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## 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: Vietnam

Ministry/Agency/Institute/Organization: Centre of Promotion Technology  
Environment and Chemical Safety

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**Please submit completed questionnaire by 20 July 2006 to:**

**IFCS Secretariat**  
**Email: [ifcs@who.int](mailto: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.**

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*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 ?  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| In legislation?  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| In agency/ministry/organization policy?                                | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| In specific guidance documents for risk assessment or risk management? | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Applied in specific cases but no particular policy?                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Not applied at all?  | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

Please provide greater detail (1 para).

Many legal documents on chemical control have been issued:

1. Constitution 1992
2. Environment Protection Law 1993
3. Government's Decree on Chemical Safety, 2005

**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?

For precaution of hazardous chemicals' effect, the key instrument used by Vietnam is legal documents with obvious award - punishment regulations.

- 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?

Legal documents used are Environment Protection law, decree of the Government on chemical safety. Large cities also build up action programmes on environment protection during 2005 - 2010. Hanoi and Hochiminh cities until 2010 will move 100% polluting establishments, provide treatment of 100% productional waste water, 100% medical solid wastes, compliant with environmental standards.

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

*Please check all that apply.*

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

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.*

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

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

To reduce content of persistent organic pollutants in industrial production, many researches have been carried out, such as: Research on Paper Breaching technology Improvement to Reduce Dioxins, Study on Waste Water from Coal-Consuming Power Plants to Reduce Dioxins, Phenol, PAH.

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.*

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

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

With the Government's concern and requirements of international organisations of which Vietnam is a member, prevention of environmental pollution has been speeded up.

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

Vietnamese Government has issued legal documents as instrument of chemical management such as: Environment Protection Law and Decree on Chemical Safety.

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

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

The process of precaution of positive effects on chemical management, chemical safety brings in great benefits regarding human health, ecology, economy. It raise the Government's position and economic sectors' positions in the processes of environment protection and chemical safety.

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

Positive  – please describe

Improving product quality.

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.

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**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?

The greatest challenges in precaution are: legal challenge, technical challenge and financial challenge. Vietnam is aiming at overcoming such challenges to apply precaution solutions.

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

Yes  No

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**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.

The most important requirements for effective precaution and overcoming the barriers are: chemical safety data, instrumentation for the purpose of precaution, technical and financial support.

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.*

Precaution is one major content of chemical safety management. Recently, precaution methods has achieved certain results. However, more efforts are needed to meet the requirements.

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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.**