

Exploring innovative solutions for the sound management of chemicals

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Overview

- Trends in chemicals management;
- Challenge from Agenda 21;
- Review of progress;
- Continuing challenges;
- Innovative solutions.

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Trends

- Chemicals underpin virtually all sectors of the economy
- Chemicals industry plays an important role in the global economy with:
 - Turnover exceeded \$3 trillion in 2008; represented 7% of global income and 9% of international trade;
 - Expected to continue to grow over the next 20 years at a rate of 3-4% per year;
 - 7 million people employed; 20 million indirectly.
- By 2020 developing countries and countries in economy in transition will account for a 1/3 of global consumption/ production
 - Mainly in BRIICS countries.

The challenge from Agenda 21

- A substantial use of chemicals is essential to meet the social and economic goals of the world community and today's best practice demonstrates that they can be used widely in a cost effective manner and with a high degree of safety.
- However, a great deal remains to be done to ensure the environmentally sound management of toxic chemicals, within the principles of environmentally sound development and improved quality of life for humankind.

Review of progress

- To be measured against Chapter 19, Agenda 21, UNCED (1992); and 2020 goal to achieve sound management of chemicals, Johannesburg Plan (2002).
- and their listed programme areas:
 - International cooperation;
 - Risk assessment;
 - Information exchange and risk communication;
 - Risk reduction and prevention;
 - Prevention of illegal traffic in toxic/dangerous products;
 - Monitoring;
 - Means of implementation.

Review of progress

- International cooperation:
 - IOMC;
 - SAICM;
 - Synergies among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention;
 - One UN; IEG.
- Risk assessment:
 - Hazard assessment: methodologies for testing and assessing such as International Programme on Chemical Safety and the International Agency for Research on Cancer;
 - Exposure assessment: models exist for OECD countries;

Review of progress



- Information exchange and risk communication:
 - Pollutant Release and Transfer Register;
 - Globally Harmonized System for classification and labelling (GHS);
 - International safety cards;
 - Prior informed consent mechanisms of Basel and Rotterdam Conventions;
 - REACH.

Review of progress



- Risk reduction and prevention:
 - Substitution of harmful chemicals and minimization of exposure; especially for: POPs, heavy metals, chemicals produced in high volumes;
 - Regulations on transport of dangerous goods, legally binding instruments for phasing out ODS, POPs, Mercury.
- Prevention of illegal traffic:
 - Basel and Rotterdam Conventions, GHS, Green Customs Initiative.

Review of progress



- Monitoring:
 - Global monitoring plan for POPs under the Stockholm Convention;
 - Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme;
 - Ongoing studies on air pollution and health.

Review of progress



- Means of implementation / financing:
 - Global Environment Facility;
 - Multilateral Fund for the Montreal Protocol;
 - SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund;
 - UNEP initiative on financing the chemicals and waste agenda;
 - Brokering tool for facilitating access to financial and technical assistance.

Review of progress



- Means of implementation / technology transfer, technical cooperation and capacity building:
 - Regional and sub-regional centres and offices;
 - UNIDO/UNEP cleaner production centres;
 - IOMC Strategy for Strengthening National Chemicals Management Capacities;
 - UNITAR Chemicals and Waste Management Programme.

Summary of progress



- Work currently underway addresses many of the challenges foreseen in the Agenda 21, Chapter 19 and JPOI;
- However, significant challenges remain that must be addressed, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Continuing challenges



- ❑ Lack of financial resources to implement obligations under chemicals MEAs and SAICM and to meet national objectives for the sound management of chemicals;
- ❑ Lack of technical and analytical capacities for development, implementation and enforcement of chemicals management programmes;
- ❑ Lack of integrated national legal and institutional frameworks and inter-ministerial coordination;
- ❑ Lack of information and awareness of the impacts of chemicals on the environment and human health.

Innovative solutions



- ❑ Mainstream the sound management of chemicals into national development priorities and the broader sustainable development agenda;
- ❑ Establish effective partnerships with the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders;
- ❑ Make use of economic instruments and promote initiatives like green economy.

Conclusion



- ❑ Much has been achieved since 1992, but much remains to be done;
- ❑ Financing continues to be a barrier to the sound management of chemicals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- ❑ Meanwhile, new challenges emerge including new chemicals under MEAs, chemicals in products, nanotechnologies, and endocrine disrupters;
- ❑ The global community needs to continue to innovate and partner to achieve the 2020 goal.