

Draft

Information note

Workshop on Development of Legal and Institutional Infrastructures on Sound Management of Chemicals – SAICM Implementation.

Introduction

The workshop in the African region 14-15 July is the fourth regional workshop on development of legal and institutional infrastructures on sound management of chemicals held that is held in conjunction with the SAICM Regional Meetings. The first workshop took place in Riga, December 2006, the second workshop took place in Bangkok, May 2007 the third workshop took place in Panama, February 2008.

The workshop in Tanzania will focus on the first preventive steps in the supply chain of chemicals, that are to be taken before or when chemicals are placed on the market and taken into use, often called “Chemicals Control”.

The purpose of the workshop is to identify and asses the needs and non-financial barriers for the development of national institutions and legal infrastructures for chemicals control.

Organization of the Workshop

It will consist of five sessions during two days with introductory presentations to the three themes from countries, private sector and civil society.

The three themes are:

- Development of national legal infrastructures;
- Development of national institutions;
- Stakeholder involvement.

There are planed group discussions for the three main sessions in relation to the theme of the session. A number of questions have been developed to assist the group discussions.

The workshop has been made possible by funding from the Swedish Government.

Relation to SAICM Implementation

The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Managements that was adopted at the International Conference of Chemicals Management (SAICM) in Dubai 6 February 2006 recognized in the Dubai Declaration that there is lack of capacity for managing chemicals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. This was also recognized in

the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity building adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in February 2005 where chemicals were appointed as one of the thematic areas.

Capacity building in sound management of chemicals is part of the seventh objective of the Millennium Development Goal on environmental sustainability and was recognized in paragraph 56 k of the 2005 World Summit Outcome that stresses that support is needed to the developing countries in strengthening their capacity for sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes by providing technical and financial assistance, as appropriate.

The facilitation of sound management of chemicals will depend on the development of national legal and institutional infrastructures. However, most developing countries and many countries with economies in transition have not managed to establish the necessary national legal and institutional infrastructures for the sound management of chemicals.

The main gaps seem to be the absence of a framework legislation regulating the obligations of manufacturers, importers and professional users of chemicals.

The framework for the workshops

The workshops are part of a project which has the specific objectives of:

1. Identifying and assessing the needs and non-financial barriers for the development of legal and institutional infrastructure in the area of chemicals control.
2. Development of a toolkit for facilitation of the development of national legal and institutional infrastructures and to test the toolkit in a number of countries from the four UN regions with developing countries and countries with economies in transition.
3. Ensuring that the tools for facilitation of the development of national institutions and legal infrastructures meet national needs.

Phase 1 is based on regional workshops to identify and assess the needs and non-financial barriers for the development of national institutions and legal infrastructures together with a discussion and recommendation of for the elements of a toolkit to meet the identified needs and non-financials barriers. This phase will be completed with the workshop in Tanzania.

Phase two will consist of implementation of the conclusions from the workshops through development of a toolkit on development of legal and institutional infrastructures and subsequent testing in countries.

Phase three will consist of a discussion of the results from the testing of the toolkit in countries in order to identify whether there is a need for amendments to the toolkit.

Relationship with other UNEP activities

The establishment of national legal and institutional infrastructures for the sound management of chemicals will require financial resources which might be an important barrier for the establishment of the legal and institutional infrastructures in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. To ensure additional financial resources, SAICM recommended integration (mainstreaming) of sound management of chemicals into the development agenda. The costs of establishment of and sustaining national legal and institutional infrastructures for the sound management of chemicals should therefore be an

integrated part of the development agenda for developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

UNDP and UNEP have developed a programmatic partnership on mainstreaming of sound management of chemicals into the development agenda, which will be tested in a number of countries, such as Uganda, Zambia, Cambodia, Macedonia and Ecuador.

The integration of sound management of chemicals into the development agenda consists of a number of steps including an analysis of the gaps in national legal and institutional infrastructures for sound management of chemicals and means to fill these gaps in light of the identified priorities.

There are two core guidance tools that are being tested in the country projects:

- UNEP/WHO Health and Environment Linkage: Managing the linkages for sustainable development – A toolkit for decision makers
- UNDP Technical Guide for Mainstreaming the Sound Management of Chemicals in MDG-Based Policies and Plans

These two central guidance documents are supposed to be supported by other detailed guidance on specific aspects to be developed in the future.

Detailed guidance on legal and institutional infrastructures is currently not available and the present workshop and its follow-up activities will try to fill that gap and is through this part of the UNEP/UNDP programmatic partnership on mainstreaming of sound management of chemicals into the development agenda.