004, the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) and the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations should have ensured that recommendations for common principles for harmonized approaches should be available for terminology, cancer, and reproductive and developmental toxicology. Common principles for the approach to other specific toxicological endpoints, such as immunotoxicology, endocrine disruption, and ecotoxicology, should be adopted wherever possible.

2. Hazard evaluation (i.e. the first step of risk assessment) should be carried out in accordance with the requirements of harmonized health and environmental risk assessments, including internationally recommended methodology, ensuring transparency and openness. These evaluations should be undertaken with the support of the participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC). New alternative test methods which enable the use of fewer laboratory animals should be developed, standardized and validated.

Hazard evaluations should be carried out in accordance with internationally recommended methodologies and in an open and transparent manner. In addition to ongoing national, regional and international evaluation programmes, through the industry initiative an additional 1000 chemicals hazard assessments will be provided by 2004, and the resulting information will be made available to the public in a timely manner.

The goal of risk assessment is to estimate the likelihood of an adverse effect on humans, other species and/or on ecological systems. This requires knowledge of exposure and of the susceptibility of species or systems likely to be impacted; this can vary from one region to another. Test methods and data have been largely developed that are most relevant to the more temperate climatic regions.

The cooperation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition should be sought to ensure that all relevant data, including exposure data, required to assess human and environmental risks are developed and assessed.

3. For all chemicals in commerce, appropriate data detailing the inherent hazards of those chemicals should be made available to the public. Highest priority should be given to hazard information for those chemicals that have greatest potential for substantial exposures.

To implement this principle, the Forum Standing Committee should develop a proposal for an additional *Priority for Action* to be discussed at Forum IV. This *Priority for Action* should address:

- The role of industry in generating and assessing data;
- The role of industry and governments in making available, and easily accessible, to the public the results of tests and their interpretation leading to conclusions about the degree of hazard or risk involved;
- The desirability of reducing the use of animals for toxicity testing where other methods, that may give a similar assurance of safety, are available; and
- Possible approaches for ensuring that relevant data become available to the public and authorities in the shortest possible time-frame, considering incentives and/or restrictions that might serve this purpose.

Programme Area B:

Harmonization of classification and labelling of chemicals

1. The Forum recognizes that global harmonization of the classification and labelling of chemicals greatly increases the protection of human health and our environment, as well as facilitating the flow of trade. Ongoing work will soon result in the completion of a globally harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals. This system will include classification criteria, related labelling systems, and guidelines for material safety data sheets, which comprise the hazard communications elements of the system. The Forum should provide mechanisms for consultation and participation of all countries in the development process of a harmonized system for classification and labelling.

The Globally Harmonized System (GHS) for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals should be agreed to by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals coordinating group for the harmonization of chemical classification systems and fully adopted by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations prior to Forum IV.

Guidance and other tools necessary for the implementation of the GHS should be made available to interested parties prior to Forum IV.

All countries are encouraged to implement the GHS as soon as possible with a view to have the system fully operational by 2008.

All countries, subject to their capacities and capabilities, should take account of the development of the GHS in any proposed changes to

existing systems for classification and labelling, and in the implementation and enforcement of their chemicals legislation.

Programme Area C:

Information exchange on toxic chemicals and chemical risks

1. All governments should be encouraged to identify and/or to establish arrangements for the timely exchange of information on chemicals. Through the effective operation of such arrangements, barriers to information exchange would be more easily overcome. Relevant information could then be communicated in a timely and appropriate manner and, where appropriate, in at least one of the six official languages of the United Nations in addition to the required language(s), to all relevant parties.

The Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations should take the lead for coordinating fundraising and implementation efforts to ensure that all government officials from developing countries and countries with economies in transition responsible for chemicals management have access to Internet and training on its use.

This type of arrangement may be described in a National Action Plan. It should include input from a broad range of stakeholders including all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, and the general public within the country. The Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations, and their regional structures, where relevant, should consider facilitating information exchange both within and between countries by issuing general guidance.

IFCS is called upon to support the initiative to eliminate 'barriers to information exchange for the sound management of chemicals' in order to enhance communication among national, sub-regional, regional and international stakeholders.

By 2005, at least five countries in each region, and by 2010, most countries should have fully operational arrangements in place for the exchange of information on hazardous chemicals.

2. The Forum recognizes the role of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade for information exchange on toxic chemicals.

All countries are encouraged to ratify or accede to the Rotterdam Convention with a view to its entry into force as soon as possible, preferably by Forum IV. To this end, all efforts must be made to ensure that the necessary procedures are put into place so that countries can successfully implement the Convention in a prompt manner.

3. The Forum recognizes the importance of providing all relevant parties with safety information on the hazardous properties of chemicals in an easy-to-access,

easy-to-read and easy-to-understand format. All countries are urged to establish mechanisms to this effect using procedures that are consistent with those concerning the safety data sheets of the 1990 International Labour Organization (ILO) Chemicals Convention (No.170). Industry should communicate with the public, especially by dissemination of information on hazards connected to chemical production.

