FORUM IV

Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety

Bangkok, Thailand
1 - 7 November 2003

Final Report
Executive Summary
Chemical Safety in a Vulnerable World

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The full report is available on the IFCS website: www.ifcs.ch.
For reference purposes the Table of Contents for the Report is included as an Annex.
Executive Summary

Forum IV agreed action items and recommendations

Introduction

The Fourth Session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (Forum IV) was held 1-7 November 2003 in Bangkok, Thailand, hosted by the Government of Thailand. One hundred twenty-six governments participated in the meeting, together with 32 representatives from twelve intergovernmental organizations (IGO) and eighty-one representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGO).

The Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS or Forum) is an innovative participatory mechanism with the purpose of providing policy guidance and strategies for the sound management of chemicals at the national, regional and international levels. The Forum provides countries the opportunity to place issues on the international agenda and emphasize their special needs and concerns with respect to improving chemicals management. It was established in 1994 in response to a recommendation adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development – UNCED, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

At Forum IV the IFCS took stock of the progress achieved on the commitments and recommendations made at Forum III, such as the IFCS Priorities for Action Beyond 2000. Forum IV considered strategies and actions to achieve the agreed targets and also charted the course for work in a number of new areas.

The Forum IV recommendations and agreed action items are presented below.
Children and Chemical Safety

1. When assessing the protection of children, consideration should be given to chemical exposures that can occur during preconception, throughout gestation, infancy, childhood and adolescence.

2. Governments should prepare, through multi-stakeholder consultation, initial national assessments of children’s environmental health and chemical safety. These assessments should identify the priority concerns and provide a basis for developing action plans to address those concerns. Governments should provide a progress report to Forum V. WHO is requested to develop, through multi-stakeholder consultation, guidance tools, and to assist at least three countries in different stages of economic development in each region to prepare the assessment and action plans by 2006.

3. Governments, with support from stakeholders, particularly WHO and UNICEF, should promote education and training on children’s chemical safety, and where risks are identified, governments and stakeholders should commit to taking action to prevent or reduce exposure. Governments should also promote harmonized data collection, research, legislation and regulations, and consider the use of indicators of children’s environmental health, and report back to Forum V in 2006. Governments should, when setting acceptable levels or criteria related to chemicals, take into consideration the potential enhanced exposures and/or vulnerabilities of children.

4. WHO is requested to support, collaborate with, and coordinate among research organizations and those supporting research (such as the European Commission, Science non-governmental organizations, the Global Health Research Forum, governments and others) to develop mechanisms to facilitate collaborative national and international research and share technology.

5. Governments and stakeholders should commit to sharing information on options for taking effective action to protect children from established chemical threats and from chemical risks where there is a degree of uncertainty. WHO is requested to convene a multi-stakeholder meeting to explore the mechanisms for collecting data and disseminating information that could be used to reduce uncertainty in risk assessments.

6. In addition, Forum IV requests the IFCS President to convey these recommendations to other meetings and fora.

7. In carrying out the recommendations set out in this priority, the stakeholders concerned should be guided by the full decision document and companion information paper that were developed by the Forum Standing Committee working group on children and chemical safety.
Occupational Safety and Health

Recalling the decision of Forum III to include in its priorities for action beyond 2000, the need to pay special attention to occupational safety and health concerns caused by chemicals, Forum IV:

I) urges ILO, WHO and FAO to strengthen their collaboration in this area and increase their participation in IFCS activities; and

II) urges the relevant Forum participants to initiate and implement measures to address the occupational safety and health aspects of chemical safety in the IFCS Priorities for Action as described in the following:

Programme Area A – Expanding and Accelerating International Assessment of Chemical Risks

Occupational exposures play a critical role in the international assessment of chemical risks. Data from workplaces are essential for improving knowledge and understanding of the prevalence, risk factors, dose-response relationships, effective intervention measures and appropriate techniques for monitoring the results of implemented prevention strategies.

