

Developing and Sustaining an Integrated National Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals

**A UNITAR/IOMC Training and Capacity Building Programme
in Three Developing Countries
2001-2002**

Guidance Document Working Draft



IOMC

INTER-ORGANIZATION PROGRAMME FOR THE SOUND MANAGEMENT OF CHEMICALS

A cooperative agreement among **UNEP, ILO, FAO, WHO, UNIDO, UNITAR** and **OECD**

UNITAR/IOMC Programme Principles

- **a multistakeholder approach**, involving representatives from various government ministries as well as concerned parties outside of government, such as industry, research institutions, labour, and public interest groups;
- **a country-driven process** through which partner countries assess and identify their chemicals management needs and link their related activities to national environmental and developmental objectives; and
- **an integrated approach** to chemicals management in order to strengthen co-ordination and therefore the effectiveness of efforts to address chemicals issues across all stages of the life cycle.

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Note to Reviewers

This “working draft” guidance document, developed by UNITAR in cooperation with all IOMC POs, is scheduled for finalisation by the end of the year 2001. While the review of this document is an activity for a three developing country project of the same name, it is intended for use by any country wishing to address chemicals management issues. It is complemented by an *Implementation Manual for Project Countries*. It is hoped that Project Countries and other interested reviewers will make use of the guidance provided in this document and provide critical feedback on the working draft prior to finalisation. Specifically, we ask that the following questions are considered when reviewing the document:

- Is the scope of the document appropriate? Is the information provided too general or too detailed? What additional information or issues should be included, if any?
- Is the guidance and information provided in the document practical? Too theoretical?
- Is the presentation of the information (e.g. language, format) user-friendly?
- Is the information and guidance provided consistent with the needs and circumstances of developing countries and countries with economies in transition?
- Are the suggestions outlined in Parts 2 and 3 useful? What are some possible ways in which the suggestions and related guidance could be made more relevant and useful?
- Are there additional types of information which should be included in annexes in order to make the document more valuable to the user?

This working draft will be further developed taking into account the general outcomes and ideas generated in the Project, as well as specific comments and feedback on the draft. Your contribution to the further development of this document is sincerely appreciated.

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PREFACE

The growing world-wide commitment to protect human health and the environment from dangerous chemicals has been a catalyst for action in many countries and sectors. Due to the cross-sectoral nature of chemicals management and the interests of various government ministries and other stakeholders in this area, well co-ordinated and integrated approaches are required at the national level in order to achieve maximum impact for the limited resources available. Co-ordinated and integrated approaches for the sound management of chemicals are therefore called for, in particular through Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 and by the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS). Following the recommendations issued at the 1992 Rio Summit and by the IFCS, many countries, in particular those where resources are scarce, are now considering the development of a sound organizational framework at the national level through which sustained national action and systematic progress in the area of chemicals management can be ensured.

In recognition of the potential advantages afforded by national co-ordination and sound integration of activities in the area of chemicals management, UNITAR, in cooperation with its partner organizations in the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), has developed this guidance document. It is meant to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their efforts to establish a collaborative framework at the national level among key interested and affected parties involved in chemicals management. Such a framework is meant to provide a critical foundation for effective and co-ordinated action to address both national chemicals management priorities as well as the implementation of international chemicals-related agreements. Its emphasis on integration is consistent with IFCS recommendations for countries to "increase their efforts to systematically develop an integrated and coordinated approach to manage chemicals safely."¹

The approach and activities suggested in this document build upon experiences gained and lessons learned through pilot programmes on integrated chemicals management which were successfully implemented in Argentina, Ghana, Indonesia and Slovenia during the course of 1996-1999.²

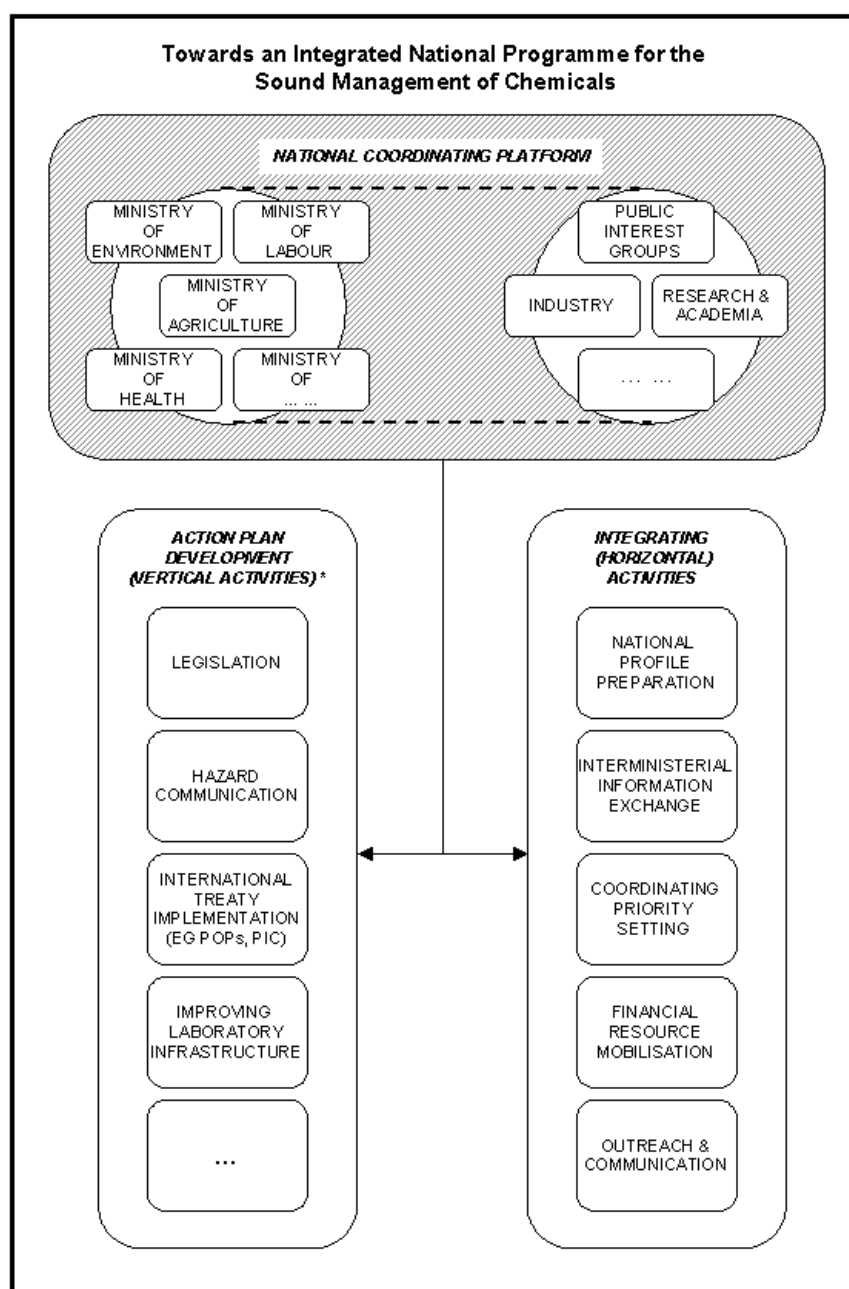
Part 1 of the document provides context and background on the importance of chemicals management including the international and regional policy frameworks that exist or are under development. This part also raises the importance of sound cooperation within government and with stakeholders, and proposes the (longer-term) development of a national policy on chemicals management as a possible vehicle for cooperation. **Part 2** outlines a range of activities and provides practical suggestions for taking concrete action towards developing and sustaining an integrated national programme. **Part 3** introduces the Action Plan development approach to sound chemicals management as a key strategic planning tool for governments.

¹ IFCS, Priorities for Action Beyond 2000, Forum III Final Report, Annex 6, p.9 (October, 2000).

² A final report of the pilot programmes is available from UNITAR.

UNITAR and its IOMC partners do not suggest that all activities outlined in this document need to be implemented in their entirety or at once to achieve co-ordinated and integrated chemicals management. Instead, this document is meant to provide flexible guidance to allow countries to address those areas which are considered of particular importance to their relevant national situation. Thus it can serve as a general stand-alone reference tool for any country that wishes to make its programmes for chemicals management more integrated and sustainable. It may also serve, however, as a basis for collaborative programmes with an international organization and/or a particular bilateral donor.

A Diagram of Key Concepts for Integrated Chemicals Management



* The topics indicated are examples only.

PART 1: A FRAMEWORK FOR SOUND CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT

1.1 The Importance of Sound Chemicals Management

While chemicals have long been a part of human history, their production and use have proliferated in the last half of the 20th century. Today tens of thousands of chemicals can be found in the marketplace and hundreds of new chemicals are developed and produced annually. World production of all types of chemicals is well in excess of several hundred million tons each year and is a significant component of international trade and commerce.

Over the course of a generation, the world has grown dependent on the benefits that chemicals provide. Chemicals play a key role in many major sectors of the world economy including agriculture, industry, housing, transport, textiles, the health sector and in the home. Despite the benefits they can provide, chemicals can be corrosive, explosive, flammable, an irritant, oxidising, and dangerous to human health and the environment. Adequate toxicity data exists for only a very small portion (on the order of ten percent) of all chemicals in commercial use. Nevertheless exposure to chemicals has been associated with a range of detrimental human health and environmental effects including: cancer, teratogenic and mutagenic effects, neurological damage, endocrine system disruption, cases of acute poisonings, and effects on ecosystems.

Thus the sound management of chemicals is a particular challenge for governments. Governments have responded with various tools such as laws, policies and practices at all levels - from the local to the national and international. These tools help to protect citizens and the environment from the detrimental effects of chemicals while maintaining access to their benefits. In many countries these tools have been designed to reflect the inherent hazards and risks chemicals can pose, attempting to limit the exposure of humans and the environment at or below levels that do not cause harm (or at “acceptable” levels of harm).

By referring to the term “national systems for environmentally sound management of chemicals”, Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 indirectly implies that national initiatives and approaches to manage chemicals safely comprise different components. Such components should, ideally, be well co-ordinated and mutually supportive, and collectively make up the “system”. Indeed, action to improve the national chemicals management system does not likely address the system as a whole, but rather focuses on strengthening particular aspects or components of it. These often include those areas which are considered to be of highest priority. The possibilities therefore are greater for mobilising the required funding, or for obtaining political support at the national and/or international level. Thus there are a range of entry points countries can consider as they develop their priorities.

1.2 Benefits of an Integrated Approach

Despite the existence of chemicals-related laws, policies and practices, the challenge of establishing a coherent, *integrated* national chemicals management framework that coexists with broader national development policies and effectively addresses local needs has yet to be

tackled by most countries. Indeed, some developing countries and countries with economies in transition have initiated programmes to address specific aspects of chemicals management and safety. However, the production in recent years of National Profiles (to assess the national infrastructure for management of chemicals) and related discussions in international fora such as the Intergovernmental Forum for Chemical Safety³ have documented that the great majority of these countries do not have fully functional and comprehensive national chemicals management systems in place.

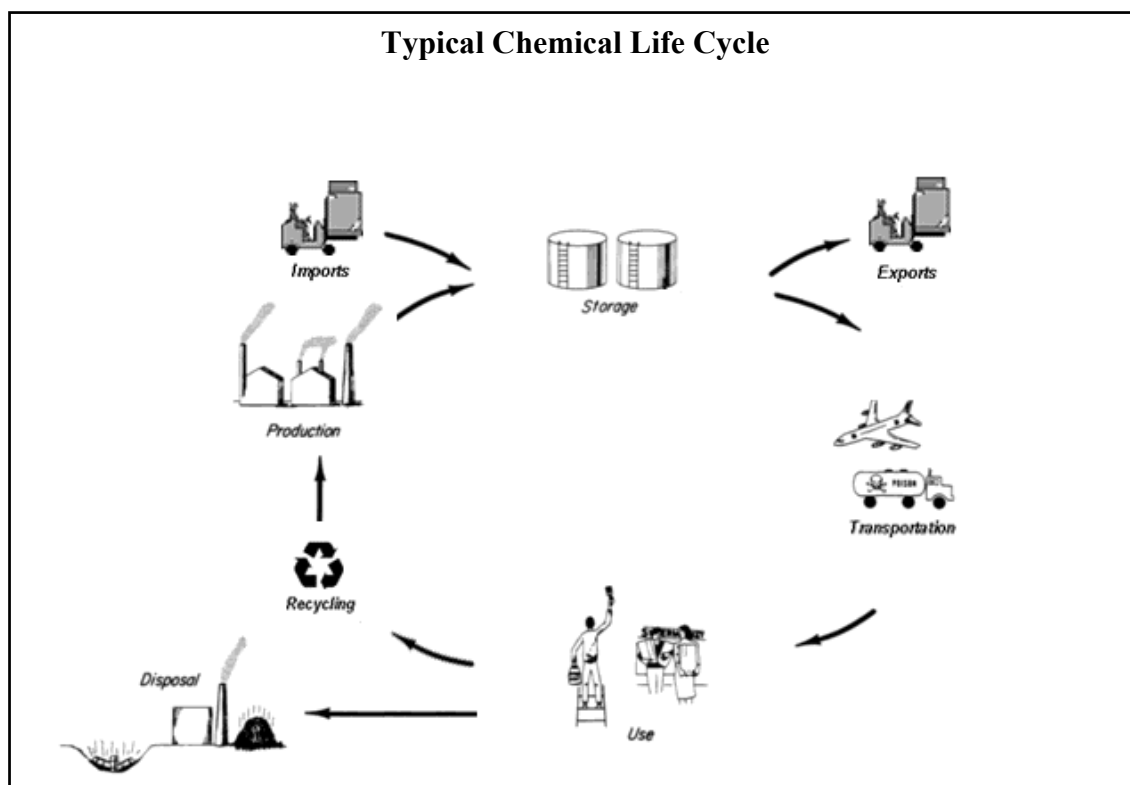
“Integrated” Means “Co-ordinated”

Developing an integrated national programme means, first and foremost, seeking to strengthen co-ordination and ensure that efforts are complementary in nature across government among the various activities and tools that are relevant to chemicals management. The goal of such a strengthening is to increase the effectiveness of existing capacities and programmes. For example, under an integrated scheme, ministries of agriculture, environment, health, labour and others would continue to work on the aspects of chemicals management for which they have the relevant mandates and substantive expertise, but their efforts would be co-ordinated to avoid conflicting policies, gaps and unnecessary overlaps with a view to contributing towards common goals. Where initiatives by various actors require common tools or comprise common activities, such as the development of an information system, the establishment of an emissions register, or the organisation of public awareness raising campaigns, such efforts would not be organised separately and on a sectoral basis, but in a way that would minimise duplication of effort. From the perspective of the regulated community and others outside the government, such co-ordination of activities would also appear as a more streamlined and rationalised system.

“Integrated” Also Encompasses a “Life Cycle Approach”

A second aspect of an integrated national programme, which is closely related to the first, is the idea of approaching chemicals management topics from a holistic, life-cycle perspective. Such an approach helps to ensure that potential risks to health and environment at the various stages of the life cycle (e.g. production, transport, use, disposal) are taken into account and that appropriate measures are put in place to manage and reduce those risks. The process of developing an integrated national programme, which entails looking at all ongoing activities as well as problems/needs in a holistic way, will help to uncover stages of the life cycle, or elements within particular stages which may have “fallen through the cracks” under the existing schemes within individual ministries and/or agencies.

³ See Section 1.3.



“Integrated” Should Include “Stakeholders”

Thirdly, the term “integrated” can also be interpreted as a reference to the involvement of various stakeholders - parties who have an interest in and/or are affected by chemicals issues. There are likely to be many untapped opportunities to form partnerships and foster collaboration among non-governmental as well as governmental stakeholders. Pursuit and development of such opportunities is another important facet of an integrated national programme.