By 2004, most countries should have procedures in place to ensure that any hazardous material put into circulation is accompanied, at a minimum, by appropriate and reliable safety information that is easy to access, read, and understand, consistent with the safety data sheets of the 1990 International Labour Organization Chemical Convention (No. 170) and taking into account the development of the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals as it develops.

The Forum recognizes the need to ensure that essential health, safety and environmental information is not withheld under confidentiality restrictions.

**Programme Area D:
Establishment of risk reduction programmes**

1. To protect human health and the environment (including surface and ground water), countries should establish ecologically sound and integrated strategies for the management of pests and, where appropriate, vectors for communicable diseases.

By 2004, most countries should have in place integrated and ecologically sound pest management strategies. Where appropriate, specific strategies for control of vectors (for communicable diseases) should be established.

2. The identification, neutralization, and safe disposal of obsolete stocks of pesticides and other chemicals (especially polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) must be urgently facilitated by provision of technical and financial assistance particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. As well, future stockpiling of other obsolete pesticides and chemicals must be prevented. With respect to the final disposition of chemicals, the Forum and Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations should promote the use of techniques that minimize risks, *i.e.* less polluting and safer technologies.

By 2004, countries should have established relevant action plans, and at least two countries in each region should have commenced implementation of their National Action Plans with respect to disposal, considering the outcomes of relevant international agreements.

3. Special attention should be paid to persistent and bio-accumulating toxic chemicals.

Work on a global convention on persistent organic pollutants (POPs) should continue with a view to reach agreement, by the end of 2000, on a strong and effective convention that will encourage countries to:

- **Adopt it at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries, to be held in Stockholm in May, 2001;**
- **Ratify it with a view to its entry into force as soon as possible, preferably by 2004.**

The Forum Standing Committee is requested to invite countries and regions to present at Forum IV risk reduction initiatives on other chemicals of major concern.

4. Major industrial accidents must be prevented. National systems for emergency preparedness and response should be developed in all countries. Such systems would include strategies for educating and training personnel. In developing such mechanisms, significant international guidance can be found in documents prepared by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations².

By 2002, 70 or more countries should have implemented systems aimed at preventing major industrial accidents and for emergency preparedness and response. These systems should be in accordance with international principles.

5. Poisoning of pesticide users, especially agricultural workers and small farmers in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, must be prevented. The Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade will address aspects of this problem. However, in order to more comprehensively address the problem of acutely toxic pesticides, the Forum:

Requests the Forum Standing Committee to provide initial input on the extent of the problem of acutely toxic pesticides, and provide guidance for sound risk management and reduction, including options for phasing out where appropriate, and report to Forum IV.

² Such as the 1993 ILO Convention (No. 174) on the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents, the OECD Guiding Principles on Accident Preparedness and Response, the programme on Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level (APELL), the 1991 ILO Code of Practice on the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents, and the 1999 IPCS Public Health and Chemical Incidents guidance document. In addition guidance exists in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE) Convention on Trans-boundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

Urges countries to apply the existing mechanisms under the Rotterdam Convention to notify the Secretariat for the Rotterdam Convention on severely hazardous pesticide formulations under conditions of use in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and request the Secretariat for the Rotterdam Convention to report on progress to Forum IV.

6. IFCS should support and encourage the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in its efforts to revise the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides at its Biennial Conference in November 2001.

Following adoption of the revised Code, IFCS should (a) support and encourage governments to play an active role in its observance; and (b) work with the FAO and all main stakeholders to enable them to play an active role in monitoring progress on implementation of the Code.

7. Poison centres, providing toxicological information and advice, should be established and strengthened, with relevant clinical and analytical toxicological facilities developed according to the needs identified and resources available at the level of each country. In developing these facilities, relevant international guidance can be found in the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) Guidelines for Poisons Control published by the World Health Organization (WHO).

By 2002, poison centres should have been established in 30 or more countries that do not yet have such centres, and further strengthened in 70 or more countries where they already exist. Extensive progress should have been made on national systems for collection of harmonized data, including categorization by, for example, type of poisoning, chemical identity, structure, use or function.

8. Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)/emission inventories are recognized in Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 as an important tool to raise public awareness about potential chemical risks and as an effective environmental management tool to stimulate chemical risk reduction. Although PRTRs are designed to be country-specific, there are commonalities between national systems. Common characteristics of many successful PRTR programmes include: a listing of pollutants; environmental multi-media and/or integrated reporting of releases and transfers (i.e. to air, water, and land); reporting of data by source; reporting of data periodically (normally annually); and making data and information available to the public.

By 2004, at least two additional countries in each IFCS region should have established a PRTR/emission inventory and countries without a PRTR/emission inventory should consider to initiate a national PRTR/emission inventory design process which involves affected and interested parties and takes into consideration national circumstances and needs.

This priority is part of a broader Forum PRTR/Emission Inventory Action Plan which is annexed to the Forum III Final Report.

9. Governments and industry should consider, subject to domestic regulatory requirements, or as provided for in international agreements, granting the public's right-to-know the chemical constituents of consumer products, at least on a qualitative basis, in order to enable them to make informed consumer choices.