A primary source of human exposure data available for risk assessment is epidemiological studies, particularly in the working environment. Work activities are generally carried out in organized and regulated environments, often with the involvement of health and safety professionals, enabling the recording and collecting of better-quality data more efficiently. Use of chemicals for which toxicological investigations have not been performed is common in various workplaces. Exposures to multiple chemicals and other physical agents are prevalent in many industries, although too little is known about combined exposure-response relationships.

IFCS should support and encourage all relevant parties to undertake steps for reporting and recording data essential for international assessment of chemical risks from workplaces, for facilitating national and international data collection measures, and for making the necessary data readily available to those undertaking assessment of chemical risks.

Recommended action items:

- Develop and implement relevant approaches standards and guidance material for recording, collecting and analyzing workplace data. These can be undertaken in conjunction with the implementation of the ILO List of Occupational Diseases Recommendation (No. 194), 2002, and the Protocol of 2002 to the Occupational Safety and Health Convention (No. 155), 1981.

- Develop, establish and enhance suitable measures for the monitoring of workplaces and for careful clinical surveillance of workers.

- Develop harmonized data elements for recording relevant workplace data in company-specific databases. Facilitate the collection of data for analysis with means to ensure that the data elements cannot be tracked back to specific workers, worksites or employers.

- Establish the role and responsibilities of employers, employees and governments in reporting, recording, collecting and assessing data from workplaces.
Programme Area B – Harmonization of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

The Globally Harmonized System (GHS) for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals has taken due consideration of chemicals in the workplace. In its implementation, however, there are areas that require emphasis and attention to specific needs with respect to workplaces.

Recommended action items:

- Develop and make available assistance, guidance, tools and other facilities necessary for the effective implementation of GHS in the workplace.
- Include relevant elements of GHS as an integral component of ILO’s SafeWork Programme.
- Establish roles and responsibilities of employers, employees, chemical suppliers and governments, in the implementation of the GHS.

Programme Area C – Information Exchange on Toxic Chemicals and Chemical Risks

The populations involved and the characteristics associated with chemical exposures in the workplace present challenges and opportunities which demand special attention for effective information exchange on toxic chemicals and chemical risks. Fundamental rights of workers – the right-to-know and the right-to-participate in health and safety decisions in the workplace - are important considerations in this regard. Putting reliable, effective and useful information into the hands of workplace participants can lead to intervention measures that can safeguard the health and safety of those occupationally exposed and also of the general public and the environment.

Recommended action items:

- Establish a means of developing and updating internationally evaluated sources of information on chemicals in the workplace by intergovernmental organizations, in forms and languages suitable for use by workplace participants.
- Make the information on workplace chemicals from intergovernmental organizations readily and conveniently available to employers, employees and governments.
- Strengthen the global information networks of the ILO and WHO in the sharing, exchanging and delivering of chemical safety information.
- Facilitate the development and updating of information on workplace chemicals by reliable sources in forms and languages suitable for workplace participants and the ready and convenient access to that information by employers, employees and governments.
- Promote the establishment of a National SafeWork Programme, including the ratification and implementation of ILO Conventions 170, 174 and 184.
Executive Summary

• Implement an integrated approach to the safe use of chemicals in the workplace by establishing new mechanisms to expand and update ILO Conventions related to hazardous substances and linking these to various other actions, such as those associated with codes, information dissemination, enforcement, technical co-operation, etc.

• Establish approaches and methods to communicate relevant information from the results of international risk assessment to appropriate workplace participants and stipulate related roles and responsibilities of employers, employees and governments.

• Strengthen chemical safety related information dissemination among social partners and through public media at national and international levels.

• Stress the importance of the workers’ right to know in all sectors (formal and informal).

Programme Area D – Establishment of Risk Reduction Programmes

Risk reduction programmes for chemical safety in workplaces are generally conducted as a subset of the overall occupational safety and health programmes. With respect to the sound management of chemicals, workplace risk reduction programmes offer wide-ranging opportunities for intervention at source, thereby extending the benefits beyond health and safety considerations within the enterprise to those of the environment and the public.