Benefits of Integrated Chemicals Management

An integrated national programme provides a great variety of benefits from streamlining administrative procedures to contributing towards a healthier society. Some of the potential benefits of an integrated approach to national chemicals management include:

- administrative benefits such as minimising overlaps and inconsistencies in policies and programmes;
- communications-related benefits, including improved information exchange within and among relevant parties, and raised awareness for the general public; and
- ensuring that chemicals management occurs at all stages of the life cycle - so that chemicals-related problems are not merely shifted from one medium to another.

1.3 International Policy Framework and Institutions

An examination of events, structures and policy decisions taken at the international or regional level can provide useful insights for the development of an integrated national programme.

Historical Milestones

Institutional and policy frameworks for chemicals management commenced soon after their widespread introduction in the middle of the last century, and accelerated accordingly as awareness of the harmful effects of certain chemicals became widespread.⁴ In fact, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has been addressing chemicals issues since the early 1920s - a Convention on lead was adopted in 1921. By the 1990s, a broad range of international agreements and bodies addressed chemicals issues. This has recently culminated (thus far) with the completion of negotiations for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Annex A outlines major legally binding and voluntary chemicals agreements, and their responsible international institutions.

Agenda 21, Chapter 19 - A Landmark for Co-ordinated Efforts on Chemicals

Many of the international efforts to address chemicals since 1992 have occurred as a result of the “Rio Conference” - more formally known as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Heads of State or Governments from more than 150 member countries of the United Nations adopted *Agenda 21*, a comprehensive document outlining responsibilities of States towards the achievement of sustainable development. Chapter 19 of *Agenda 21* is entitled “Environmentally Sound Management of Toxic Chemicals, Including Prevention of Illegal International Traffic in Toxic and Dangerous Products”, and provides an international strategy for achieving the sound management of chemicals, a goal to which all countries present at the Rio Conference agreed.

Chapter 19 addresses chemicals issues in six programme areas: international assessment of chemical risks; harmonisation of chemical classification and labelling; information exchange on chemicals and chemical risks; risk reduction; strengthening national capacities and capabilities for chemicals management; and prevention of illegal international trade in toxic and dangerous products. *Programme Area E on Strengthening of National Capabilities and Capacities for Management of Chemicals* is of particular relevance to countries that are in the process of establishing or improving their national systems for chemicals management. It provides a list of basic elements of national chemicals management, namely: (a) adequate legislation; (b) information gathering and dissemination; (c) capacity for risk assessment and interpretation; (d) establishment of risk management policy; (e) capacity for implementation and enforcement; (f) capacity for rehabilitation of contaminated sites and poisoned persons; (g) effective education programmes; and (h) capacity to respond to emergencies.

⁴ For example, with the publication of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* in 1962.

Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS)

In 1994, the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) was established as a means for countries to regularly discuss their activities and priorities for the sound management of chemicals, including progress made in implementing Chapter 19 of Agenda 21. It comprises representatives of countries around the world as well as representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations. It meets every approximately three years (and formerly met intersessionally). Through these meetings and within its regional groupings, the participants in the Forum discuss important aspects of chemicals management and safety and develop recommendations which serve as a driving force for work at the international level and within countries. These recommendations, together with “Priorities for Action” adopted at each Forum, provide important milestones for countries in their efforts to strengthen their national chemicals management programmes.

The IFCS encourages its participants to work closely in regional groupings, stressing the benefits of regional co-operation for implementing its recommendations, and as an important means of building capacities and the necessary infrastructure for chemicals management. A particular emphasis has been placed on regional and sub-regional groups to deal with issues of strategy development and improved co-ordination.

Key IFCS Recommendations

...By 2002, most countries, through a multi-stakeholder process, will have developed a National Profile on chemicals management [and] ensured national co-ordination for the sound management of chemicals...

...By Forum IV in 2003, an effective Information Exchange Network on Capacity Building for the Sound Management of Chemicals will be operating...

...By 2005, at least five countries in each IFCS region will have full arrangements in place for the exchange of information on hazardous chemicals...

...By 2005, most countries will have developed national policies with targets for improving the management of chemicals...

...By Forum IV in 2003, all countries will have reported on risk reduction initiatives they have taken on other chemicals of major concern...

Implementation of International Agreements

International agreements and conventions have affected and will continue to affect national legislation, regulations and policies for the sound management of chemicals. Examples of key international agreements, many of which have only been recently negotiated, include: the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Convention on the PIC Procedure

for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and ILO Convention 170 concerning safety in the use of chemicals at work.⁵ These various instruments have been negotiated under the auspices of several international organisations, such as UNEP, FAO and ILO and, following the ratification at the national level, are often implemented through national counterpart ministries of the respective international organisations (for example, a national environment ministry takes the lead in implementing an agreement negotiated under the auspices of UNEP). However, the growing number of international agreements dealing with chemicals also requires integrated and co-ordinated approaches among a host of ministries (beyond the ministry with the lead role) at the national level.

While each of these agreements has its precise objectives and purpose, some of the regulatory and policy instruments required to implement the obligations under various agreements at the national level are often similar, if not the same. Examples of such instruments include: classification and labelling requirements; regulatory provisions for production, marketing and use restriction; inspections (compliance); import/export control requirements; emission inventories; trade statistics and record keeping; and enforcement (sanctions). In some cases, integrated and co-ordinated implementation of such instruments at the national level could potentially minimise costs for government as well as for the regulated community.

Countries should therefore consider developing fora for exploring opportunities for developing such linkages between the instruments created under various international agreements. A committee made up of ministries/agencies and all stakeholders who are affected or interested in a particular international agreement could be set up to deal with implementation issues in a co-ordinated manner. International convention secretariats could foster such efforts by assisting countries in thinking through how implementation of conventions at the country level could be achieved in a more integrated way.

The Inter-Organisation Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals

The Inter-Organisation Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) was established in 1995 by UNEP, ILO, FAO, WHO, UNIDO and OECD as Participating Organisations following recommendations made by the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development to strengthen co-operation and increase co-ordination in the field of chemical safety. In January 1998, UNITAR formally joined the IOMC as a Participating Organisation (PO). The purpose of the IOMC is to promote co-ordination of the policies and activities pursued by the POs, jointly or separately, to achieve the sound management of chemicals in relation to human health and the environment.

The Inter-Organisation Co-ordinating Committee of the IOMC

The experience gained by the international organisations participating in the IOMC may serve as a good example of a mechanism for co-ordination. To ensure good communication among the seven organisations and as a means for ensuring co-ordination on topics of common concern, the Inter-Organisation Co-ordinating Committee (IOCC) was established.

⁵ See Annex A for a more complete list.

The IOCC is comprised of the senior managers responsible for the chemicals-related programmes in the seven respective organisations. The IOCC meets twice per year to discuss relevant topics and to exchange information on ongoing activities. The responsibility of chairing the IOCC is shared among the participating organisations on a rotating basis, with each chairperson serving a 2-year term. Tools have also been developed to facilitate information flow among the members of the IOCC and their respective organisations, including a calendar of events and an inventory of activities featured on the IOMC website. In areas requiring technical co-ordination, specific groups have been established for: harmonisation of classification and labelling of chemicals; assessment of existing industrial chemicals and pollutants; chemical accident/emergency preparedness and response; and pollutant release and transfer registers.

1.4 Regional and Supranational Co-operation

Increasingly, countries are joining together in regional groupings in order to facilitate trade and/or to address issues of common concern. Related to this, governments have long found it to be advantageous, especially those whose economies are closely integrated or strive to be closely integrated, to co-operate, and therefore share the often resource-intensive burden on a variety of chemicals issues, including, data collection and sharing; basic research; evaluation; and even approvals and other regulatory actions. Such groupings span a wide spectrum from organisations that are relatively well integrated, such as the European Union, to less closely integrated fora for co-operation, such as SADC (Southern Africa Development Community), Mercosur (Mercado Común del Sur (Southern Common Market)), ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Community), SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) and NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) (and its associated body, the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (NACEC)).

Key supranational integration activities of note include those within the European Union and its predecessors, the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) and, to a lesser degree, among the NAFTA countries (see Annex B).

1.5 Ensuring Sound Interministerial Co-ordination and Co-operation

Governments, through the IFCS, have strongly recommended that collaboration to enhance interministerial dialogue and co-ordination occur within countries.⁶ An analysis of existing structures, challenges and opportunities for enhanced co-ordination and co-operation, and examples of responses by a number of key countries can be of assistance to those who wish to address this important issue.

Ministries Concerned With the Sound Management of Chemicals, Their Respective Roles

Chemicals management is a diverse field, spanning issues of public health, environmental protection, economics, industry, agriculture, worker protection, international relations and

⁶ See box on key IFCS recommendations.

trade. As a result, a wide range of governmental ministries and agencies have responsibilities which, taken as a whole, comprise the overall integrated national programme.

Ministries concerned with, or who have a role in, the management of chemicals can include Ministries of Agriculture, Commerce, Customs, Economics, Environment, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Health, Industry, Justice, Labour, Public Works, Telecommunications or Transportation. Other governmental entities (such as central agencies or councils) could also have an interest, including those responsible for the development and implementation of laws, regulations, policies and activities related to chemicals management throughout their life cycle, and/or aspects of pollution prevention and control.

An integrated national programme is complicated by the fact that usually different ministries participate in the control of chemicals in different phases of the chemical life-cycle. The allocation of responsibilities can vary between countries. Countries may use different titles for their ministries/agencies. In most cases:

- Ministries of *Agriculture* are generally concerned with the use of agricultural chemicals for the benefit of securing food supplies;
- *Customs Authorities* are generally responsible for ensuring that chemicals do not enter or leave the country contrary to government regulations, and tariffs and duties;
- Ministries of *Environment* are generally concerned with the direct and indirect effects of releasing chemicals into the environment as emissions and wastes to air, water and land;
- Ministries of *Finance* have a central role in financial resource allocations for chemicals-related activities;
- Ministries of *Foreign Affairs* usually co-ordinate all international aspects of chemicals management, such as participation in relevant international agreements and conventions;
- *Government printing/publications offices* are generally concerned with the publication and distribution of laws, regulations and other government documents, and can play a role in raising public awareness;
- Ministries of *Health* are mainly concerned with the short- and long-term health impacts of chemicals on the general public or specific population groups;
- Ministries of *Industry* are often concerned with the production of chemicals and chemical products and the introduction of cleaner production technologies;
- Ministries of *Justice* or *Legal Affairs* are generally concerned with the development and enforcement of laws and regulations, and often deal with issues concerning public access to information, the protection of confidential business information, criminal and

forensic issues and accidents/incidents/terrorism;

- Ministries of *Labour* are generally concerned with occupational health and safety issues related to the use and handling of chemicals at the workplace;
- Ministries of *Planning* primarily deal with economic planning (and land use/regional development). This ministry can also often deal with the donation or receipt of development assistance, which could include chemicals for agricultural use, technical or financial assistance for the development of chemical industries, or technical assistance for the management of chemicals;
- Ministries of *Science and Technology* play an important role in deciding the future direction and resource allocations for research and, at least indirectly, action on chemicals;
- Ministries of *Trade* are generally responsible for regulating the import and export of chemical substances and often have the authority to issue relevant trade permits; and
- Ministries of *Transport* are generally concerned with the safe transportation and storage of chemicals during the distribution phase.

Challenges and Opportunities of Co-ordination and Co-operation

It can be difficult for persons who work within individual ministries, with finite mandates and responsibilities, to “see the big picture” with regard to an integrated national programme. Often the various governmental actors involved in chemicals management may operate on a sectoral basis (e.g. under their own, separate legislation) and thus may not be accustomed to working and sharing information with one another. Some may not see a clear link between their activities and sound chemicals management, an area which may be considered to be largely the domain of environmental and health authorities. In addition, several orders of government, e.g. federal, provincial and local governments, also typically share responsibilities (though often without recognising collaboration) for the implementation of chemicals management programmes, laws and policies. In fact, in some countries much of the actual implementation of relevant programmes and enforcement of chemicals-related laws is carried out at the local level.

Effective co-ordination among the whole range of those who have responsibility for or a stake in chemicals issues means that all those involved:

- are familiar with each others’ chemicals-related activities, priorities and positions, and the underlying reasons for each; and
- use that information to make better quality and more strategic decisions on chemicals issues.

Benefits of such co-ordination can include:

- common positions on issues are identified and reinforced;
- synergies are created - work can take place in collaboration instead of in isolation, resulting in additional benefits to both parties;
- duplication of efforts is avoided where possible, freeing up scarce resources for other priority issues;
- gaps in chemicals management are identified; and
- understanding of divergent issues is increased, and thus the potential for misunderstanding is decreased.

Challenges to sound inter- and intra-ministerial co-ordination and co-operation may include:

- conflicting or competing mandates;
- poor inter- and intra-ministerial communication;
- gaps in expertise;
- a lack of resources; and
- low priority given to chemicals issues within (a) particular ministry(ies).

Enhancing Dialogue and Co-ordination

Most, if not all countries that have attempted to address these issues have recognised the benefits of a multi-stakeholder “platform” for addressing national chemicals management issues in an integrated and co-ordinated way. Such a platform often has a defined relationship with, for example, existing committees, such as a pesticides registration committee, a policy formulation committee or a PIC decision-making task force. For most issues (except, for example, where policies are being developed government-wide through an agreed process), each individual committee usually maintains its own mandate and decision-making power - contributing to the integrity of the whole “network” and adding value to its own work.

One can visualise varying degrees of formality for such a “network”, depending upon countries’ needs and preferences. Formalising national efforts in this regard, e.g. through a decree or law, may enhance its effectiveness (see Slovenia and Indonesia examples, below). A decree or law can help to ensure that the efforts will have a real impact and that it will continue to function over the long term, notwithstanding changes in personnel or political leadership. Conversely, a less formalised collaboration - where existing committees and ministries merely share information informally - may prove to be a more dynamic forum where participants can share experiences, best practices and lessons learned with full confidence that their respective mandates may not change as a result of decisions made.

Countries may take the following questions into consideration when evaluating how to enhance dialogue and co-ordination, and in the design of their own process:

- Which ministries are regularly involved in chemicals management activities?
- Do the activities of one ministry have an impact on the activities of another ministry?
- Would a ministry benefit from learning about the activities of other ministries or

- sharing information about its own activities?
- Do possibilities exist for the co-ordination of activities among ministries?
- Would increased knowledge about chemical activities outside of government, eg. related to the NGO community or industry, benefit ministerial activities?
- What processes or mechanisms could be used to facilitate the sharing of information concerning chemicals management activities?
- What would an ideal membership be for a body that can act as a platform for such activities?
- Would it be useful to have more than one body, depending on the nature of the activities or issues being discussed?

Indonesia's National Co-ordinating Forum

Indonesia has recently seen much activity in the field of chemicals management. This large and diverse developing country has completed a National Profile, issued an Indonesian Agenda 21, promulgated a variety of laws governing chemicals management, and held a workshop on and drafted a National Action Program for Integrated Management of Chemicals (1997-1999). As a result of these activities Indonesia created a platform with broad-based membership called the National Co-ordinating Forum for Integrated Chemicals Management.

The Forum is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Health and has brought together a wide range of representatives from some 15 institutions, including government ministries, public interest groups and industry. Some 250 individuals have participated in various activities. Terms of Reference were developed for the Forum to give programmatic and process-related guidance to its members to enhance their co-ordination and co-operation.

1.6 Involvement of Stakeholders/Civil Society

Chemicals play a part in nearly all aspects of modern life. As a result, many individuals and groups in society have an interest in, and are potentially affected by, the way in which chemicals are managed and used. Those who produce, sell and use chemical products - from industrial managers to shopkeepers to homemakers - have responsibilities related to their judicious and correct use and sound management. A successful integrated national programme therefore requires involvement of those outside of government. If public and private interests are not supportive and/or engaged, the best-planned government programme could result in nothing more than a paper exercise.