Programme Area E:

Strengthening of national capabilities and capacities for management of chemicals

1. Countries should increase their efforts to systematically develop an integrated and coordinated approach to manage chemicals safely. Countries should therefore prepare and regularly update national profiles, identify capacity building priorities, and develop sound national action plans for them. Those countries that have completed a National Profile should make it as widely available as possible through such means as the UNITAR/ECB National Profile Internet Homepage.

By 2002, National Profiles, based on a multi-stakeholder process, should have been developed by most countries.

By 2002, all countries should have designated an appropriate contact point (IFCS National Focal Point) and have established an intersectoral coordinating effort.

2. National³ policies or action plans should be developed through a multi-stakeholder process and based on information from the National Profiles. These policies/plans should be reviewed and revised from time to time as required. This should include information and details pertaining to all of the following:

- the development of effective national legislation, policies and enforcement,
- implementation of educational programmes and other projects designed to raise national awareness,
- capacity building related to risk reduction/risk management,
- strengthening institutional mechanisms and programmes,
- strengthening national information systems, networks, and Internet links.

Safer and cleaner technologies must be utilised to avoid, or to greatly reduce, risks from hazardous chemicals to the health and safety of workers, the general population, and to the environment. The development and use of these technologies should be in National Action Plans. Industry has a special obligation to participate in the implementation of risk reduction programmes.

³ Whenever in this text the term national is used, it means national or other institutional level as appropriate.

Although risk reduction activities are primarily national responsibilities, regional and international risk reduction programmes are warranted for those problems that are sub-regional, regional and international in scope.

By 2005, national policies with objectives, priorities, strategies and action plans with targets for improving the management of chemicals should have been developed in most countries and regions.

3. Countries requiring external assistance should include capacity building for the management of chemicals as a national priority for development assistance and coordinate among relevant ministries clear and well-defined requests for external additional resources. In programmes against poverty, for agricultural development etc, the dimension of environment should be included, and other ministries such as those of planning should be involved. The Forum urges donor countries and organizations to undertake to strengthen their assistance programmes, at both policy and technical levels, and to report progress through the OECD biennial reports on assistance.

OECD countries, other IFCS participants, non-profit organizations, and other institutions, should begin to work immediately to mobilize sufficient financial resources and technical assistance for the sound management of chemicals, including technology transfer as appropriate, providing opportunities to all countries to support activities under all the Forum programmes of action.

The Forum Standing Committee should review assistance given to countries to support capacity building for the sound management of chemicals and report back to Forum IV.

The Forum encourages coordination at international level of the various efforts to support strengthening of capacities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, integrating work on Prior Informed Consent (PIC), persistent organic pollutants (POPs), obsolete stocks, Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs), pesticides etc. to the extent possible and based on the specific and explicit demands of countries seeking support for strengthening their chemicals management.

4. Enhanced access to information on various aspects of capacity building activities and needs related to the sound management of chemicals is a prerequisite for planning, implementing, evaluating and coordinating capacity building projects for the sound management of chemicals. As such it may also contribute to international, regional and national efforts to raise the awareness about the need for increased assistance to strengthen national capacities and capabilities for the sound management of chemicals.

The Forum supports the development of an Information Exchange Network on Capacity Building for the Sound Management of Chemicals within the framework of the IFCS and calls upon countries, international organizations, industry, labour unions, public interest groups and the academia to actively participate in this effort by 2003.

Programme Area F:

Prevention of illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products

1. The Forum requests that the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) participating organizations establish a working group on illegal trafficking, drawing on the expertise of the Forum and considering recommendations given by the regional groups. This working group shall build upon ongoing activities within the IOMC participating organizations and shall assess illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous substances, review measures to detect and prevent illegal traffic, and make recommendations as to how its participating organizations may advance, add value to, and help integrate the work undertaken by other organizations, such as Interpol, the Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and the World Customs Organization. This assessment and recommendations shall be considered by Forum IV; interim reports on the progress of analysis should be made to the Forum Standing Committee in the following areas:

- national legislation and enforcement programmes;
- capacity to detect illegal import and export;
- resources and operational mechanisms for technical assistance for developing countries and for countries with economies in transition;
- the extent of illegal traffic at international, regional, sub-regional, and national levels, and the assessment of its impact at these levels;
- the extent of coordination and cooperation among all stakeholders;
- how international conventions related to the sound management of chemicals and national laws may be more effectively applied to the transboundary movement of chemicals.

2. The Forum recommends that governments elaborate national strategies of prevention, detection, and control of illegal traffic, including the strengthening of laws, judicial mechanisms, and the capacity of customs administrations and other national authorities to control and prevent illegal shipments of chemicals, by enhancing information systems, e.g. case reporting systems, training, and other practical measures. In particular, in line with Article 13 (1) of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, countries should give appropriate support to initiatives taken by World Customs Organization members aiming at the attribution of specific harmonized system codes for certain chemicals falling under the Rotterdam Convention and POPs, and enabling their comparison to environmental compliance data.