The ILO standards on workplace safety, health and the environment are a vital source of protection to people at work throughout the world. They fulfil the need for occupational health, safety and environmental policies at country levels to be supported by a universally accepted global formative framework. The ILO standards are also effective advocacy instruments for stakeholders seeking reforms at the country level.

IFCS should support and encourage the development, enhancement, updating and implementation of ILO’s SafeWork standards, including supplementary consensus guidelines, codes of practice and other non-binding instruments influencing safe use of chemicals in the workplace.

Recommended action items:

• Facilitate the development, enhancement, updating and implementation of ILO Conventions and supplementary consensus instruments that help to promote the sound management of chemicals in the workplace.

• Pay special attention to the needs of workers in SMEs, the informal sector, migrant workers, self employed, waged workers and vulnerable groups, including children, young persons, women and elderly in addressing risk reduction programmes for chemical safety in the workplace.

• Implement the ILO Guidelines on Occupational Safety and Health Management System (ILO-OSH 2001) paying special attention to the safe use of chemicals.

• Implement the ILO National Safe Work Programmes, incorporating safe use of chemicals as an integral component.
• Enact and strengthen legislation to protect the health of workers and the public, covering the entire spectrum of work situations where chemicals are handled, including such sectors as agriculture and health.

• Address special chemical safety related problems of illegal work and illegal migrants.

• Develop system of health and environment impact assessment in chemicals handling and incorporate it in occupational safety and health programmes in countries as a prerequisite to boost prevention efforts.

• Promote the necessary training and capacity to all people involved directly and indirectly with pesticides use and application in rural areas

• Apply the measures from ILO Convention 169 about work conditions of indigenous and tribal population in order to prevent the use of specially dangerous pesticides (art. 3).

• Enhance risk reduction programmes through the expansion of insurance coverage and compensation systems.

Programme Area E – Strengthening of National Capabilities and Capacities for Management of Chemicals

Capacity building is a most critical requirement for effective chemical safety management, particularly in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. In this regard members of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) can play a significant role in assisting these governments to improve the enforcement aspect of occupational safety and health policies in the production and use of chemicals in the workplace.

At the country level a variety of institutions and organizations contribute to the national occupational health and safety programme, which also incorporates risk reduction efforts with respect to chemicals in the workplace. Strengthening of national capabilities and capacities for management of chemicals should take into consideration the needs for building the relevant strengths of the institutions and organizations engaged in chemical risk reduction activities in the workplace.

Recommended action items:

• Identify the particular demands and needs with respect to institutions and organisations responsible for workplace-related activities concerning chemical safety, and direct the capacity-building efforts accordingly.

• National government occupational safety and health policies should contain specific sections/text on chemicals management, with a clear emphasis on preventive measures. Government legislation should require that workplace risk assessments and hazard prevention measures are carried out, based on the recognized hierarchy of prevention and control measures.

• Establish integrated programmes for health and safety professionals and public health practitioners with emphasis on identification, assessment and control of occupational chemical risk factors in all workplaces (industrial, rural, business and services).
• Promote exchange of information on successful experiences and projects related to chemical occupational safety and health.

• Enhance international cooperation programmes aiming especially the national capacity building in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.
Hazard Data Generation and Availability

Forum IV adopted the following priority for action.

For all chemicals in commerce, appropriate information detailing the inherent hazards should be made available to the public, and generated where needed. Essential health, safety and environmental information should be accessible. Other information should be accessible according to a balance between the public right to know and the need to protect valid confidential business information and legitimate proprietary interests. Existing hazard information should be systematically identified, collected, validated and shared to ensure an equitable sharing of the burdens of assessment and interpretation, and to avoid duplicative testing, for both economic and animal welfare purposes. For the generation of new information, advancements in hazard identification and other relevant approaches that reduce the use of animals for toxicity testing should be applied.

Governments in cooperation with industry and other stakeholders:

- are encouraged to establish national priorities for information generation for chemicals that are not produced in high volumes, e.g. by using production/import volume inventories of chemicals in commerce and by collecting or generating other relevant information such as information on significant exposure;
- should agree to use appropriate measures, where necessary according to each country’s own situation, to promote the timely generation of hazard information.