Anyone who is concerned with the sound management of chemicals - be they producers, end users, workers or others - are potential stakeholders. While the role stakeholders play in any participatory process may differ for any number of reasons, all may bring legitimate perspectives to the table.

**Slovenia's Intersectoral Committee on the
Management of Dangerous Chemicals**

In 1996, Slovenia formed (by government resolution) an Intersectoral Committee on the Management of Dangerous Chemicals. Two types of membership were identified: full membership for, among others, 10 ministries responsible for dangerous chemicals; and associate membership for sectors such as NGOs and labour unions. The chair of the committee rotates from meeting to meeting. The principal goal of the committee is the better protection of health and the environment from the negative effects of chemicals - i.e. improved chemical safety.

Numerous subcommittees were also set up which addressed a wide variety of chemicals-related issues, including, inter alia, implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, hazardous waste, chemicals accidents and good laboratory practices. As the committee's work progressed, it became more apparent that close co-operation between sectors on chemicals issues was necessary in order to promote integrated chemicals management.

Most stakeholders (fortunately, for process management purposes) have self-organised into various identifiable categories. Such categories include:

- industry associations and industrial enterprises;
- the agricultural sector (e.g. farmers, agricultural associations, co-operatives);
- retailers and distributors;
- public health professionals;
- workers and workers' unions;
- public interest groups (e.g. environmental groups, consumer protection groups);
- research institutes and academia;
- women's organisations;
- communities; and
- individual citizens.

The support and engagement of such groups is often critical for the successful implementation of chemicals management strategies and initiatives. For example, public interest groups often have high credibility with the public - thus making their support of great added value to any process. The public can also play a role in monitoring commitments to standards of practice and can participate in enforcement of chemicals laws. It is of the utmost importance that private industry also be a key partner for chemicals management - otherwise chemicals-related regulation and/or other approaches (e.g. voluntary) becomes much more difficult, if not impossible, to implement. Workers who produce or use chemicals (and therefore likely have a higher potential for exposure to harmful chemicals) have a similar, critical stake in the outcomes of any process or programme addressing integrated chemicals management. Academics can bring expertise and an analytical perspective that may be more "arm's length" from any process or programme, and thus add value as well.

Governments should therefore consider how representatives of these groups could be most effectively involved in the identification of priority problems and in the development and implementation of practical solutions. Moreover, it is probably not enough to obtain the views of non-governmental affected and interested parties but fail to take their input into account. Seeking affected and interested parties' input, but not acting upon or addressing the suggestions and concerns raised may generate distrust and friction.

A set of key principles and processes can be considered in any effort to meaningfully engage stakeholders in policy development and implementation for an integrated national programme. Indeed, many components of these principles and processes are applicable not only to the involvement of stakeholders, but also for inter- and intra-ministerial engagement on chemicals issues. Key principles and processes include: transparency, ensuring roles and responsibilities are clear, comprehensive participation, two-way communication, understandable and timely information disclosure, stakeholder education and adequate funding (see Annex C).

Involving stakeholders in chemicals management, to the extent and in the capacity that is appropriate, should therefore be considered both prudent and imperative. Such an approach can help to:

- provide chemicals management with greater legitimacy by allowing affected and interested parties, where appropriate, an opportunity to influence related decision-making and programme development;
- ensure greater transparency of, and increase overall affected and interested parties' confidence in, chemicals management and related decision-making and programme development;
- improve chemicals management through the inclusion of local knowledge and values and the examination of expert knowledge by various affected and interested parties; and
- incorporate the different, and attempt to resolve conflicting, interests of the various affected and interested parties.

Indeed, Agenda 21 emphasises the importance of involving stakeholders in environmental decision-making.

The Importance of Stakeholders, as Recognised in Agenda 21

*“The need for new forms of participation has emerged. This includes the need of individuals, groups and organisations...to know about and participate in decisions, particularly those which potentially affect the communities in which they live and work. Individuals, groups and organisations should have access to information relevant to environment and development held by national authorities, including information on products and activities that have or are likely to have a significant impact on the environment, and information on environmental protection measures”.*⁵

The possible contributions of stakeholders as partners with governments in fostering chemicals management and safety are numerous. The potential role of the various stakeholder

groups are discussed in more detail below.⁷

The Role of Industry and the Private Sector

Industry - be they importers, manufacturers or users of chemicals - have a central role to play in developing an integrated national programme. Their co-operation in chemicals management issues is essential. Industry and the private sector may undertake voluntary initiatives such as product stewardship and 'Responsible Care' to reduce potential risks associated with their products and processes, thereby exceeding 'protections' and risk reductions which may have been achieved through government regulation alone. Industry is also likely to have significant expertise and technical capacities which can be of great use, for example, in responding to chemicals-related accidents.

The Role of Labour Unions

Labour unions represent the interests of workers who may be directly involved in any stage of the chemicals life cycle. Workers can be directly affected by chemicals accidents and overexposures to the point where lives can be in danger. Therefore workers have a particularly pivotal role in chemicals management. Labour unions may be an important source of information for workers on how to protect themselves from potential risks at the workplace, and have to react in case of chemicals incidents, thereby helping to create a well-informed workforce and contributing to the attainment of occupational health and safety standards.

The Role of Public Interest Groups

Public interest groups encompass a diverse spectrum from, for example, small, community-based organisations focussing on local issues to large, well-resourced, high-profile environmental or consumer groups. Their points of entry into the chemicals management field are almost as diverse. They often can play an instrumental role in increasing the public's understanding of the potential risks of hazardous chemicals and providing information on how chemical products can be properly used, managed and disposed of and/or destroyed. They can often also represent the end-users of chemical products, including those who have been or are potentially affected by the injudicious use of chemicals.

The Role of Universities and Research Institutes

Schools and universities are likely to play a role in educating the general public about chemicals and in building the necessary knowledge and skills of future managers and decision-makers. Moreover, given that they are likely to have certain technical capacities (e.g. laboratories) and related expertise, research and academic institutes may be able to aid governments in assessing the impacts caused by certain priority chemicals and in considering potential policies and measures for risk reduction.

⁷ United Nations. 1993. *Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development*, Section 23.2.

Common Strengths

All of the above stakeholders have varying degrees of political influence. This can be very beneficial when interests are working together, but can be a challenge when some choose to work outside of a multi-stakeholder process. Many stakeholders often have international networks and experiences they can “bring to the table”. This collection of expertise and experiences can be used to avoid making repeated mistakes, or at least inform participants about other potential solutions to challenging problems.

Most governments already engage external stakeholders at one or more levels as they deal with chemicals issues - through, for example, their participation on individual committees or initiatives, and often when consulting for general policy advice. Engaging stakeholders in a more integrated structure, however, can remain a challenge.

Stakeholder participation is an integral part of efforts for integrated chemicals management in many countries (see Indonesia and Slovenia examples in Section 1.5). Maintaining a separation between a body with stakeholder representation and one that is purely governmental in nature is critical. Civil servants are an integral part of government, with unique roles, responsibilities and accountability to the public through their respective ministers. Thus, the mandate and functions of a body with stakeholder representation would usually be advisory in nature, and stakeholder membership (as is the case with Slovenia) should be of a different nature. Nevertheless, a Minister may decide to give such a body decision-making power, under some limited circumstances.

The net result of incorporating stakeholder participation would be the expansion of the chemicals dialogue to all sectors of society that are “represented” at the table. If such a network is working effectively, the benefits for sound chemicals management and for society at large are obvious.

1.7 Development of a National Policy on Chemicals Management

Some countries have found it useful to develop a national policy on chemicals management - a set of principles and procedures which address a broad range of chemicals issues that all ministries are required to follow. Such a policy can be an effective, overarching tool for an integrated and sustainable national programme. At a minimum, the process of attempting to find common ground or even consensus among government and stakeholders participating in the development of such a policy is an exercise that, of itself, can provide many benefits for integrated national management.

The development process of a national policy will inevitably differ from country to country. It can occur as a culmination of the National Profile process, as was done in Hungary (see box). A National Profile may also contain specific priorities for action which could form the basis for a policy. In other cases, it may make sense to define some priorities for action through a decision-making process and to make use of the momentum generated through those activities to focus the attention of policy-makers on the need for an overall national policy. Alternatively, the identification of priorities may be linked to an existing national

policy, with a focus on actions needed to further the objectives and principles contained therein. With either model, priority setting can provide the framework for the national policy.

The National Profile as a Catalyst for a National Policy - the Case of Hungary

The preparation of an in-depth National Profile in Hungary acted as a catalyst for a national policy and other, related chemical safety issues. A series of recommendations and principles were developed as a result of in-depth analysis of Hungary's chemical safety system. Key strategic recommendations included:

- Chemical safety should be treated as a strategic element of sustainable development;
- A policy on chemical safety should be developed;
- Development of a Chemical Safety Act is essential;
- The national co-ordination of chemical safety should be ensured by the establishment of an Inter-ministerial Commission;
- An information system for chemical safety must be developed;
- The creation of integrated, comprehensive chemical safety based on the principle of graduality (priorities) is not a one-time, finished process; authorities should be strengthened, and a Chemical Safety Inspectorate should be established;
- Development of chemical safety is a task for the whole society, including with the co-operation of governmental and non-governmental organisations;
- The right to chemical safety should be a basic civil right;
- It should be ensured that Hungary plays an active role in the development of regional (Central and Eastern European) chemical safety.

Some countries may find it useful to set up an advisory body or independent committee to draft the national policy. A similar approach was used by Sweden (see Annex D). Irrespective of the process used for drafting a national policy, the involvement of stakeholders during key stages of discussion and decision-making is of great importance. A national platform for chemicals management, or a similar mechanism could host the development of a national policy. The multi-sectoral nature of that body will help to ensure that ongoing activities and existing priorities will be taken into account, as diverse interests will be represented. Depending upon its status, those who participate in the national platform may also play a key role in promoting the policy and fostering action on the identified priorities, including obtaining the necessary political and financial support.

The contents of a national policy will vary from one country to the next: what is important is that it provides a general picture of where the country would like to be in five, ten and twenty years with respect to its chemicals management programme. It is also an opportunity to lay out the key principles to be promoted through chemicals management policies and activities (see Boxes on "Key Principles"). As means to operationalise the overall aims stated in the national policy and to put them into concrete and measurable terms, it may be useful to include specific "milestones" in the policy statement. Milestones are simple statements on what is to be achieved and by when.

While milestones should be realistic and feasible, it is indeed possible that not all will be fulfilled by the specified dates. Nevertheless, such targets and deadlines are useful, in that they provide clear endpoints towards which efforts can then be directed and criteria for judging success, progress or failure.

Key Principle:
Principle 16, Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 1992
(The “Polluter Pays” Principle)

National authorities should endeavour to promote the internalisation of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account the approach that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, with due regard to the public interest and without distorting international trade and investment.

The executive summary of Hungary’s National Profile has taken the form of a policy statement in which overall chemicals management goals and milestones are outlined (see box). In the case of Indonesia, the development of a national report following two years of targeted action on certain priority topics provided the basis for a national resolution on key principles and further actions needed (see box).

**Key Resolutions from a Workshop on Integrated Chemicals Management
in Indonesia**

As a result of two years of targeted work on chemicals issues in Indonesia, a national resolution was drafted outlining key principles and actions to enhance chemical safety. Key resolutions included:

- a call for all concerned parties including government institutions, agencies, industry associations and non-governmental organisations to fully participate in national and local efforts to achieve chemical safety at all levels;
- agreement to establish a National Co-ordinating Forum as an interim step towards the possible formalisation of a National Co-ordinating Body with the goal of ensuring harmonisation and coherence of all chemicals management measures in Indonesia;
- agreement to thoroughly review, as a matter of urgency, the feasibility of developing a national framework law on chemicals that would build upon and complement existing legislation and regulations; and
- a call for all relevant parties at the national level and relevant international and bilateral organisations to participate in a resource mobilisation strategy to secure the

Linking Chemicals Management with Strategic National Policies

The development of a National Chemicals Policy usually demands that linkages be made with other ministries, their policies and other national policies and laws. Policies of relevance

to this discussion can be grouped into two broad categories:

- other (non-chemicals specific) environment-related programmes and objectives, recognising that managing chemicals is one component of broader national efforts to achieve environmental protection and sustainable industrial and agricultural development; and
- strategic policies in the economics and social development fields, that may in some cases, at first glance, not appear to have as obvious a relationship as those policies described above.

It is important that these linkages be made in order to both realise benefits for effective chemicals management (through, for example, raising its stature as a priority issue within government), and to strengthen how policies are related and integrated government-wide. A coherent national chemicals policy also facilitates the allocation and mobilisation of financial resources.

Relevant environment- and health-related national policies and programmes include, *inter alia*:

- pollution prevention and control programmes;
- education;
- biodiversity conservation;
- sustainable development initiatives (such as UNDP's Capacity 21 programme⁸);
- clean water initiatives, agricultural extension services, occupational health and safety programmes; and
- sustainable tourism.

Strategic economic and social development policies can include, *inter alia*:

- communications;
- finance;
- foreign affairs (see below);
- international trade;
- justice;
- planning/development;
- science/technology; and
- transport.⁹

⁸ Capacity 21 is a UNDP initiative that was conceived in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and was developed in its aftermath. With a modest budget, Capacity 21 aims to help countries to make the fundamental changes needed to enable them to implement Agenda 21 and achieve sustainable development.

⁹ Also see Section 1.4.

Key Principle: The Precautionary Principle

In the context of chemicals, the Precautionary Principle responds to the complexity of environmental health problems, the lack of information and subsequent uncertainty about cause-effect relations, and the slow pace of testing and government decision-making. At its core, the principle calls for preventive, anticipatory measures to be taken when an activity raises threats of harm to the environment, wildlife, or human health, even if some cause-and-effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.

The Precautionary Principle has taken root in international statements of policy and legally binding agreements dealing with high-stakes environmental concerns of low scientific certainty. Key international agreements that incorporate this principle include:

- the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (Principle 15);
- the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer;
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- the Biosafety Protocol to the Convention on Biological Diversity; and
- the recently negotiated global Persistent Organic Pollutants Convention.

While there is no universally agreed upon, specific definition that fits all situations, acceptance of the principle nonetheless reflects a significant paradigm shift in the environment-development realm of decision making. (*Adapted from WWF*)

A small sample of the types of questions which can be raised in order to highlight potential linkages include: How can chemicals management programmes contribute to national efforts to promote pollution prevention and cleaner production, particularly within small and

medium-sized enterprises? What potential impacts might decisions made in the context of chemicals management have on regional and international trade? How might stronger management of chemicals positively affect the country's international image, corporate competitiveness and the market for its products? How can improvements in chemical safety enhance the health and quality of life of its citizens?

Linking Chemicals Management with Foreign Affairs Policy

Chemicals management issues are increasingly being addressed internationally through treaty negotiations, regional agreements and other instruments. International trends towards increased economic integration are being realised through regional and international agreements, many of which have a direct relationship to environmental (including chemicals-related) matters. Countries are often represented at these negotiations by officials from the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, or a combination of Foreign Affairs and other Ministries, from whom Foreign Affairs officials take advice and direction. It is advisable to have effective, two-way communication among key ministries in order that consistent and clear national positions on chemicals issues are expressed in such international fora. Committing to objectives for chemicals management set internationally should be preceded by careful planning and agreement that the resources and commitment to implement such agreements at the national level will be obtained. Development of a National Policy can be such a tool to ensure consistency. Commitments made by countries at the international level without parallel commitments domestically may weaken, undermine or even render ineffective international instruments.

Key Principle: The Right-to-Know Principle

In order to provide communities and the public at large with chemicals-related information, a number of governments have in recent years promoted the principle of Right-to-Know, which has also been endorsed in Agenda 21. The Right-to-Know Principle establishes the right of citizens to certain chemicals information, in general in relation to releases of chemicals into the environment, which might pose a potential risk to human health. The promotion of the Right-to-Know Principle in developing and industrialising countries as part of a National Chemicals Policy can be an effective tool for integrated chemicals management.

