
Annex

IFCS Forum V
Plenary Information/Discussion Session on Tools and Approaches for
Applying Precaution in the Context of Chemicals Safety
Information Request for Background Paper
Structured Questionnaire

Background Information

Country: POLAND

Ministry/Agency/Institute/Organization: Bureau for Chemical Substances and Preparations

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Please submit completed questionnaire by 20 July 2006 to:

IFCS Secretariat
Email: ifcs@who.int
Fax: +41 22 791 4875

Please note: Unless you indicate otherwise in your response, these submissions will be posted on the IFCS website.

Please provide any links or additional supporting materials that provide additional information on particular policies, tools, or activities.

National chemicals policy or management:

1. How is the concept of precaution explicitly or implicitly (in terms of decision-making under conditions of uncertainty) incorporated in national chemicals policy or management in your country/organization?

Please check all that apply.

In the country constitution ?

In legislation?

In agency/ministry/organization policy?

In specific guidance documents for risk assessment or risk management?

Applied in specific cases but no particular policy?

Not applied at all?

Please provide greater detail (1 para).

Polish government accepts and applies precautionary principle in full agreement with the statement laid down in the Treaty of European Community.

Tools and approaches for applying precaution:

2. What are some of the key tools and approaches used by your country/organization in applying precaution (or making decisions in circumstances of uncertainty) in the context of chemicals safety?

a. Is there a defined approach to applying precaution or decision-making under uncertainty?

Yes No

If yes, can you outline the elements of that approach or provide references to it?

b. Is precaution integrated in other decision-making processes, tools and approaches such as;

Please check all that apply.

- Data collection?
- Prioritization of substances for risk management actions
- Uncertainty characterization?
- Socio-economic analysis (e.g., social impact, proportionality/cost-benefit assessment, trade concern)?
- Risk assessment and risk management options?
- Screening, comparison of alternatives, informed substitution?
- Stakeholder and Public involvement?
- Other

For those boxes checked, please briefly provide greater detail or links to additional information.

c. How are gaps in knowledge addressed?

Please check all that apply.

- o Though conservative risk assessment assumptions
- o Through safety factors
- o Through modeling techniques
- o Through an assumption that lack of information is indication of potential harm
- o Through requesting additional research
- o Gaps are not addressed

For those boxes checked, please briefly provide greater detail or links to additional information.

3. Please provide details of a particular case (or example) where precaution was applied (or decisions made in the face of uncertainty) in the context of chemicals management?

a. What stimulated/initiated the precaution process/action?

Please check all that apply.

- o Government concern over hazards and/or exposures
- o Stakeholder concerns over the particular threat
- o International policy requirements/pressures
- o Negative impacts/experience(s) from not acting on a previous chemical risk
- o Other

For those boxes checked, please briefly provide greater detail or links to additional information.

b. What process was used to make the decision? (please briefly describe the process or tools used to make the decision)

c. Were there positive or negative impacts of this process/action?

Please check all that apply.

<u>Positive</u>		<u>Negative</u>	
Ecological or Health benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ecological or health impacts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic benefit	<input type="checkbox"/>	Economic impacts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved government/industry image	<input type="checkbox"/>	Substitutes/alternatives did not work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved government/public morale	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negative public reaction	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvements to scientific tools/decision processes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other?	<input type="checkbox"/>		

For those boxes checked, please briefly provide greater detail or links to additional information.

d. Were there any unintended consequences from this process/action?

Positive – please describe

Negative - please describe

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4. Are there any particular cases in your country/organization where precaution was not applied (decisions not made in the face of uncertain chemical risks) resulting in adverse impacts?

Yes No

If yes, briefly describe if and how decision-making processes have been modified as a result.

5. Does your government have processes in place to re-examine decisions made based on precaution or made in the face of uncertainty as additional data are available?

Yes No

If yes, briefly describe the process and how this process may be used to modify decisions, decision-making process, or tools.

Lessons Learned from applying precaution in chemicals management

6. What are some of the biggest challenges to your country's (organization's) application of precaution in the context of chemicals management or in chemicals management decision-making in the face of uncertainty?

Please check all that apply.

- Scientific capacity
- Lack of scientific information
- Legal challenges
- Technical challenges
- Financial challenges
- Trade Challenges
- Other?

For those checked boxes, please briefly indicate what were the implications of these barriers and how have they been addressed or if not yet addressed, how could they be addressed?

Are these challenges also applicable to decision-making and actions regarding established risks?

Yes

No

Next steps

7. What are the most important needs of your country or organization for more effectively applying precaution (or making decisions in the face of uncertainty) and overcoming barriers in chemicals management decision-making?

Please check all that apply.

- Data on chemical toxicity/risks
- Tools for prioritization
- Tools for risk assessment
- Decision-making tools/frameworks
- Technical assistance in risk assessment processes
- Technical assistance in risk management processes
- Financial support for implementation
- International dialogue
- Information sharing to facilitate understanding of the issues
- Other

For those boxes checked, please briefly provide greater detail or links to additional information.

8. Briefly describe your perceptions as to some of the concerns regarding application of precaution in the context of chemicals safety?

Please briefly provide details or links to additional information.

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9. Do you have any additional information on tools and approaches for applying precaution that would be helpful to inform discussion?
Please provide any additional materials or web links.

Please note: Unless you indicate otherwise in your response, your submission and those of others will be posted on the IFCS website.