OECD is invited, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders and enabling input from non-OECD countries via already established mechanisms, by Forum V, to have:

- established a detailed programme for an international repository on hazard information that would be available free of charge;
- agreed to timeframes for how industry, in cooperation and coordination with other stakeholders, will make accessible or generate hazard information for high production volume chemicals not addressed under existing commitments.
- established generally applicable guidelines on the respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of governments, producing/importing enterprises and suppliers of chemicals concerning the generation, assessment and dissemination of hazard information;
- further harmonised data formats for hazard information;
- established recommendations on tiered approaches to addressing screening information requirements for chemicals that are not produced in high volumes;
- identified possible approaches for prioritisation for such chemicals that are not necessarily based on production volume but, for example, build on significant exposures.

IPCS and OECD are invited to have by Forum V harmonized terminologies to be used in hazard and risk assessment.

IPCS is invited to take the lead in the development of guidance on, and mechanisms for, collecting, disseminating and utilizing clinical and exposure data from human observations.
Governments, intergovernmental as well as non-governmental organisations and industry should encourage the use of the Internet as a tool for identifying and disseminating hazard information to the intended target groups in the respective tiers, preferably using existing databases, and free of charge.

In carrying out the recommendations set out in this *Priority for Action*, the stakeholders concerned should be guided by the full decision document and companion background annex that were developed by the Forum Standing Committee.
Acutely Toxic Pesticides

Recognising that poisoning of pesticide users and their communities, especially agricultural workers and small farmers in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, must be prevented, national governments are hereby provided with guidance for sound risk management and reduction actions, in particular those related to acutely toxic pesticides.

Governments should, with the commitment and support of international, regional and local stakeholders, such as international organizations, scientific and medical communities, pesticide and agricultural industries, public interest groups, agricultural workers, labour unions, small farmers and indigenous peoples, take a variety of actions, best suited to their needs and capacities, such as:

I. Policy Actions

1) ratify and implement the internationally agreed Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade;

2) fully implement the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides as the basis for a comprehensive life cycle approach to pesticide management at national level;

3) promote a culture of compliance and accountability, and effective enforcement and monitoring programmes;

4) give appropriate priority to pest and pesticide management in their national development cooperation strategies in order to access technical and financial assistance, including appropriate technology;

5) base national decisions on acutely toxic pesticides on an evaluation of their intrinsic hazards, anticipated local exposure to the products, taking into account their common conditions of use and the need to reduce risks.

II. Regulatory Actions

1) promote Integrated Pest and Production Management;

2) prioritise the registration and/or use of formulation types suited to the conditions of use in the country;

3) ensure that product label statements have clear safety and use information;

4) establish licensing systems for the sound storage, distribution and application of pesticides;

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5) promote appropriate standards for application equipment, container and package design (e.g. size, shape, material), and procedures for maintenance and guidance for use of equipment;

6) establish mandatory or voluntary container return procedures, whichever is the most effective;

7) establish pesticide use surveillance and monitoring systems to gather information on common conditions of use and their impact on health and environment;

8) expand research and capacity for research on alternative pest control (both chemical and non-chemical) and crop production measures;

9) use the tools of the Rotterdam Convention in order to:
   a. provide appropriate level of resources to Designated National Authorities,
   b. identify and notify the Secretariat of the Convention of severely hazardous pesticide formulations;

10) prohibit or restrict availability (including the use of import and /or export controls as desirable) and use of acutely toxic pesticides (such as formulations classified by WHO\(^2\) as Extremely Hazardous (class 1a) and Highly Hazardous (class 1b)) and/or those pesticides associated with frequent and severe poisoning incidents;

11) substitute acutely toxic pesticides with reduced risk pesticides and non-chemical control measures;

12) encourage industry to extend product stewardship and to voluntarily withdraw acutely toxic pesticides when poisoning incidents occur;