1.8 Ensuring Interest and Commitment of Decision-Makers

A wide range of national decision-makers are typically involved in policy and budgetary decisions that affect the sound management of chemicals, including ministries such as Agriculture, Environment, Health, Industry and Labour, as well as ministries of Finance, Planning and Foreign Affairs. The “buy-in” and support of such decision-makers will be needed to secure necessary human and financial resources. Such support is also needed to ensure that chemicals management concerns will be taken into account in the development of other policies and programmes that, although not of direct relevance, will ultimately impact on chemicals management concerns (e.g. economic policies, trade, agricultural policies). Generating support and commitment among decision-makers outside of government, such as industry executives, environmental advocates and community leaders, is also important. As is the case with the issue of a national policy on chemicals, ensuring interest and commitment of decision-makers is particularly helpful for mobilising financial resources.

Chemicals management in itself is often not among the top priorities of high-level decision-makers who may be focussed on other societal and development goals, such as economic and industrial development, agricultural production and public health protection, and whose decisions are impacted by driving forces, such as globalisation of trade, economics and international/regional policy commitments. There are, however, very real linkages between these concerns and the objectives of chemicals management. Therefore the key to generating support among decision-makers, including those within as well as outside of government, is to highlight these linkages and illustrate how their priorities and concerns relate to and are

impacted by chemicals management issues. For example, chemicals management can be shown to intersect with trade when one considers that ensuring a continued market for the country's export crops may depend on the country's ability to meet the pesticide residue limits of its major trading partners. Strong arguments can also be made to decision-makers of the costs of postponing necessary prevention and control activities for chemicals, citing examples such as significant chemicals accidents and disasters that affect human health and the environment.

Some possible means for raising awareness and generating support among decision-makers that countries may wish to consider include¹⁰:

- using the news media;
- organising publicity events;
- organising a national chemicals safety day;
- securing the commitment and involvement of one or several key leaders (e.g. respected scientist, politician, business leader) who will be able to bring others on board; and
- using the international policy context to focus national political attention on chemicals management issues (e.g. international conventions, Agenda 21 commitments).

¹⁰ Also see Section 2.4.

PART 2: DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED NATIONAL PROGRAMME: SUGGESTIONS FOR TAKING ACTION

This part of the document outlines a range of activities and provides practical (meaning realistic and implementable) suggestions for taking concrete actions towards developing and sustaining an integrated national programme for the sound management of chemicals. Each major section ends with a checklist of important points that, when taken together, form the basis of a workplan for countries wishing to follow some or all of the suggestions.

2.1 Preparing a National Profile

Introduction

A good understanding of the present situation in a country with regard to chemicals management is key to any effort to enhance co-ordination and integration of chemicals-related activities. Discussions during the early 1990s in various fora indicated, however, that only a few countries had prepared an authoritative document which could provide a good overview of chemicals management activities in the country and which was prepared through co-operation among all concerned ministries, as well as parties outside of government.

Taking these discussions into consideration, the IFCS, at its first meeting in April 1994 in Stockholm, recommended that “National Profiles to indicate the current capabilities and capacities for management of chemicals and the specific needs for improvement should be elaborated as soon as possible and not later than 1997”. At Forum II (February 1997, Ottawa), IFCS reiterated this recommendation and encouraged countries “to prepare and continuously update National Profiles, using the UNITAR/IOMC guidance document, with the involvement of all concerned parties, and to use conclusions based on these assessments to define priorities to be addressed through national action programmes for strengthening chemicals management”. Forum III (October, 2000, Salvador, Brazil) continued its support of the National Profile process by setting the goal for a majority of all countries to complete a National Profile, with multistakeholder input, by 2002.

What is a National Profile?

A National Chemicals Management Profile provides a comprehensive overview and assessment of the national administrative, institutional, legal and technical infrastructure for the management of chemicals¹¹. It includes information on, *inter alia*: chemical production, import, export and use; legal instruments and non-regulatory mechanisms; ministries, agencies and other institutions involved in managing chemicals; relevant activities of industry, public interest groups and the research sector; inter-ministerial commissions and co-ordinating mechanisms; data access and use; technical infrastructure; and international linkages.

¹¹ As defined in the UNITAR/IOMC guidance document entitled “*Preparing a National Profile to Assess the National Infrastructure for the Sound Management of Chemicals*”.

If carefully prepared, a National Profile:

- provides practical information on ongoing programmes and activities in the country which are concerned with the management of chemicals;
- helps to establish a process which can facilitate the exchange of information and dialogue among government ministries concerned with the sound management of chemicals, and to assist ministries in learning from experiences of each other as a basis for improved co-operation;
- facilitates the exchange of information and dialogue between government and parties outside of government such as industry, labour and the broad range of public interest organisations;
- facilitates the exchange of information at the international level with regard to the state and experience of chemicals management at the national level;
- provides a baseline against which progress or lack of progress can be judged; and
- results in an authoritative document which can serve as a basis for further efforts to strengthen an integrated national programme through involvement of all concerned parties.

As of January 2001, some 85 countries, including developing countries, countries with economies in transition and countries with advanced chemicals schemes, have prepared or were in the process of preparing a National Profile.

Principles for Preparing a National Profile

In accordance with the spirit of Agenda 21, the following general principles should guide countries when preparing a National Profile:

- a National Profile should be prepared at the country level through a process which involves all concerned ministries and other government institutions, as well as other interested national organisations (“by countries for countries”);
- a National Profile should provide a means for improved co-ordination among and within interested governmental and non-governmental organisations;
- a National Profile should provide a basis for cost-effective allocation of resources by including information on the resources available for the management of chemicals, including financial resources and human skills/capabilities, as well as an indication of resources needed for undertaking priority actions;
- a National Profile should initiate a process by which a country will be able to identify gaps in the existing legal, institutional, administrative and technical infrastructure related to chemical management and safety; and
- a National Profile should be a “living” document and periodically reviewed, and updated as appropriate, to remain an authoritative national document.

Using the National Profile as a Starting Point for Analysis

Many countries that have prepared a National Profile have found that it can serve as a good “jumping off” point for a national initiative to strengthen the chemicals management

infrastructure and related capacities. The National Profile provides a snapshot of the existing situation in the country, including details on existing problems, programmes in place, responsible bodies and officers, and ongoing activities.

The National Profile may reveal potential shortcomings and gaps in the current national chemicals management scheme including areas/topics which may warrant priority attention. For example, National Profiles prepared by countries revealed issues such as:

- insufficient co-ordination among and/or within concerned ministries;
- lack of access to and exchange of information among those involved in chemicals management;
- failure of existing sectoral policies to address all stages of the chemical life cycle;
- the need for better enforcement of existing legislation; and
- weaknesses in the technical infrastructure, e.g. lack of analytical capacities.

Thus, the preparation and review of the National Profile may be one of several starting points for taking action toward strengthening certain aspects of the national chemicals management infrastructure.

Using the National Profile as a Starting Point for Co-ordination and Collaboration

The preparation of the National Profile is also often the first time that the various concerned and interested parties within and outside of government have joined together on a common project. Because it serves as a tool for revealing existing challenges and opportunities, and because it has brings together many of the key actors, the National Profile process can provide an opportune basis for follow-up activities, or at least provide an opportunity for strategic dialogue. In some cases, countries have organised a National Priority Setting Workshop (see Section 2.3) or other national forum during which the outcomes of the National Profile process are discussed and priorities for action are identified and agreed..

Checklist

- involve all concerned ministries and other government institutions, as well as other interested national organisations, in preparing a National Profile
- National Profile is periodically reviewed, and updated as appropriate

2.2 Information Exchange on Relevant Initiatives/Activities

An important lesson learned by many countries as they prepared their national profiles was a lack of knowledge of activities in ministries that were duplicative of, or related to, activities in other ministries that were not adequately communicating with one another. A key, concrete achievement of any sustainable, integrated national programme for the sound management of chemicals is the development and ongoing use of mechanisms for information exchange on relevant initiatives and activities among the different ministries and stakeholders.

While overlapping mandates may not be resolved through information exchange, such

activities can provide a platform for working together in a co-ordinated way. For example, one ministry - such as an agricultural ministry - might encourage use of a particular pesticide because it kills insects effectively. The government's environment ministry may have evidence, however, that the same pesticide may harm the biodiversity of certain sensitive ecosystems located near areas where the pesticide is used. Additionally, the health ministry may have concerns about possible effects of the pesticide on human health. Sharing such information among ministries may lead to the agriculture ministry reconsidering its support of the pesticide, and may be a catalyst to find less harmful alternative pesticides. Without effective information exchange the same pesticide could have remained in use until major, avoidable damage to biodiversity or human health was uncovered. To take this hypothetical example one step further, all three ministries could then develop a common position for adoption outlining a plan for the pesticide to be banned and replaced by less harmful alternatives. This position could then be put forward at the next opportunity on the international stage - perhaps (if appropriate) as a candidate chemical to be added to the Rotterdam Convention's Prior Informed Consent Procedure.

Information exchange, then, involves sharing information about activities (such as policy discussions, research results and decisions) within a Ministry, and relevant information generated internationally (from, for example, other countries or international organisations), or from stakeholders (such as industry and public interest organisations).

Mechanisms for Information Exchange

Mechanisms for information exchange on chemicals issues that a country might consider span a broad range. They include, *inter alia*:

- regular updating meetings (at mid- to high-levels), on a topical basis, among ministries with similar mandates/responsibilities;
- broadening circulation of official correspondence/decisions on chemicals issues;
- technical means such as a common chemicals web site, an internal intranet site, and/or an email "listserve";
- "hard copy" activities summaries in bulletin, newsletter, or other forms;
- regular interministerial workshops, with stakeholder representation, on issues of common interest.

Co-ordinated, effective information exchange is essential for countries who would like to complete, in an effective way, the further activities outlined below.

Checklist

- consider, develop, test and refine tools for information exchange a regular part of how ministries conduct their regular business.

2.3 Developing and Co-ordinating Priorities

Another key activity that a country could consider for an integrated national programme is the development and co-ordination of priorities. Information exchange activities that have taken place in many countries as part of their National Profile processes have often led to at least a preliminary priority-setting exercise. These priority-setting processes have often been facilitated through a National Co-ordinating Platform.

A *priority* is something which is given prior (or superior) attention; to *prioritise* is to arrange in order of importance. Building upon these definitions, a priority in the present context is considered to be a topic/area in which the level of interest (e.g. due to its importance/urgency) and level of support (e.g. organisations and people willing to commit their time and resources) are sufficiently high that a decision is usually taken to initiate action. Other topics may also be considered important, but if there is no commitment to act upon them, they have not achieved priority status. This is important to keep in mind when setting priorities, otherwise one runs the risk of ending up with topics/issues on the list for which there is no real commitment to act. This will inevitably lead to a situation in which no action is taken, which in turn may lead to discouragement among involved parties and may even jeopardise the viability of the overall initiative. It is important to recognise that priorities exist at different levels: within ministries, within stakeholder groups and national priorities related to foreign affairs.

While there may be numerous possible activities which could be undertaken to strengthen an integrated national programme, it will never be possible to address all of them at one time. Thus, setting priorities is an important part of the planning process. A priority-setting process can be undertaken regardless of whether or not the country has developed a formal national policy. If such a policy has been agreed to, however, it should serve as the framework within which the setting of specific priorities for action should be undertaken. If a national policy does not yet exist, the priority-setting process takes on even greater importance, as it will determine the direction and focus of the country's efforts in the coming months and years to strengthen its capacities and programmes for managing chemicals. Such a process also provides an opportunity to strengthen information exchange mechanisms within government - a fundamental part of any scheme for integrated chemicals management. In many cases, the development of a national policy and the setting of specific priorities may be undertaken as part of the same process.

Entry Points for Setting Priorities

Experience gained in the context of some 15 national priority setting workshops organised by countries around the world with the support of UNITAR have revealed certain patterns concerning how countries have chosen to initiate national action on particular aspects of chemicals management. Also, the IFCS/UNITAR National Profile Survey published in 1997 provides an indicative listing of topics for which countries have taken or were planning to take national action. These experiences documented that Action Plans are sometimes developed for relatively "narrow" or "horizontal" areas, e.g. the development of a mechanism for information exchange among ministries and other interested actors at the national level. In

other cases, the entry point for national action may be a comprehensive implementation of an international convention, such as the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants or ILO Convention 170 which addresses chemical safety at the workplace. Such a comprehensive approach may entail the need to divide the topic covered by the respective convention into more manageable “sub-goals” which can be considered to be “stand-alone” goals or Action Plans (see Part 3, Section 3.3, Phase II). In the case of POPs, for example, this may require the development of a series of “stand-alone” Action Plans addressing different POPs categories including pesticides, unwanted by-products, and industrial chemicals respectively, under the overall umbrella of a national POPs Action Plan.

The following sections attempt to group various entry points for action in a way that illustrates the wide range of choices open to countries. In reading the following four sections, it should be kept in mind that the four groups are not mutually exclusive. Also, the boundaries of each group may not always be clear. The classification below is merely meant to be a reflection of the different ways that countries have decided to take action for sound management in the past. It is intended to contribute to the task of identifying, setting and acting on priority issues as a step towards integrated chemicals management.

Initiating Action on a Particular Priority Chemical

In many countries, individual chemicals or groups of chemicals - “priority chemicals” - have been singled out for national action, in particular for risk reduction and/or risk elimination activities. For example, Slovenia singled out asbestos when setting national priorities in 1997, among other priorities, as a chemical which required targeted risk reduction action. Similarly, a country which participates in the Rotterdam Convention may decide that national import decisions need to be made on substances included in the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) procedure, or that steps need to be taken to address a certain chemical that is causing environmental problems under local conditions of use. Additional chemical-specific entry points include POPs and other persistent toxic substances, asbestos (an insulating material whose trade has been challenged on health grounds in the international sphere), lead (still used in gasoline and other products in some countries), arsenic and mercury.

Experiences gained in the past indicate that countries with a relatively weak national chemicals management scheme, as a result of inadequacies with their infrastructure, face significant challenges when they attempt to take action on a particular chemical or group of chemicals. An example of this would be a country that lacks a basic chemicals law, and therefore would not be able to adequately or effectively take legal action to restrict or ban the use of a particular chemical without first developing and passing a basic (and broader) chemicals law. For such reasons, many developing countries focus their initial efforts on developing the basic building blocks of a national chemical management system as outlined in Programme Area E of Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 (see below).

Initiating Action to Strengthen Basic Elements of a National Chemicals Management Infrastructure

For countries in which chemicals management is not at an advanced stage, the development

of a basic infrastructure for managing chemicals is likely to be one of its most important goals. This observation is supported by the types of priorities chosen in many developing countries in the context of their national priority setting workshops. These priorities for action are often those which are described by *Programme Area E* of Chapter 19 as “core element[s] of a national chemicals management system” and include:

- adequate legislation;
- information generation, gathering, use and dissemination;
- capacity for appropriate hazard and risk assessment, interpretation and communication;
- establishment of risk management policy, including evaluation of safer chemical alternatives and non-chemical options;
- capacity for implementation and enforcement of laws;
- capacity for rehabilitation of contaminated sites and poisoned persons;
- education, awareness raising and training programmes; and
- capacity to respond to emergencies.