13) establish or enhance comprehensive national systems for surveillance and reporting of poisoning incidents affecting workers and communities, including:
   a. training of waged agricultural workers, farmers, communities, and public health professionals to recognize pesticide poisoning symptoms and enable immediate intervention in the field,
   b. education and resources for health care workers to treat health effects appropriately,
   c. community and self surveillance monitoring and reporting mechanisms,
   d. use of incident report forms established under Rotterdam Convention and WHO harmonized human data collection tools, and other available instruments; studies to estimate the under-reporting of poisoning incidents,
   e. support and strengthen Poison Centers;

14) avoid the build up of stocks, and dispose of obsolete stockpiles using the best available technologies and practices in accordance with international agreements;

15) prioritize the procurement of least hazardous pest control measures and use best practices to avoid excessive or inappropriate supplies in donor assistance activities.

III. Communication Actions

1) improve access to information on pesticides, particularly acutely toxic pesticides and alternative safer pest control measures by using the tools of the Rotterdam Convention and other information networks;

2) expand awareness raising, education and training appropriate to the public and user communities;

3) encourage and facilitate exchange of information, technology and expertise within and among countries by both public and private sectors for risk reduction and mitigation;

4) facilitate access to research results related to alternative pest control (both chemical and non-chemical) and crop production measures by pesticide users, those exposed to pesticides and extension services;

5) evaluate the efficacy of pesticide risk reduction programmes and alternative pest control methods currently implemented and planned by international organizations, governments, pesticide, agricultural and trade sectors and other stakeholders, and
   a. distinguish programmes that have achieved significant and sustainable risk reductions from those which have not,
   b. ensure that results are shared locally, regionally and internationally,
   c. incorporate evaluation mechanisms and measures of progress in future programmes.

For future consideration:

- governments and stakeholders to consider liability and compensation issues.
**Capacity Building Assistance**

Recognizing the importance of sound management of chemicals in poverty eradication, Forum IV recommends the promotion of a dialogue with international development assistance institutions (including UNDP, World Bank) with the goal of integrating chemical safety issues into poverty reduction strategies and national sustainable development strategies, and relevant project activities.

Forum IV invites all governments to integrate chemicals safety policy into development cooperation activities, and promote chemical issues in the relevant governing bodies of international and intergovernmental organizations.

Recognizing the value of the WHO programme on health and sustainable development, Forum IV encourages all international organizations, including UNEP and the other IOMC partner organizations, to ensure and/or strengthen the integration of sustainable development and chemicals issues into all relevant activities, e.g. water, waste management, health, agriculture, trade.

*Forum IV invites the private sector and civil society to participate actively in the above effort.*

Forum IV invites countries, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations, to consider the related counsel given below.

And request the FSC to report back on the outcomes of these activities to Forum V.

Counsel:

Forum IV request IFCS participants to take into consideration the following counsel:

A. All IFCS participants:

   a. Should actively seek means to ensure that countries in their economic and social development have core essential capabilities and capacities for the sound management of chemicals covering all stages of the lifecycle and achieve the goals set in the Bahia Declaration;

   b. Should promote, establish and maintain a structural dialogue with international development assistance institutions with the goal of integrating chemical safety issues into poverty reduction strategies and national sustainable development strategies, and relevant project activities;

   c. Should actively promote integration of sound chemicals management with other environmental management programmes (e.g., water, waste management, health, agriculture, trade) and to the social and economic dimensions of Agenda 21;

   d. Should promote chemical safety by identifying, describing and widely disseminating success stories of sound chemicals management programmes;

   e. Should explore the development of measurable indicators to assess progress in capacity building for the sound management of chemicals.
B. Countries and stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, where appropriate:

a. Should incorporate chemical safety as an integral part of sustainable development policies, poverty eradication strategies, as well as the national development assistance plans and their implementation, including incorporating chemical safety issues into public education, in order to formally confirm that these issues are a country-driven-priority;

b. Should integrate chemical safety policy into development cooperation activities and take full advantage of existing opportunities when developing project proposals, including approaching already existing funding mechanisms (such as the GEF);

c. Acknowledging the outstanding importance of direct development assistance and technology transfer from industrialized countries to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, should strengthen bilateral capacity building efforts;

d. Should consider defining the financial and methodological mechanisms, including by using existing mechanisms, that can assist them to create and/or strengthen the necessary capacities to ensure chemical safety is achieved;

e. Should apply a multi-stakeholder approach from the outset, including strengthening information flow between stakeholder groups, and the inclusion of organizations that represent local communities;

f. Should incorporate an evaluation framework as part of the project proposal and implement it.

C. IOMC/international organisations:

a. Should use all possible opportunities for linking the different elements of the chemical safety agenda through enhanced coordination and cooperation;

b. Should use the momentum of a specific entry point, such as an multilateral environment agreement (MEA) or the globally harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals (GHS), to work with countries on the broader chemicals safety agenda;

c. Should further develop training programmes on e.g. poison centres, ILO guidelines on compensation in the case of chemical poisoning, emergency preparedness, risk assessment and management, information reporting systems, education and training in precautionary measures, and concentrate efforts on training and long term relationships, avoiding one-time events with no structural context;

d. Including GEF, World Bank, UNEP, WHO, OPCW and other international and intergovernmental organisations, should ensure and/or strengthen the integration of sustainable development and chemicals issues into all relevant activities, e.g. water and waste management, establishment of poison control centres;
e. Including UNDP, World Bank, UNITAR and other intergovernmental organizations, as appropriate, should facilitate national-level dialogues to assist with integrating chemicals management activities;

f. Particularly UNITAR, should seek additional resources to assist countries with National Profile development and further development of guidelines on awareness-raising.

D. OECD-Development Assistance Committee (DAC):

a. Should promote the integration of sound chemicals management as an important element of human health and environment policy, and give full attention to linking sound chemicals management, in all stages of the life cycle, to other elements of sustainable development;

b. Should by 2004, further develop the DAC guidelines on the Integration of Rio Conventions into Development Co-operation, issued in 2002, by ensuring the addition of all current and future chemical safety related conventions and agreements;

c. Should promote an increase of support for developing countries for capacity building for the sound management of chemicals.

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3 It was announced that the European Commission is supporting the UNITAR programme on the development of National Profiles, priority setting and information exchange in an additional 15 countries.
Addressing The Widening Gap Among Countries In Following Chemical Safety Policies

Since the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development – UNCED held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - the international community has developed numerous policies regarding chemical safety. Some have lead to conventions (namely the Rotterdam, Basel and Stockholm conventions). Some have resulted in policy guidelines for international organizations, regional arrangements, national governments, NGOs and other actors. The tide of events has lead some countries of the world to be left far behind, compared to some others, in the implementation of policies and conventions. The transboundary nature of threats by hazardous chemicals requires that all countries move towards the implementation of sound management of chemicals, more or less at the same pace. The current wide implementation gap is contrary to the main aim of these efforts and is counterproductive. Therefore, wide gaps that exist between developed countries and developing countries in their ability to pursue chemical safety policies need to be bridged.

As a step to find a practical solution to this,

1. The Forum decided to establish an ad hoc Expert Group including interested observers with the objective to propose a systematic way of strengthening the sound management of chemicals in countries with an expressed need and requested the Forum Standing Committee to decide on the modalities for the ad hoc Experts Group. The group is mandated to propose a system by which a government could avail itself, if appropriate, of the expertise available within the group to identify areas in the country where there is room for improvement. Possible elements of such a system might include:
   - A list of states with greater challenges in implementing chemical safety policies.
   - Taking stock of all available capacities (e.g. as identified through National Profile process) to the extent possible and the specific and explicit demands of countries seeking support for strengthening their chemicals management.
   - Preparing an indicative survey of the circumstances of developing countries and countries with economies in transition with regard to the challenges they face in the implementation of chemical safety policies. The survey would be based on already-existing information and on any input provided by countries concerned.
   - On a voluntary basis, as funds are available, facilitation of visits to states that so request to evaluate the situation.
   - Recommendations on actions in chemical safety to be taken by the requesting government and/or the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) organizations.