Taking national action in any of the above areas is, however, not only of interest to countries where a basic infrastructure for chemicals management does not yet exist. Often, countries with rather advanced schemes realise, for example through preparation of a National Profile, that some of the above topics require attention due to an overlap of activities conducted by various ministries. This is often the case in the area of legislation, where, due to the sectoral approaches of the past, existing legislation for specific stages of the chemical life cycle may be duplicative and overlapping, while legislation may be nonexistent for other stages. The entry point for taking action would therefore still be “adequate legislation”, but the focus would be on harmonising and streamlining existing laws and regulation, rather than developing new legislation.¹²

Initiating Action on a Specific Chemicals Management Instrument or Subject Area

A third “point of entry” for taking action by many countries addresses a range of specific instruments or chemicals management subject areas, which address a specific and important purpose. They can also be considered key building blocks of an integrated national programme, but in a more narrow and specialised sense compared to the rather broad areas addressed through Programme Area E of Chapter 19.

Examples of specific instruments, all of which require careful planning and consideration prior to implementation, include:

- pesticides registration schemes;
- inventories of chemicals in use;
- a framework national law on chemicals; and
- Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs).

¹² In 1998, IPCS and UNITAR released a guidance document entitled “Key Elements of a National Programme for Chemicals Management and Safety.” The document proposes a framework for a cross-sectoral, comprehensive approach to chemicals management. It is provided as a resource for countries to be used in their efforts to establish, update or implement national programmes and policies related to chemicals management.

Chemical management subject areas are closely related to the instrument concept introduced above and cover national action in areas such as:

- pesticide poisoning prevention and control;
- accident preparedness and response; and
- classification and labelling.

For many of the instruments and chemicals management subject areas mentioned, a wealth of experience is available from countries which have experimented with these approaches in the past. For certain areas, such as pesticides registration and PRTRs, significant expertise is also available through international organisations.

Initiating Action to Implement a Particular International Agreement

The growing concern associated with chemicals has led to a significant increase in the number of international agreements dealing with chemicals (examples include the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, various conventions addressing chemical safety in the workplace, the recently completed Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and recently completed negotiations for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs); see also section 1.3 and Annex A). While some of the conventions remain rather vague with regard to required implementation arrangements in participating countries, others, such as the POPs Convention, specifically require the development of Action Plans (APs) (known as, Article 7 of the Stockholm Convention, Implementation Plans).

Particularly (though not exclusively) for those agreements that require the development of APs, countries are likely to quickly realise that some of the convention implementation issues closely relate to more general aspects of chemicals management as introduced above, e.g. development of a sound legislative framework, or the establishment of an information exchange system. Therefore, while it may be politically important to emphasise and “focus” on the implementation of a particular agreement, it is ultimately the existence of a core chemicals management infrastructure and the implementation of specific instruments and programmes which will allow a country to comply with international obligations under various agreements - finding a good balance between the two is a key challenge and will determine which entry points will be selected.

Organising the Priority-Setting Process

Recognising Existing Sectoral Priorities

It is important to take into account ongoing work of relevant parties when identifying priorities. It may not be necessary to develop new priorities for action or new areas of work: a reiteration and renewed commitment to ongoing work may often be a pragmatic way forward. In fact, a failure to take into account ongoing work during the priority setting process may diminish the interest and commitment of those who are involved in existing projects.

Considering the Existing Chemicals Management Framework from a Life Cycle Perspective

Another useful approach is to look into how chemicals are managed at each stage of the life cycle (also see diagram under 1.2). Such an exercise can aid in identifying possible gaps, weaknesses or inconsistencies which may need to be addressed. Developing a more integrated national programme means ensuring not only that all stages of the life cycle are sufficiently managed, but also that the activities of the range of parties responsible for sound management at the various stages are co-ordinated and consistent. Thus, examining the existing situation from a life cycle perspective may serve to elucidate important opportunities for improvement, and in particular those which stand to benefit from a multi-sectoral problem-solving approach.

Establishment of Priorities Through a National Priority Setting Workshop

Defining the priorities to be addressed through decentralised activities which contribute to integrated chemicals management, and defining the structure to facilitate communication and action concerning those key concerns may be the two main objectives of a National Priority Setting Workshop. These can serve as components of the planning process for an integrated national programme (often following preparation of a National Profile). Broad participation among all interested and affected parties is crucial to the success of a workshop of this type. Workshop participants should be of sufficiently high authority to effectively engage in priority-setting and decision-making and be a catalyst for action within their respective organisations.

A National Profile, if available, will serve as an important reference for identifying and prioritising the areas of chemicals management to be further considered for action. The input of the various interested and affected parties participating in the workshop will also aid in identifying areas of priority concern. In order to facilitate an effective priority-setting process, an appropriate workshop format should be selected. The UNITAR/IOMC document entitled *Organising a National Workshop on Chemicals Management and Safety: A Guidance Document* provides additional information and suggestions.

Key outputs of the National Priority Setting Workshop¹³ include:

- a list of chemicals management issues to be addressed;
- a membership list of key stakeholders and ministries;
- a work plan and time frame for planning and implementation;
- the development of an organisational structure and operating procedures of a National Platform or similar structure; and
- actions for ongoing follow-up, including e.g. proposed date and location of the next meeting of a body charged with follow-up activities.

¹³ Also see Annex D.

Keeping the Number of Priorities Realistic

Generally speaking, priority setting involves identifying a broad range of options based on input from stakeholders and ministries. This initial list is then narrowed down and prioritised according to agreed criteria. Decisions need to be made on which and how many of the items that appear at the top of the list should be slated for immediate action. This last step is generally a matter of available human and financial resources. Issues/topics for which resources are not currently available are not forgotten, but rather are set aside so that they can be taken up at a later point in time.

A key to this process is the identification of the criteria to be used in deciding what is a priority and what is not. Some possible criteria might include, for example:

- Feasibility - Can the problem/issue be effectively addressed, taking into consideration existing or readily obtainable capacities and resources?
- Time frame - Will benefits/results be Realise within an acceptable time frame? There may be good reasons to select at least some issues for which early successes can be assured.
- Potential Impact - Will addressing the problem/issue have a significant positive impact?
- Stakeholder Commitment - Is there sufficient interest and commitment among stakeholders, particularly those whose co-operation and efforts would be needed in order to successfully tackle the issue?
- Potential for Support - If it is an issue that is likely to require external support and expertise, are there international organisations and/or other outside parties that are prepared to provide guidance and assistance?
- Assessment - Will it be possible to track or measure progress achieved in addressing the problem/issue?

The identification of decision-making criteria and their application to the various options on the table should be undertaken in a transparent way and with the involvement of interested and affected parties. Once the criteria are agreed, the various options can be compared as to how well they measure up. This may often require additional information, thus it is important to have the involvement of those who are working in relevant areas and who have first-hand knowledge of circumstances, existing constraints, etc. In some case, the information needed to answer criteria-related questions - for example, what are the potential resource implications of addressing this topic? - will be lacking or difficult to obtain. In such cases, drawing upon the expert judgement of the key ministries and agencies involved in chemicals management and others involved in the priority-setting process will be particularly important.

Once priorities have been selected, it is important to communicate these to all interested and affected parties. This can help generate interest and support among those whose input may be needed to address the selected topics/issues. Some suggestions on developing co-ordinated Action Plans to address selected priority topics are provided in Part 3.

Checklist

- recognise existing sectoral priorities
- review international agreements/policy recommendations and related national obligations
- consider the existing chemicals management framework from a life cycle perspective
- hold a National Priority Setting Workshop
- identify criteria for deciding which issues are priorities

2.4 Outreach & Communication

Obtaining the support and understanding of relevant groups and the general public is critical to ensure the success and sustainability of an integrated national programme. Developing and implementing a communications/outreach strategy can help to sustain such interest and support. The primary aims of such a strategy are to communicate key developments and achievements of the integrated national programme to interested parties and to allow for input from stakeholder groups as the process evolves. A communication/outreach strategy is likely to entail activities at various levels. For example, efforts might be undertaken to disseminate information to the general public on national chemicals management goals and initiatives, to inform certain stakeholder groups (e.g. industry, workers) of progress made in addressing topics in which they have a particular interest, and/or to provide information to the international community on national capacity building initiatives and achievements.

There are numerous tools and approaches that can be used for communication and outreach: each country will have to find the approaches that best meet its needs. For example, a multi-stakeholder committee or other active body may decide to send periodic letters or arrange meetings with certain key groups to inform them of progress made and encourage their continued involvement and support. Such activities are likely to have close links to resource mobilisation efforts. Other means of outreach might include providing brief project updates through relevant publications (e.g. newsletters of professional associations, industry or workers' organisations) and making use of the news media (e.g. newspapers, radio, television) in order to reach out to the general public. Statements by high-level officials aimed at publicising progress towards specific milestones (e.g. reduction in illegal importations, improvements in worker safety) can be particularly effective for attracting media coverage.

In addition to ongoing outreach activities, participants in these efforts may also wish to consider more formal means for disseminating results and assessing progress on a periodic basis. Issuing a national report on the integrated national programme every 2-3 years can be a useful means for communicating key priorities and achievements to stakeholder groups. The National Profile, and its periodic updates, can also serve as an important vehicle for providing in-depth information on the status of the national chemicals management infrastructure and needs for improvement. A national chemicals management Internet site on which information on ongoing activities is posted and through which various groups can exchange information on ongoing activities and concerns is another potentially valuable approach.

The communications and outreach strategy should also address the need for interaction and two-way communication with concerned parties. Events, such as national or regional workshops, interministerial meetings, and consultations with industry and other non-governmental groups, are some of the approaches to be considered in this regard.

In many countries, issues of chemicals management may not have a high profile. This can pose a particular challenge when seeking to generate interest and support among the public and stakeholder groups. Thus, finding ways to help various groups and sectors of society understand how their interests and concerns relate to sound chemicals management may become an important component of the communication/outreach strategy. Participants may also wish to seek opportunities to highlight linkages between sound chemicals management and broader societal goals, such as sustainable economic development and environmental and public health protection. Making a strong case that sound chemicals management is essential for reaching such societal goals will help not only in generating political support but also in the context of resource mobilisation efforts.

Organising Strategic Briefings Sessions

One potentially successful method for communication and outreach is through “strategic briefings”. The targets for such briefings include high-level decision-makers, the media (see below) and the general public. Such sessions could include, *inter alia*, statements on the chemicals-related activities being undertaken; a request for public input/involvement; and a “press release” summarising the key messages that the participants wish to convey. In addition, briefings targeted at key decision-makers could be internal, held in advance of public briefings, and use “briefing notes” outlining basic information and points that require high-level decision-making (see Annex E).

Involving the Media

The media are an important mechanism for disseminating information on chemicals issues. Any integrated national programme for the sound management of chemicals could involve the development of a media strategy on particular issues of relevance; planning aimed at predicting issues that may come to public (and therefore media) attention in the future (e.g. a chemicals accident, spills, outbreaks of illness or other emergencies); and the development of media “products”, such as press releases. Press releases are key tools for conveying important messages about chemicals issues (see Annex F). Additionally, meeting with editorial boards and other key decision-makers in the media about programme activities can help to garner public support.

Developing and Disseminating Simple Information Products

A press release is an example of a relatively simple information product designed to convey key messages for priority topics of chemicals management. There are many other simple information products that can be developed that are not necessarily media-related. Brochures on chemicals issues written in local languages and in relatively simple terms have proven to be effective tools in many countries. Video, public service announcements and radio or

television interview “scripts” all have the advantage of reaching those who are not literate or otherwise easily accessible. Posters, maps and other graphic information can be developed and posted in public places such as post offices, clinics, community centres, town halls and schools.

Checklist

- consider tools and approaches that can be used for communication and outreach
- organise strategic briefing sessions
- involve the media to assist in disseminating information
- develop and disseminate simple information products

2.5 Mobilising National and External Financial Resources

The issue of resources is likely to be a particularly challenging one, and should be addressed early on and throughout the process of developing and sustaining an integrated national programme and developing specific Action Plans. Resources are needed to support ongoing implementation of an integrated national programme and activities, as well as for specific projects such as Action Plan implementation. Experiences suggest that resource mobilisation efforts that are well planned, undertaken on an ongoing basis, and with sufficiently high-level backing will have the greatest chances of success. Thus, it is suggested that a resource mobilisation strategy is developed for pursuing support both from national sources as well as from bi-lateral donors and multi-lateral organisations.

While it is recognised that external resources may be needed to move certain projects forward, the commitment of national/local resources is essential. By committing resources (e.g. funding, staff time, data), officials/organisations demonstrate their interest in and support for the initiative. This commitment bodes well for successful implementation as well as for long-term sustainability. Initiatives that are solely funded from external sources may run the risk of falling flat once the external support has ceased.

Understanding the Budgetary and Resource Allocation Process

A critical starting point for a resource mobilisation strategy is to understand how budgetary and resource allocation decisions are made. Often those who are directly involved in chemicals management activities may not be closely involved in such processes and decisions, and thus a concerted effort may be needed to gather information in this regard. A first step might be to contact the relevant parties in the Ministry of Finance, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, budget offices of relevant line ministries (e.g. Environment, Health, Agriculture), the national legislature, and other relevant bodies in order to gain a thorough understanding of the process and the respective roles of the various actors. It is important not only to understand the official procedures, but also to gain insight into how budgetary proposals are typically initiated and what factors can help to support favourable outcomes. Gaining an appreciation for political priorities and how these affect resource allocation decisions can be particularly important. Understanding the time frame for such activities is

also crucial.

In addition to understanding the national budgetary and resource allocation system, it is also important to understand how external donors allocate resources. Each donor entity (e.g. bilateral assistance organisation, multilateral bank) is likely to have specific application procedures through which countries can request support, as well as certain organisational objectives that influence its decisions as to what types of projects it will fund.¹⁴ It may be desirable to develop a list of all of the relevant external donors, in particular those with offices and activities in the country, and seek information on their relevant procedures as well as what types of projects each donor entity is most likely to support. A list of activities currently being funded by the respective donor agencies could also be of interest. To ensure that such information is available on an ongoing basis, setting up a process for periodically gathering/exchanging information on donor activities and priorities should be considered. Such a process could also be used to facilitate better co-ordination of funding requests.

Developing a Resource Mobilisation Strategy

Parallel to understanding the procedures and roles of the various donor entities, it is important to develop and maintain working contacts with the relevant officials in such organisations (see Annex G). As discussed below, keeping external assistance agencies informed of national priorities, needs and achievements, and otherwise ensuring effective channels of communication, can increase the likelihood that such entities will respond favourably to requests for support.

Obtaining necessary resources can require considerable time and perseverance. To ensure that such efforts are carried out in an effective and sustained manner, it is suggested that a committee with representation from concerned ministries, if it has been established, or a relevant agency develop and implement a resource mobilisation strategy. Such a strategy should be based on a solid understanding of the relevant procedures for requesting and obtaining support from national and external sources. It should address what resources are needed, from what sources such resources will be sought, what actions are to be taken to this end, and who/what entities are responsible. The box below provides a sample outline of what a national resource mobilisation strategy might contain.

It is important that representatives of key ministries, agencies and project managers work closely together, as these individuals will be in the best position to determine what resources and types of support are needed to ensure the success of their respective projects and initiatives. In addition to identifying what resources are needed and from where these might be obtained, is important to think about how to increase the likelihood of success. Presenting project proposals that are tailored to the interests and priorities of those in a position to provide support can be particularly useful in this regard. Each organisation, ministry or external donor has its own objectives and priorities. Therefore, they must not only be convinced of the need for and viability of the proposed project, but they will also want to see

¹⁴ At time of publication, UNITAR is finalising a series of "Fact Sheets on Bilateral Assistance Agencies" which are available for interested countries.

how the project will benefit them and contribute towards their own organisational goals. It is the job of those seeking support to identify such linkages and to develop a strategy that will convince potential supporters to become involved.

Resource mobilisation is an ongoing task, and one that will change over time with the evolving nature and focus of the country's capacity building efforts. Thus, the development and implementation of a resource mobilisation strategy is not a one-time undertaking, but rather an integral and ongoing component of an integrated national programme.