2. Countries requiring external assistance, OECD countries, non-governmental organizations and other institutions, and other IFCS participants, in particular the IOMC organizations, should give high priority to this undertaking in line with the general recommendation from IFCS Priority for Action E3 to mobilize sufficient financial resources and technical assistance for the sound management of chemicals.

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3. Forum IV requested the Forum Standing Committee to review the implementation of the system in its regular sessions and report back to Forum V.
Globally Harmonized System (GHS) for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Action Plan

Emphasizing the important contribution of the GHS to promote sustainable development, such as reducing barriers to trade, and to protect human health and the environment from dangerous chemicals in all countries;

Appreciating the work of the IOMC and the UN Subcommittee of Experts on the GHS (UN SCEGHS) in developing and adopting the GHS as an international instrument;

Reaffirming the WSSD recommendation that all countries are encouraged to implement the GHS as soon as possible with a view to have the system fully operational by 2008;

Noting the importance of minimizing the transition period to global GHS implementation;

Emphasizing the importance of developed countries with existing systems to modify these systems to adopt the GHS;

Noting Resolution 2003/64 of July 2003 of the UN Economic and Social Council;

Appreciating the activities of the UNITAR/ILO GHS Training and Capacity Building Programme for developing and transition countries, such as implementation of collaborative pilot projects in Zambia, South Africa, Senegal and Sri Lanka;

Aware of and supporting the UNITAR/ILO/OECD initiated WSSD Global Partnership for Capacity Building to Implement the GHS launched in 2002;

Welcoming the framework workplan of the WSSD GHS Partnership, adopted at the first meeting of Partners on 10 July 2003;

Emphazing that GHS implementation has become one of the top priorities for capacity building for the sound management of chemicals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

Encouraging developing countries to seek within their national development priorities to integrate chemical management, and in particular the GHS, into national poverty reduction strategies and/or their national sustainable development policies; and

Noting with concern that current financial and technical resources to support GHS capacity building are not adequate.
Forum IV:

*Invites* UNITAR/ILO, as the focal point for capacity building in the UN SCEGHS, in collaboration with the Sub-committee to develop a roster of GHS experts who could provide support on training and capacity building activities on the application of GHS classification, labelling, and safety data sheets by the end of 2004.

*Encourages* the WSSD GHS Partnership to aim for the following specific targets for capacity building activities of their framework workplan of the Partnership:

- **Development of GHS Awareness Raising, Capacity Building Guidance and Training Materials**
  - GHS awareness raising, capacity building guidance and training materials (including GHS action plan development guidance, national situation analysis guidance and other training tools) prepared and pilot tested, and these outcomes endorsed by the UN SCEGHS, by the end of 2004.

- **GHS Capacity Development at the Regional Level**
  - At least two regional GHS workshops held and implementation strategies prepared by the end of 2005, taking into consideration regional economic integration arrangements.

- **GHS Capacity Development at the National Level**
  - At least two pilot projects for National GHS Situation Analysis, Action Plan Development and Implementation per IFCS region completed and evaluated by the end of 2006 (with a view to having the GHS operational by 2008).

*Calls upon* countries, regional economic integration organizations, donor organizations, multilateral financial institutions and stakeholder groups, in particular industry, to make available sufficient financial and technical resources to support national and regional GHS capacity building projects in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.⁵

*Invites* the Forum Standing Committee of the IFCS to bring the FORUM IV GHS Action Plan to the attention of the UN SCEGHS, and to submit a progress report to FORUM V.

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⁵ The Governments of Switzerland and Germany have indicated their intention to support various capacity building activities for GHS implementation.
Executive Summary

Prevention of Illegal International Traffic in Toxic and Dangerous Products Resolution

The Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety,

Recalling Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 on ‘Environmentally Sound Management of Toxic Chemicals including Prevention of Illegal International Traffic in Toxic and Dangerous Products’,

Further recalling the Bahia Declaration and the Priorities for Action Beyond 2000 adopted at its 3rd Session in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, October 2000, by participating Governments, IGOs and NGOs,

Noting the decision of Forum III to undertake work on the prevention of illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products in accordance with Programme Area F of the Priorities for Action Beyond 2000,

Noting further that progress on this work has been slower than desired,

Aware of the concerns of all countries, in particular the developing countries and countries with economies in transition, on the prevention of illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products,

Re-iterating its recommendations made at Forum III regarding prevention of illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products,

Noting the recommendation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in paragraph 23 of its Plan of Implementation on promotion of efforts to prevent international illegal traffic in hazardous chemicals,

Recognising the responsibility of all countries in the achievement of the widely shared goals of sustainable development,

Further recognising that the prevention of illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products is the responsibility of all countries at different levels of partnerships,

Noting that progress on addressing the recommendations of Forum III on this issue will require political will as well as financial and technical resources,

Further noting the urgency for all governments to take action at the national level to address problems of illegal traffic in dangerous and toxic products in accordance with the recommendations of Forum III, including ratifying relevant international agreements, in particular the Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions,

Reaffirms that the prevention of illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products is an issue of global priority as addressed under Chapter 19 of Agenda 21, the Bahia Declaration, the Priorities for Action Beyond 2000 and the WSSD Plan of Implementation,
1. Invites UNEP to take the lead in initiating the actions requested by Forum III on the prevention of illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products.

2. Calls upon Governments and organizations that are in a position to provide the necessary technical and financial resources to do so as a matter of urgency to enable the full and effective implementation of this decision.

3. Invites the governing bodies of the participating organizations of the IOMC, in particular the UNEP Governing Council, to consider adopting a decision on the prevention of illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products.

4. Requests UNEP, on behalf of the IOMC, to report to Forum V on the implementation of this decision.

5. Invites the World Customs Organization to participate in this activity.
Resources to Support IFCS Vice Presidents

The Forum elects countries to the IFCS Offices and Forum Standing Committee (FSC); a procedure adopted to ensure that required support is provided to enable individuals designated to carry out their responsibilities. The Forum stresses the importance of countries considering candidacy understanding the requirements of the IFCS position. This ensures the commitment being made is understood fully by the candidate.

Forum IV recognized that it may be very difficult for a developing country or country in economic transition to carry out the responsibilities of an IFCS Officer without external assistance. The Forum noted that the IFCS Secretariat could provide guidance as needed, but should not manage the funds.

The Forum considered what assistance could be given to a Vice President:

*Noting* that developing countries and countries in economic transition may lack the ability to provide the necessary resources to support a Vice President to perform the outstanding responsibilities in accordance with the roles defined by the IFCS,

*Agreed* that assistance could be acquired from donors in order to ensure the success in the implementation of the task of a Vice President. Such assistance could cover secretariat, communications, travel expenses, and meetings within their respective regions.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Children & Chemical Safety

Occupational Safety and Health

Hazard data generation and availability

Acutely Toxic Pesticides – risk management and reduction

Capacity building
  • Capacity building assistance
  • Addressing the widening gap among countries in following the chemicals safety policies

Globally Harmonized System (GHS) for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Action Plan

Prevention of illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products

Resources to support Vice Presidents

MEETING SUMMARY

ANNEXES:
1. List of meeting documents (IFCS/FORUM-IV/1 INF Rev 1)
2. List of acronyms
3. Report of African Regional Group Meetings
4. Report of Asia and the Pacific Regional Group Meetings
5. Report of Central and Eastern European Group Meetings
6. Report of Latin American and Caribbean Regional Group Meetings
7. Report of Western Europe and Other Groups Regional Group Meetings
8. Regional Roles and Responsibilities for Vice Presidents
9. Guidelines for National Focal Points
11. IFCS Trust Fund - Budget of the IFCS Secretariat 2004 – 2006
12. IFCS Elected Officers and Government Forum Standing Committee Members
13. List of Participants
The Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) is a broad-based alliance of all stakeholders concerned with environmentally sound management of chemicals. It operates on the basis of full and open participation, offering representatives the opportunity to meet and build partnerships, provide advice and guidance, make recommendations and monitor progress. The IFCS was established in 1994 in response to a recommendation adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development – UNCED, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

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