Key Issues to Consider for a Process to Develop and Implement a Financial Resource Mobilisation Strategy

Background and Overview

- importance of a financial resource mobilisation strategy
- key policy context (international, regional, national)
- economic status of the sound management of chemicals worldwide
- donor country commitments, related recipient conditions

Planning a Financial Resource Mobilisation Strategy Process

- problems/challenges
- lessons learned
- are chemicals a recognised priority?
- are chemicals a priority issue for external assistance?
- is there a national policy on procuring assistance?

Developing a Financial Resource Mobilisation Strategy

- national context of strategy
- goals and sub-goals
- activities to attain goals and sub-goals

Implementing a Financial Resource Mobilisation Strategy

- raising awareness
- obtaining commitment
- ongoing evaluation of implementation and efficacy
- feedback of lessons learned into strategy

Checklist

- understand the budgetary and resource allocation process
- understand how external donors allocate resources
- set up a process for periodically gathering/exchanging information on donor activities and priorities
- establish a committee with representation from concerned ministries to develop and implement resource mobilisation strategy
- ensure that representatives of key ministries, agencies and project managers work closely together

2.6 Assessing Progress at Regular Intervals

From time to time, perhaps every 2-3 years, it is important to take a step back to consider the direction that the integrated national programme is headed, to reassess national priorities, and to consider whether ongoing initiatives are continuing to meet the country's evolving needs. Each country will have to decide how it will go about this reassessment and at what point in time. Various measurable objectives (as well as specific means for measuring their attainment) should have been identified in a variety of contexts during integrated national programme planning, such as: setting national priorities, designing national policies and laws, preparing Action Plans and developing Terms of Reference on integrating, "horizontal issues". Some of the suggestions on initiating a national dialogue, defining milestones and setting priorities that were discussed in the sections above may be of relevance at this stage.

Assessing Results of Ongoing Activities

By this stage in the process, numerous activities will have been initiated to address various aspects of the integrated national programme, many with a direct link to the priorities set at the beginning of the country's efforts to develop/implement an integrated national programme. An effort should be made to find out what has been achieved through these various and largely decentralised activities. In the ideal case, there will have been ongoing communication between the active bodies. These individuals and groups should have also conducted evaluations of their activities (see Part 3) and thus should be in a position to demonstrate the extent to which they have been able to implement their Action Plans and what the results have been.

By gathering information on achievements made and assessing to what extent the initially defined national priorities have been addressed, the active bodies should be able to get an accurate sense of progress made and remaining challenges. The aim of this "taking stock" exercise is not to highlight areas in which results have fallen short of expectations. Rather, it is to ensure that the process of strengthening the integrated national programme is an iterative one, and that it is able to respond and adapt to changing circumstances and needs.

Updating the National Profile

Updating the National Profile should be a cornerstone of the evaluation and re-assessment process. The National Profile provides a means for systematically documenting the state of the national chemicals management infrastructure, including legal, administrative, technical and organisational aspects. It also can provide a useful basis for a national dialogue to revisit national needs and priorities.

Convening a National Dialogue

Some countries may find it useful at this stage to reconvene interested and affected parties to review the progress that has been achieved to-date, to revisit the national priorities and revise them as needed, and to set the stage for the next phase of efforts to further develop and implement the integrated national programme. Experiences indicate that continuing the national dialogue through holding such an event regularly can be useful, in that it helps to keep stakeholders informed, may serve to maintain their interest in the process and can ensure that changing needs and priorities of all parties are taken into account. Annex D provides some highlights of the experiences gained by a developing country in organising such an event.

Checklist

- assess results of ongoing activities
- update National Profile
- convene a national dialogue to review progress achieved to-date, revisit the national priorities and revise as needed, and set the stage for further efforts

PART 3: DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN FOR A PRIORITY TOPIC OF NATIONAL CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT

3.1 The Importance of Action Plans

The purpose of an Action Plan (AP) is to provide a clear basis or “blueprint” for the implementation of activities aimed at addressing an identified priority issue. This type of planning tool is particularly useful when an initiative might involve a range of groups and individuals who may not be accustomed to working together and who represent divergent interests and perspectives. A well-prepared AP outlines the specific goal and indicators of success to be achieved, related activities to be undertaken, associated responsibilities of the participants, time frames, and resources and evaluation details. It is important that an AP is not seen, however, as a snapshot of a particular situation or a one-time event. Rather, the AP can be modified as necessary as part of an iterative process.

The development of an AP will likely be initiated by a ministry or government agency (hereinafter called the lead organisation) concerned with the sound management of chemicals. Working in partnership with non-governmental organisations can also bring benefits to the process, while still maintaining full governmental involvement. In any case, important components of any AP process are sound interministerial co-ordination and stakeholder involvement. This becomes particularly apparent when an AP is being prepared for a priority topic of national chemicals management which is cross-sectoral in nature. Ministries concerned with, or who have a role in the management of chemicals can include Ministries of Agriculture, Customs, Environment, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Health, Industry, Justice, Labour, Planning, and Transportation (see Section 1.5). Other governmental entities which may play an initiating role include central agencies or councils responsible for the development and implementation of laws, regulations, policies and activities related to chemicals management throughout their life cycle, and/or aspects of pollution prevention and control.

What is Planning and Why is it Important?

Working with large and potentially diverse groups to co-ordinate on a particular initiative and ensuring that success is achieved can be challenging and complex. The AP process can help to make it easier to co-ordinate activities and secure more predictable results. More specifically, planning involves the establishment of clear and precise intentions (and the activities that will have to take place to accomplish them) in order to reach a final, stated goal. The goal may involve the solution of a problem or the achievement of some state or condition different from the present one.

Potential benefits of sound planning can include:

- increased transparency in planning and implementing a project;
- increased likelihood of mobilising funding for a project;
- optimum use of resources (e.g. time and money);

- improved results and performance;
- sustained momentum and focus; and
- increased teamwork and commitment.

The Action Plan Process

The suggested AP process includes a series of preparatory tasks and considerations and a number of subsequent phases that constitute the core of the process. Preparatory tasks include: understanding the context for the AP, identifying partners within the government, developing a stakeholder involvement plan, establishing an AP Task Force, and writing Terms of Reference, workplan and budget for developing the AP. Once these preparatory tasks and considerations are addressed, key subsequent phases (as illustrated in the figure below; see also Annex I) include:

Development Phases¹⁵

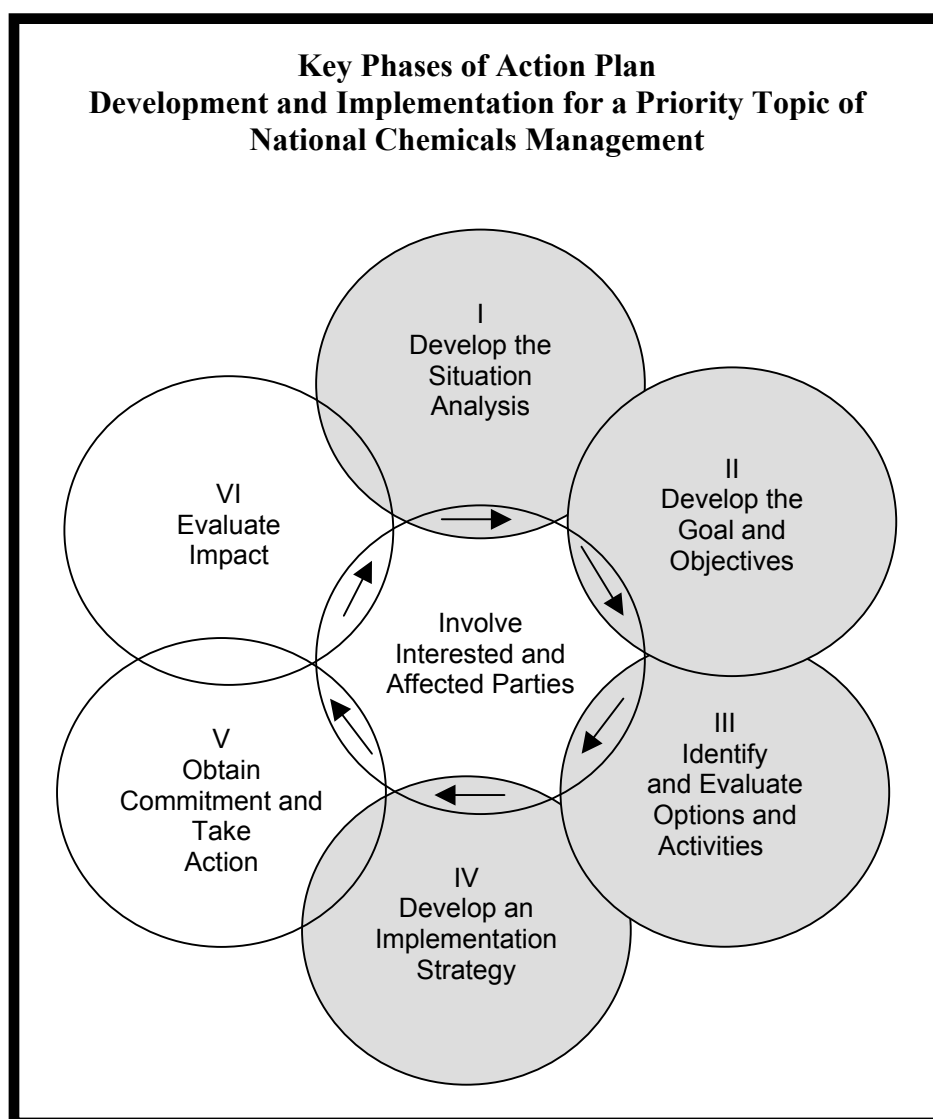
- analysing the situation and problems regarding the issue for which an AP is being developed;
- developing the goal and indicators of success;
- identifying, evaluating and selecting options and activities to achieve the goal;
- developing a strategy for implementing such activities;

Implementation Phases

- obtaining commitment for the AP and implementing activities (including monitoring the implementation of activities); and
- evaluating the impact of the AP and (if necessary) taking further action.

Developing and implementing an AP is discussed in detail in the UNITAR document, *Guidance on Action Plan Development for Sound Chemicals Management*.

¹⁵ UNITAR's role in the UNITAR/IOMC Programme, *Developing and Sustaining an Integrated National Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals*, primarily addresses the development phases (I to IV).



* Phases I to IV are referred to in this document as “development phases” while Phases V and VI are referred to as “implementation phases”.

Entry Points for Taking Action

Action Plans are sometimes developed for “horizontal” areas, e.g. the development of a mechanism for information exchange among ministries and other interested actors at the national level. In other cases, the entry point for national action may be the comprehensive implementation of an international convention, such as the Stockholm POPs Convention or ILO Convention 170 which addresses chemical safety in the workplace. The following categories illustrate the wide range of entry points through which countries may wish to initiate action¹⁶:

(1) Initiating action on a particular priority chemical: such action may involve a single chemical chosen as a result of a priority-setting process or a list of chemicals targeted for action as the result of an international treaty.

(2) Initiating action to strengthen basic elements of a national chemicals management infrastructure: strengthening or developing basic infrastructure for chemicals management, such as a basic chemicals law, information generation, gathering, use and dissemination, capacity for implementation and enforcement of laws, or capacity to respond to emergencies.

(3) Initiating action on a specific chemicals management instrument or subject area: many countries have taken action concerning specific instruments or chemicals management subject areas which address a specific and important purpose, such as pesticides registration schemes, inventories of chemicals in use, pesticide poisoning prevention and control, or classification, labelling and hazard communication.

(4) Initiating action to implement a particular international agreement: the growing concern regarding chemicals had led to a significant increase in the number of international agreements dealing with chemicals. While it may be politically important to emphasise and “focus” on the implementation of a particular agreement, it is ultimately the existence of a core chemicals management infrastructure and the implementation of specific instruments and programmes which will allow a country to comply with international obligations under various agreements. Finding a good balance between the two is a key challenge and will determine which entry points will be selected.

3.2 Getting Started: Preparatory Tasks and Considerations

Thinking through preparatory tasks and considerations will help to ensure that a solid foundation has been laid for initiating the key AP development and implementation phases. The lead organisation may wish to begin by considering consulting sources outside of the lead organisation regarding the development of these preparatory tasks and considerations. Such sources may include government ministries, industry, public interest non-governmental organisations and academia.

¹⁶ It should be kept in mind that the four categories listed are not mutually exclusive. Also, the boundaries of each category may not always be clear. The classification is merely meant to be a reflection of the different ways that countries have decided to take action for the sound management of chemicals in the past.

Working through the steps in this section will help to identify potential participants and assist with the preparation of Terms of Reference, workplan and budget for the AP development phases. Thinking through preparatory considerations and committing them to paper will provide unambiguous guidance to participants concerning specific elements (such as which ministries will participate) and mechanisms for the process (such as how decisions will be made).

Understanding the Context of the Action Plan

It is important to develop a clear understanding of the issue for which an AP is being developed. This involves identifying the motives or “driving forces” for initiating action and key issues regarding the priority topic for which an AP is being developed.

Driving forces for initiating action can include:

- the ratification of an international convention;
- a national decision to implement a programme, e.g. a Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR);
- identification, through a National Profile or other process, of critical gaps in chemicals management structure (e.g. lack of testing for pesticide residues in food); and
- an accident or other event that led to media/public attention being focussed on a particular issue of chemicals management.

Developing an understanding of the key issues regarding the priority topic can provide a critical foundation for the AP process and can help to confidently communicate intentions to decision-makers. This may involve determining, for example, whether the topic has international status and if certain legislation or infrastructure might be required. Such thinking can help to provide an initial overview of the AP, help to guide the identification of appropriate partners within the government and public, and serve as a starting point for the situation analysis in Phase I.

Identifying Partners within the Government

It is necessary to identify partners within the government who have the potential to become involved in the AP development phases. Those potential partners who have mandates directly related to the AP are the most obvious and easiest to identify. There may be partners, however, for whom the relationship is not as immediately obvious. For example, officials from a Ministry of Finance may have no direct mandate related to chemicals management, but may make decisions that have profound implications for the success of an AP. If a forum exists to enhance dialogue and co-ordination at the interministerial level (see Section 1.5), it may provide an effective mechanism to identify potential partners.

It is also important at this stage to begin to identify possible avenues for financial support for AP implementation. While financial commitment for implementing the AP is not critical nor likely at this juncture, identifying possible support and raising awareness of AP development early on can help to pave the way for more focussed solicitation for support following

development of the AP. Awareness-raising can include providing information regarding the priority topic for which an AP is being prepared, what opportunities the development of the AP can provide, and the implications and responsibilities it holds for those who will be involved in and affected by its implementation. The “buy in” and support of decision-makers will be needed to secure necessary human and financial resources for development and implementation of the AP.

Developing a Stakeholder Involvement Plan

While not all interested and affected parties (hereinafter called stakeholders) will need to be directly involved in developing and implementing an AP, it is nevertheless important to understand who the stakeholders are for a given issue and to ensure that their perspectives and concerns are taken into account. Involving key stakeholders may also be of practical relevance, since their actions and commitment will likely be essential to the implementation and success of the AP.

The lead organisation should consider stakeholder involvement issues, such as: identifying potential stakeholders and their interests; identifying the context and mechanisms for stakeholder involvement (see Annex C); and inviting stakeholders to participate. The specific nature of stakeholder involvement in the AP process depends on a number of factors, including the nature and context of the issue, the time frame for developing the AP, the legal mandate within which the lead organisation operates, and the availability of resources for stakeholder involvement.

Establishing an AP Task Force

Part of thinking through preparatory tasks and considerations includes the formation of an AP Task Force or other body responsible for AP development. Selection of participants for the AP Task Force would be based on “identifying partners within government” and “developing a stakeholder involvement plan” (as outlined above). The Task Force should meet early on in the AP process and should either develop or approve the Terms of Reference, workplan and budget.

Developing Draft Terms of Reference, Workplan and Budget

Terms of Reference should comprise brief, but sufficiently descriptive operational details on various administrative and organisational issues pertaining to the AP development phases. Such issues include: who are the participants in the AP Task Force, how the Task Force will work together, and how decisions will be made. A workplan sets out the details for the AP development phases, such as milestones, sequence of events and timelines, and expected outputs. Examples of substantive outputs, which are outlined in AP phases I to IV (see Section 3.3), include, *inter alia*: the situation analysis, goal, indicators of success and options. The budget should provide a detailed estimate concerning the cost of various components of the workplan for which resources are needed.

In developing draft Terms of Reference, workplan and budget, key decisions will need to be

made on relevant:

- expected outcomes;
- resources required;
- timelines;
- sequence of events;
- responsibilities; and
- monitoring procedures.

Developing draft Terms of Reference, workplan and budget will help to further define the AP and help ensure that each member of the Task Force is in agreement concerning important administrative and organisational details relevant to developing an AP.

3.3 Key Phases of Action Plan Development and Implementation

Developing an AP should be seen as a logical and systematic procedure designed to highlight the potential for success in the various areas of planning and management, and subsequently make apparent the most efficient and effective options. While each AP process may vary in terms of size, participants and context, the process nevertheless follows a basic set and sequence of events. The generic phases of developing and implementing an AP are summarised in the figure in Section 3.1 above and outlined below (also see Annex I).

Phase I. Conducting a Situation Analysis

Identifying and Evaluating the Situation: Obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the situation or “environment” in which the AP will be carried out - essentially preparing an issue/subject-specific National Profile - will provide insight and guidance into where challenges lie and where opportunities exist. For example, a key outcome of a situation analysis is to reveal potential overlap and identify relevant existing structures upon which co-operative relationships could be built. A situation analysis should be divided into two active parts: information collection and information analysis, which collectively constitute a paper for discussion.

Information for the situation analysis can be obtained through: literature reviews; personal communications, interviews or group discussions; site visits; etc. A comprehensive National Chemicals Management Profile, if one has been prepared, could serve as a good starting point for this analysis.

Developing a Problem Tree: Developing a problem tree will essentially build on the information collected and analysed as part of the situation analysis by thinking through further the reasons for the existence of identified weaknesses (including gaps). A problem tree is simply the problems related to the issue for which an AP is being developed set out in a hierarchical order.

Outputs at the completion of this phase are a detailed situation analysis and a “problem statement” consisting of a list of the problems identified.

Phase II. Developing the Goal and Indicators of Success

The goal is a concise statement that describes the AP's purpose. The goal should have an action word (e.g. develop, design, install), end result, target completion date and (if possible) cost. An example of a goal is, "Develop effective capacity for metals analysis within 5 years". At this stage, the intentions of the AP will be clear. This step should merely formalise the goal. A sound goal should be specific, measurable, assignable, realistic and time-related. This concept is elaborated in the box below.

In some cases, the AP goal may be of a scope that requires the development of sub-goals. These sub-goals would therefore be considered to be stand-alone goals in their own right.

Developing a "SMART" Goal and Indicators of Success

The SMART method helps to ensure that important aspects of the goal and indicators of success are identified and addressed.

<i>Specific</i>	Clear about what, where, when and how the situation will be changed.
<i>Measurable</i>	Able to quantify the benefits and change.
<i>Assignable</i>	Able to be assigned to someone or some organisation for completion.
<i>Realistic</i>	Able to be achieved within budgeted time and resources.
<i>Time-related</i>	State the duration in which the goal can be achieved.

The "M" in "SMART" refers to the ability to assign indicators of success to the goal, which describe it in operationally *measurable* terms and provide the basis for measuring impact¹⁷. Indicators of success are not actual activities or tasks but rather describe intended results of the AP. In other words, even if the AP is implemented within the budget and on time, what else does it take to be successful? For example, for the goal, "Develop effective capacity for metals analysis within 5 years", an indicator of success could be "Response time for analysis of samples improved". Identifying indicators of success will help, along with defining the AP's goal, to provide focus that can be used as a charter for AP options and activities.

The final output of this phase is a sound goal and a set of related indicators of success.

¹⁷ It is important to ensure that baseline information is available for each indicator of success. If a clear understanding of the initial situation is lacking, it will be difficult to determine later on whether there has been any impact.

Identifying the “Low Hanging Fruits”

Often the people who care most about chemicals management issues and clearly see the need for improvement are those working at the technical or middle management level. What can be done at this level, and outlined in an AP, to initiate a concerted national effort to improve the ways in which chemicals are managed in the country? Not discounting the need to bring in high-level support and commitment, there are steps that can be taken at the “working” level to trigger action. A lot can be achieved when people who are working in chemicals management on a day-to-day basis see opportunities for improvement and decide to take action. While some options will require policy-level support and additional resources, others can be achieved with modest means and through good will and dedication. The benefits of low hanging fruits, when combined, can have a cumulative effect or can reinforce one another, thereby helping to set in motion systematic change on a larger scale. Moreover, this principle can be applied beyond the “working level” to all levels of decision-making where practical action can be taken.

Phase III. Identifying and Evaluating Options

Defining core elements will help to structure discussion regarding possible options or “courses of action” to achieve the goal. Core elements are integral to the AP: they are the main “pieces of the puzzle”. Defining core elements can be seen as a two step process: identifying core elements and making decisions regarding which alternatives are the most desirable and feasible. It is likely that decisions concerning each core element will not be able to be made in isolation, but rather the relationship among the core elements will need to be considered.

Having selected a “SMART” goal and identified and made decisions on core elements, it is important to consider possible options (each consisting of a package of activities) which will deliver the goal. Options can provide an organisational framework to identify and outline the paths taken to reach the goal. For example, if the AP goal is to “Undertake legislative reform, within 10 years, leading to the implementation of an effective integrated law on the sound management of chemicals”, options might include:

- Option 1: Develop comprehensive chemicals law;
- Option 2: Reform existing laws and fill gaps with new laws;
- Option 3: Leave existing laws unchanged and fill gaps with new laws; and
- Option 4: Leave existing laws unchanged and fill gaps with voluntary initiatives.

Identifying options will help to guide the identification of associated activities. Identifying a set of activities for each option will, in turn, help to facilitate comparison of each option and provide details which could be presented to decision-makers for selection and approval.

A set of discrete, separately identifiable activities will define the work that must be done in

order to accomplish the goal. They must be formulated and specified so that they can be easily measured and their completion easily verified. Identifying possible activities to be undertaken for each option is a useful way to organise thinking on this matter. One possible starting point for identifying activities is to divide the AP Task Force into small groups to brainstorm on each option. Each group should identify and assess activities to reach the particular option and agree on the best choices. Having more than one group brainstorm on the same option may provide a variety of ideas that can often be combined to create a comprehensive strategic approach. Like the goal and indicators of success, activities also need to be “SMART”.

Once activities have been identified, each option will need to be evaluated to help ensure that the best selection is made. In order to conduct a transparent and objective evaluation of the options, it is essential to identify decision criteria against which the various options can be evaluated.

The key outputs from this phase include selecting a sub-set of options and activities to achieve the goal, using evaluation criteria, from a larger set of options and activities identified.

Phase IV. Developing an Implementation Strategy

Once options and activities have been selected, the “nuts and bolts” or organisational details of the activities can be developed. Even the most complex activities can be planned, executed, and their attainment measured with confidence, resulting in a comprehensive “blueprint” to guide implementation of the AP.

The output from this phase is a detailed Action Plan outlining the goal, indicators of success, options, activities and tasks. This includes the establishment of resource requirements, responsibilities, time lines and sequence of activities¹⁸.

Phase V. Obtaining Commitment and Taking Action

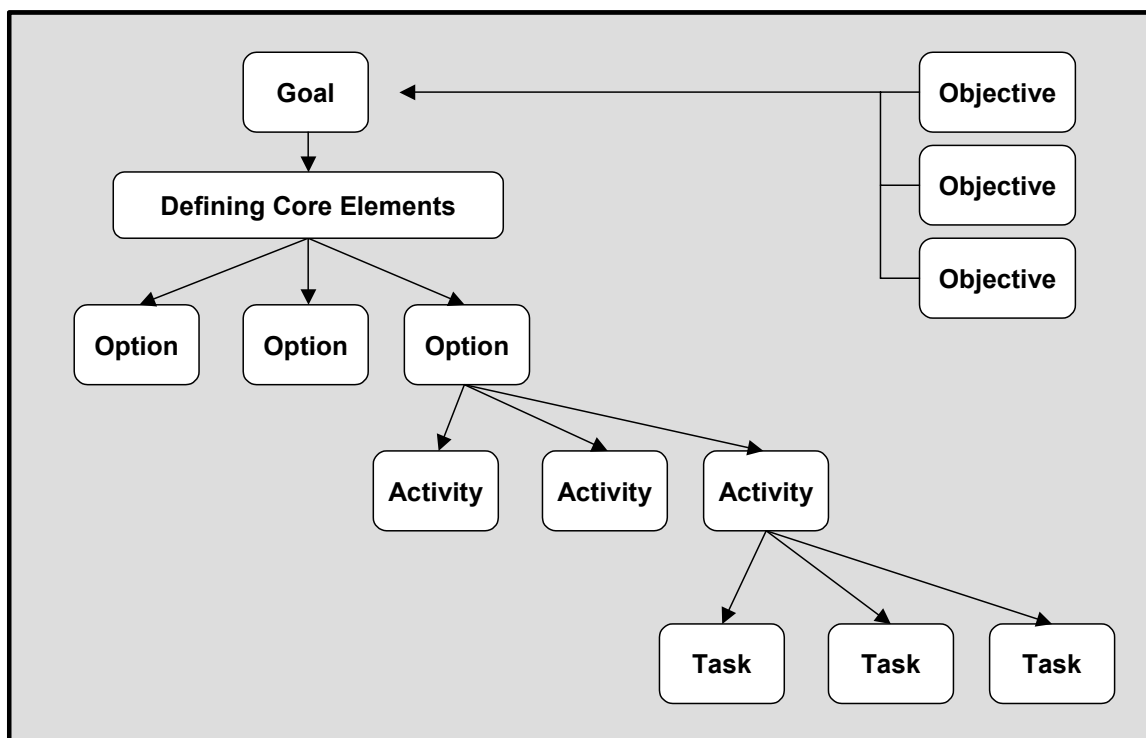
At this stage, acceptance of and commitment to the proposed AP from relevant decision-makers must be sought to help ensure effective implementation. Important elements for this phase include raising awareness of the potential benefits of taking action (i.e. implementing the AP) to decision-makers, securing adequate human and financial resources, institutionalising the project, and finally, successfully implementing planned activities. An example of an essential “mechanical” exercise for this phase includes ensuring that the AP, in pre-approved form, is distributed in a timely and appropriate manner to those who have an influence over its approval. An important aspect of AP implementation involves continuously monitoring the progress in implementing activities (e.g. against the planned schedule or budget).

¹⁸ The AP is not a static document, but may require revisions throughout implementation and as a result of regular monitoring (during Phase V) and following the evaluation phase (Phase VI).

Action Plan Hierarchy

The goal describes the AP's purpose. Indicators of success describe the intended results of the AP. Defining core elements involves identifying and making decisions regarding the main components of the AP are. These will collectively help to provide focus that can be used as a charter for identifying AP options and activities.

An option can be defined as a “course of action” which consists of a package of activities which will deliver the goal. Options can provide an organisational framework to identify and outline the paths taken to reach the goal. Activities define the work to be undertaken during the project to obtain results/achieve the goal. Identifying activities to be undertaken for each option is a useful way to organise thinking on this matter. A task is a subdivision of an activity. Each activity may consist of several smaller tasks.



This phase can help to ensure that, through processes set in motion early in the AP development phases, commitment is obtained and activities are implemented in a timely and effective manner.

Phase VI. Evaluating Impact

This phase concerns ascertaining the degree of success in achieving the goal and indicators of success. Having clearly established baselines prior to AP implementation (see Phase II) is therefore particularly critical for this phase.

Three simple questions can guide the evaluation process:

- To what degree were the agreed-to activities implemented (this step would have taken place in Phase V, *Obtaining Commitment and Taking Action*)?
- Did these activities actually achieve the agreed-to goal and indicators of success?
- If not, what further action is required?

The output of this phase is an evaluation of the impact of the AP followed by (if necessary) additional action.

ANNEX A: MAJOR INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS RELATED TO CHEMICALS

An examination of events, structures and policy decisions taken at the international or regional level can provide useful insights for the development of integrated national chemicals management programmes. The following is an overview of key legally binding and voluntary agreements related to chemicals management.

Legally Binding International Agreements:

- Single Convention on Narcotics, UN, 1964, as amended by 1972 Protocol, 1975
- Convention on Benzene, ILO, 1971
- Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution from Land-Based Sources, UNEP, 1974
- Convention on Psychotropic Substances, UN, 1976
- Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, UN/ECE, 1979 - Convention of Long-range Transboundary POPs Protocol, UN/ECE, 1998
- Montreal Guidelines for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Sources of Marine Pollution, UNEP, 1985
- Convention on Asbestos, ILO, 1986
- Vienna Convention, 1985 - Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, UNEP, 1987
- Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, UNEP, 1989
- Convention Concerning Safety in the Use of Chemicals at Work, ILO, 1990
- Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, UN, 1990
- Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, UN/ECE 1992
- Convention concerning the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents, ILO, 1993
- Chemicals Weapons Convention, UN, 1993
- Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, UNEP/FAO, 1998

- Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, 2001

Voluntary Agreements:

- Certification Scheme on the Quality of Pharmaceutical Products Moving in International Trade, WHO, 1975
- Amended International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, FAO, 1989
- Amended London Guidelines for the Exchange of Information on Chemicals in International Trade, UNEP, 1989
- Code of Ethics on International Trade in Chemicals, UNEP, 1994

Notes: At the time of publication, negotiations had recently been completed of a treaty addressing selected Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) (UNEP).

In addition to the agreements listed above, there are a number of agreements addressing chemicals issues developed by regional and multilateral organisations, such as the OECD and EU which establish requirements for member countries.

ANNEX B: SELECTED STRUCTURES FOR REGIONAL AND SUPRANATIONAL CO-OPERATION***European Union***

While early European Union (EU) actions on chemicals typically concerned the elimination of technical barriers to intra-community trade, later European Commission (EC) policies for chemicals control reflect concern for the environment, safety and health at work, and protection of the population from undue risks. The impact of the EU on chemicals control is particularly noteworthy for two reasons: first, the EU has achieved far-reaching harmonisation of chemicals control in its Member States, and second, the activities of the EU have influenced activities in many other countries. For example, the EC directive regarding classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances issued in 1967¹⁹ resulted in the harmonisation of legal requirements and the introduction of a new system for labelling of chemicals in Member States. Further policies or amendments, such as the sixth amendment²⁰ to the above mentioned directive, which introduced new principles and procedures for the control of chemicals - including the concept of pre-manufacturing and pre-marketing assessment of the effects of a chemical and provisions for extended control measures regarding chemicals on the market - have been of great importance for the strengthening of chemicals control, not only in the Member States of the EU, but also beyond.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

For almost thirty years, the Environment Policy Committee of the OECD has developed and implemented OECD policy on environmental matters. One of the early and most well known OECD actions concerning the environment was the adoption of the Recommendation on the Implementation of the Polluter-Pays-Principle²¹ (1974), which states that the polluter should bear the expenses of carrying out measures decided by public authorities to ensure that the environment is in an acceptable state.

The work of OECD on control of chemicals (which includes: recommendations on specific chemicals, such as mercury, PCBs and cadmium; pre-market assessment recommendations; guidelines on assessment of the environmental effects of chemicals; the testing programme; information exchange activities; monitoring and analysis; and developing methodologies for economic analysis), was considerably strengthened by the establishment in 1978 of the Special Programme on Chemicals²². This programme's initial work included efforts towards: good laboratory practice, information exchange procedures regarding chemicals; confidentiality of data; and development of an international glossary.

¹⁹ Council Directive 67/548/EEC of 27 June 1967 on the approximations of laws, regulations and administrative provision relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous chemicals.

²⁰ Council Directive of 18 September 1979 amending for the sixth time Directive 67/548/EEC of 27 June 1967 on the approximations of laws, regulations and administrative provision relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous chemicals (79/831/EEC).

²¹ OECD Recommendation on the Implementation of the Polluter-Pays-Principle, adopted on 14 November 1974.

²² OECD Council Decision C(78) 127 (Final), 21 September 1978

In 1985, an OECD Declaration²³ explicitly mentioned chemicals control stating that Ministers will “achieve through shared and co-ordinated efforts more effective control of both new and existing chemicals, from their manufacture to ultimate disposal”. The Environment Committee and the Chemicals Group now provides a forum for both formal and informal exchange of information.

North American Commission for Environmental Co-operation

The North American Commission for Environmental Co-operation (NACEC) has addressed chemicals management issues in a detailed fashion through a number of chemical- and issue-specific initiatives, including the Sound Management of Chemicals, PRTRs and Pollution Prevention. Such efforts are aimed at facilitating co-ordination and co-operation between the three NAFTA countries (Canada, USA and Mexico) concerning protection of the environment; enhancing comparability and compatibility between the three environmental protection systems; improving the knowledge base on issues of environmental pollution; developing technical and strategic tools to avoid, eliminate, reduce, or manage environmental pollutants; and improving the scientific, technical and strategic capabilities of North American environmental protection agencies.

²³ OECD Declaration on Environmental Resources for the Future adopted 20 June 1985 at the Meeting of the OECD Environment Committee at ministerial level.

ANNEX C: PRINCIPLES FOR CO-OPERATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

The following is a series of brief overviews of key principles and processes which should be considered in any effort to meaningfully engage stakeholders in policy development and programme implementation for integrated chemicals management. While this section has been written in the context of co-operation with stakeholders participating at a relatively high level, the principles and processes can be easily adapted for a variety of stakeholders and levels of engagement. In fact, these principles are also applicable for inter- and intra-ministerial engagement on chemicals issues.

Transparency

The key principle underlying successful co-operation is *transparency*. In cases where bodies are charged with making decisions and seeking stakeholder opinions, those who provide input into decision-making need to have the opportunity to have their views adequately heard, considered and responded to - especially if the decision made is contrary to what they sought. In order to maximise transparency, decision-makers must adequately communicate the reasons for the decision and the related factors that were considered. Anything less - for instance giving a decision without providing the reasons behind it - can sow mistrust among those who provided input and may affect their future participation in such processes.

Ensuring Roles and Responsibilities are Clear

All stakeholders need to have clear roles and responsibilities. Co-ordination with stakeholders should commence with the development of a sound Terms of Reference. Such Terms of Reference are, in effect, the ground rules for participation. They can outline how decisions will be made - for example, by consensus where possible and by government officials where it is not. The Terms of Reference should also make it clear whether stakeholders are to receive feedback and input from their respective constituencies, or simply try their best, from their own experiences, to represent what they think their constituencies' views will be.

Comprehensive Participation

One of the key elements to improving stakeholder participation is to involve stakeholders, where possible and appropriate, throughout the chemicals management process (e.g. from decision-making and programme planning to programme implementation and review). Of particular importance is the inclusion of stakeholders at the early and formative stages, especially when decisions are to be made in the development of public policy. Involving stakeholders as early as possible may result in the identification of issues which might have otherwise been overlooked or not considered important, but which could prove to be of significant importance for certain stakeholders or for the matter in question. Moreover, where stakeholder participation occurs exclusively at the latter stages of policy discussions or development, those not present at the start are often incapable of influencing the selection of alternative decisions or key variables since key decisions will likely have already been made. In order to facilitate comprehensive participation, policy discussions should occur with

stakeholders present whenever possible. Stakeholders who know what the limits of their influence are in the process (if it has clear Terms of Reference) should be able to give their input freely with the understanding that their advice will not always be adopted. In general, however, the overall process should greatly benefit from such participation.

Two-way Communication

In order to maximise the gain from comprehensive stakeholder participation in chemicals management, a communicative relationship between and among stakeholders and government must exist. Successful stakeholder involvement will be severely challenged if these relationships are not characterised by two-way communication, rather than a mere one-way flow of information from the ‘chief’ decision-makers (e.g. government) to the remaining stakeholders. There are a variety of ways to both involve, and facilitate an interactive relationship between, stakeholders (and government), which can be strategically employed to complement all stages of chemicals management. These include advertisements, leaflets, media, displays, exhibitions, questionnaires and surveys, telephone ‘hot lines’, open houses, personal contact, community liaison staff, community advisory committees, presentations, roundtables, workshops, public meetings and public inquiries.

Understandable and Timely Information Disclosure

Another factor which can greatly affect the degree and efficacy of involving stakeholders in chemicals management is the provision of information which sufficiently caters to the differing needs of the various participating stakeholders. Clearly written documents and related materials are of crucial importance for stakeholders. The timely provision of information is also vital - especially in terms of building trust and confidence for those that are new to a process. Language barriers and a possible lack of technical expertise among stakeholders must also be addressed.

Despite sufficient access to information - even information which has been written with the readability of the wider stakeholder population in mind - some stakeholders may still find the often technical nature of chemicals management and the related environmental effects perplexing. While individual stakeholder representatives who participate at relatively high levels are likely to be highly familiar with chemicals issues, those who participate at other levels could be less knowledgeable. Poor understanding of chemicals management will undoubtedly devalue the availability of quality literature and documentation. Another means of improving stakeholder involvement, which works towards addressing these issues, is stakeholder education.

Stakeholder Education

Educating stakeholders about chemicals management can empower stakeholders to engage more actively and effectively in shaping the outcome of chemicals management activities, and in protecting their interests. Often, certain stakeholders, such as the public, are inadequately informed concerning their potential role(s) in chemicals management. Various methods, however, can be used to improve upon such a deficiency which include stakeholder

training programmes, computer-based participation, open houses, plain language, phone lines, educational publications and videos.

Adequate Funding

Armed with sufficient skills and materials to make informed and meaningful contributions to chemicals management, certain stakeholders may still be at a severe disadvantage concerning their involvement due to a lack of financial resources. Insufficient resources can significantly impact certain stakeholders' involvement in chemicals management, greatly reducing the effectiveness and credibility of their participation and discouraging involvement. For example, at the early stages of developing a chemicals management programme, certain stakeholder groups may require technical advice on the characteristics of the matter in question in order to ensure that all key issues and contentious aspects are identified. In addition, other costs, such as travel, incurred as part of the participation process, can severely debilitate certain stakeholder groups, such as the public, who inevitably will not have resources comparable to private groups, such as industry representatives.

As those responsible for developing chemicals-related policies and programmes reach out for input into decision-making, some decisions, however, even in a politically charged field like chemicals management, can be relatively easy to reach by consensus from the participants. As long as participants feel like they have been treated as equals around the table, and the structure of who has final decision-making power and other ground rules are clear throughout, such processes can be effective pillars of a sustainable platform for integrated chemicals management.

ANNEX D: A SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW GUIDELINES ON CHEMICALS POLICY TO THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT

In 2000, the Swedish Committee on New Guidelines on Chemicals Policy proposed that new guidelines on chemicals policy should be implemented jointly with the EU. The proposals have been influential with regard to chemicals management.

The Committee's key proposals included:

- Knowledge of the health and environmental properties of all chemical substances shall be available not later than 2010, since such information is lacking for a large portion of the substances we use today.
- Chemical substances that are carcinogenic, mutagenic and toxic to reproduction may not be present in consumer-available products from 2007.
- Chemical substances that are particularly persistent and bioaccumulative may not be present in products from 2010.
- Other persistent and bioaccumulative substances may not be present in products from 2015.

Rationale for the Proposals

Knowledge requirements should be expanded. Today there is a great lack of knowledge regarding health and environmental properties for the chemical substances that have long been on the market. In order for new substances to be marketed, however, requirements are made on knowledge of their properties. The Committee proposed that *all* chemical substances on the market be subject to the same data requirements. Substances that do not meet the requirements may not be placed on the market after a certain date. For all high-production-volume substances (1,000 tonnes per year or more), manufacturers or importers should have compiled such data by not later than the end of 2005. For medium-production-volume substances (10–1,000 tonnes per year), such data shall be compiled by not later than the end of 2009, and for other substances not later than the end of 2010.

Persistent and bioaccumulative organic substances should be phased out. Chemical substances that are particularly persistent and bioaccumulative (i.e. accumulate to a high degree in organisms) may not be present in chemical products or other manufactured products such as clothing, cars and mobile telephones as from 2010. Such products may not contain other persistent and bioaccumulative substances as from 2015. After consultations with representatives of the international scientific community, the Committee submitted proposals for criteria for when a substance is so persistent and bioaccumulative that it should be covered by the bans.

Carcinogenic, mutagenic and reproduction-toxic substances should be phased out. There is already a ban in the EU today to the effect that chemical substances that are carcinogenic, mutagenic and toxic to reproduction may not be present in consumer-available chemical products. The Committee proposed that the ban be extended to cover other products besides chemical products (substances and preparations) as well from 2007.

In the case of **endocrine-disruptive substances**, the Committee proposed that efforts should be focussed on enabling such substances to be detected by the development of testing methods for reproduction disruptions.

The Committee also submitted proposals for the continued **phase-out of mercury, cadmium and lead**. Furthermore, **other metals** must be used in such a way that they do not leak out and cause harm to man or the environment. Action must be taken against the uses that give rise to widespread metal pollution.

A summary of the Report is available in English at: www.chemicals.sustainable-sweden.gov.se.

ANNEX E: ZAMBIA'S NATIONAL CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP: A CASE EXAMPLE

The Environmental Council of Zambia, with support from IPCS and UNITAR and in collaboration with other national stakeholders, organised a National Workshop on Chemicals Management in April 1996. The purpose of the workshop was to define priority actions for strengthening national chemicals management, based on the results of the National Profile process. This necessitated the involvement of policy makers as well as the substantive input of technical-level staff. In order to involve this range of participants, Zambia developed a 2-part workshop agenda, as illustrated below.

Day 1: Policy Planning Workshop

Objectives: To raise high level awareness of the main conclusions of the National Profile; and to identify objectives for the Technical Planning Workshop.

Participants: High level decision makers from within and outside of government

Topics:

- The international policy framework for sound management of chemicals
- Summary and conclusions of Zambia's National Profile
- Discussion of objectives for the technical-level component of the workshop

Days 2-4: Technical Planning Workshop

Objectives: To discuss priority issues of chemicals management in Zambia and to develop specific recommendations and action plans to present to decision makers.

Participants: Technical staff and mid-level officials from relevant ministries, industry, agriculture, research institutes and public interest groups

Topics:

- Strengthening co-ordination of national chemicals activities
- Key aspects of chemicals management in Zambia
 - Risk reduction for PIC chemicals and POPs
 - Cleaner production and PRTRs
 - Prevention of chemical accidents and poisonings
 - Raising awareness for chemical safety
 - Strengthening the legal framework, including enforcement
 - Information gathering, management, use and dissemination
- National chemicals management infrastructure: priority needs
- Workshop recommendations and follow-up

A key to success of this type of workshop format is a well thought-out agenda in which the initial policy-level session provides the impetus for focussed discussions during the technical working group sessions. Briefing the high level officials in advance is critical in this regard. For the technical sessions, working group papers and other discussions documents should be prepared in advance. Finally, to set the stage for effective policy action, the technical working

groups should focus on developing a concise and pragmatic set of recommendations to present to decision makers at the conclusion of the event.

ANNEX F: INFORMING A MINISTER: A SHORT PRIMER ON MINISTERIAL BRIEFING NOTES

Government Ministers, due to the nature of their profession, have very limited time to address a great number of issues, many of which require informed decisions. The Ministerial Briefing Note has evolved in many countries as an effective tool to brief, make recommendations to, and otherwise keep Ministers and other senior officials informed about important issues.

As a country develops an Integrated National Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, information on planning for and developments of the programme should be communicated regularly to senior officials. Clear communication takes on greater importance when decisions are needed that will affect the future direction of chemicals work in the country.

Briefing notes should provide:

- a succinct statement of the case or issue,
- the essential background information,
- the current status of the matter, and
- the recommendations made or directions sought, if any.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
<u>ISSUE</u>	
• XXXC XXXX XX XXXX XXXX XXXX XXX XXX XX XXXXXX XX XX XXX XX XX XX X XXX XX XXX.	
<u>BACKGROUND</u>	
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<u>RECOMMENDATION</u>	
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<u>ACTION OR DECISION RECOMMENDED</u>	
• XXXC XXXX XX XXXX XXXX XXXX XXX XXX XX XXXXXX XX • XX XXX XX XX XX X XXX XX XXX.	
Name, title, and telephone number, signature	

Briefing notes should generally not exceed two pages, and must be clear and accurate. Point form should be used, unless otherwise requested. Briefing notes should also be clearly dated.

The figure on the left is an example of a briefing note, possible headings and suggested text type.

All briefing notes should be approved by senior officials in accordance with the procedures of the Ministry. The name, title, and telephone number of the official who prepared the briefing note and of the person who approved it should appear along with their signatures at the bottom of the briefing note.

ANNEX G: ELEMENTS OF A PRESS RELEASE

Below is an annotated example of a press release that can be used to promote a planning event or other important matter relating to integrated chemicals management that should be communicated to the public at large.

- ***Letterhead***
The press release should be on Ministry or other official stationary.
- ***A standard introduction for a press release:***
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
- ***Who to contact for more information. Include address and phone number:***
Contact: _____
Press Officer: _____
Government Communications Division, Lead Ministry: _____
Name and telephone contact : _____
- ***Succinct title that attracts the reader's attraction:***
For example: "Country X puts forth plan to protect citizens and the environment from dangerous chemicals".
- ***Begin with the location and date, followed by an introduction covering all major points:***
City name, Country name, date and year.
- ***A quote by a government representative is helpful (a Minister is desirable):***
A sample quote: "This new plan, once implemented, will be a concrete step towards sustainable development for our country."
- ***Include information about why this event is newsworthy:***
Sample background information: "This Action Plan on pesticides was developed as part of a United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) project, with Swiss government funding, for Developing and Sustaining An Integrated Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals. This is a new process designed to ensure that our country can plan and work together with all sectors of government and society to strengthen our laws, policies and practices for sound chemicals management. Every year, people and the environment are needlessly exposed to dangerous chemicals. This effort, when implemented, will help to minimise or prevent harm from chemicals, while ensuring that their safe use will continue to provide many benefits to our society. The project, which began in our country in February, 2001, will conclude in December, 2002.
- ***Conclude with further contact information:***
"For more information contact (name, telephone number(s) and web address (if available))".

ANNEX H: DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE (DAC) MEMBERS

Australia	Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Austria	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Belgium	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Cooperation
Canada	Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
Denmark	Danish Development Agency (Danida)
EC	The Directorate General for Development (DG Development)
Finland	Department for International Development Cooperation
France	Groupe de l'Agence française de Développement (AFD) General Direction for International Cooperation and Development
Germany	The German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) Credit Institute for Reconstruction (KfW) German Foundation for International Development (DSE)
Ireland	Department of Foreign Affairs
Italy	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Japan	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC)
Luxembourg	Lux_Development Sarl
New Zealand	Development Cooperation Division
Norway	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)
Portugal	Portuguese Institute for Cooperation
Spain	Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI)
Sweden	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Switzerland	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
The Netherlands	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
United Kingdom	Department for International Development (DFID)
United States	U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)



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