Second Meeting of the Intersessional Group of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety

Canberra, Australia
5-8 March, 1996

FINAL REPORT
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SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents a summary of the action items, conclusions and recommendations agreed during ISG-2 abstracted from the main section of the report. The items are grouped by topic area as discussed and are not listed in any priority order.

IFCS BUDGET

A1. ISG-2 agreed to the adoption of the proposed budget -- $531,150 for 1996 and $688,904 for 1997 as described in the working paper (ISG/96.3.Rev2).

A2. As part of the longer term issue, ISG-2 authorized the President to explore the possibility of industry support, taking into account concerns raised by countries and some NGOs about the need to avoid undue influence and the need to avoid long term dependence on a limited number of funding sources.

A3. ISG-2 recommended that Governments consider further contributions to the IFCS budget.

A4. The Ad Hoc Working Group on the Agenda for Forum II will consider whether more formal fund-raising mechanisms are needed.

NATIONAL PROFILES

A5. UNITAR committed to revising their Guidance Document to increase its flexibility to accommodate varying national circumstances and to include the option of completing a mini-profile as an initial step in the development of a comprehensive national profile. The revised document will be available and distributed by the end of May 1996.

PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS (POPs)

A6. The meeting agreed that the available scientific evidence on tasks a) and b) of Decision 18/32 is sufficient to demonstrate the need for international action on the 12 specified substances (see footnote in paragraph 32 for description of tasks).

A7. Recognizing the desirability of improving the scientific information base, the meeting agreed that an "open file" be created to provide for more comprehensive reporting of peer reviewed scientific information on tasks a) and b) i.e. the chemistry, toxicology, transport pathways, origin, transport and deposition of the 12 specified substances on a global scale.
A8. The meeting concluded that information is needed on the 12 specified POPs to complete the tasks in paragraphs c), d) and e) of Decision 18/32 and to address socio-economic considerations as a basis for development of recommendations and information for international action (see footnote in paragraph 32 for description of tasks).

A9. UNEP offered to serve as a clearing house for all information and will issue periodic updates on the contents of the file.

A10. An IFCS Working Group on POPs was established by adopting the Ad Hoc Working Group on POPs that was set up by UNEP within the framework of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC).

A11. An IFCS sponsored meeting will be held in June 1996 in the Philippines to address tasks c) and d) of Decision 18/32. This will be followed by an open meeting of the IFCS Working Group on POPs to review the results of the meeting on tasks c) and d), to address task e) of Decision 18/32 and to develop recommendations and information on international action, including such information as would be needed for a possible decision regarding an appropriate international legal mechanism on POPs (see footnote in paragraph 32 for description of tasks).

A12. The IFCS Working Group on POPs will submit a report containing information and recommendations resulting from the June meetings to all IFCS participants for review and comments by July 31, 1996. A summary of the comments received will be submitted with the report to UNEP and WHO by August 31, 1996.

A13. Criteria for adding POPs to the list will not be developed by IFCS in 1996, since other groups will address this during this time period. However, a proposed process for the development of science-based criteria should be included in the recommendations to UNEP Governing Council (UNEP GC) and World Health Assembly (WHA), and should build upon ongoing activities such as those under the UN ECE Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP) Convention. The meeting requested the UK to consider drafting a proposal for this process based on the work of the UN ECE Preparatory Working Group on POPs.

HARMONIZATION OF CHEMICAL CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING

A14. ISG-2 made the following recommendations to the CG/HCCS:

a. Further development of options for an instrument, including full consideration of the US proposal for a non-binding international standard as a mechanism for implementation, for the Forum II in 1997.

b. Clarification of the intended scope for the proposed instrument by revision of CG/HCCS terms of reference.
c. Completion of technical work as expeditiously as possible recognising that non-consensus issues be clearly identified.

d. For the CG/HCCS to continue awareness raising /information activities involving all interested countries.

INTERNATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

A15. ISG-2 noted the report of the October 1995 IFCS Meeting on Coordination of Work on the Assessment of Existing Chemicals in Paris and recommends the continued involvement of this group in coordinating the activities which develop international assessments, to ensure that, as far as possible, there is not duplication of effort and overlap in document preparation. The group should be expanded to include representative regional participation from developing countries.

A16. Assessments currently counted as meeting the IFCS targets based on criteria established at the Paris meeting are: IPCS Environmental Health Criteria documents (EHC); IPCS Concise International Chemical Assessment Documents (CICAD); OECD Screening Information Data Sets (SIDS). The coordinating group referred to in the previous paragraph was requested to prepare a paper for Forum II in 1997 which outlines the progress in programme Area A including meeting the international assessment targets of 200 additional chemicals by 1997 and another 300 by 2000. The paper should also evaluate the targeted assessment documents referred to in the ISG working paper ISG96.4 by the criteria cited at the Paris meeting, including transparency of the review process, and recommend which ones should count as international assessments based on their relative conformity to those criteria.

INFORMATICS

A17. The President noted that the Informatics Seminar, held 3-4 March in Canberra, has given good background on current Internet and other electronic capabilities for sharing chemical safety information, and requested that the IOMC consider the issues of access to information and implementation of information dissemination mechanisms in countries with varying degrees of infrastructure, and develop a report for the IFCS II meeting. The IOMC was also requested to coordinate work in this area with interested countries.

A18. The Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Forum II was requested to consider the need and possible scheduling arrangements for future informatics seminars.
TREATMENT OF OBSOLETE CHEMICALS

A19. ISG-2 agreed to the formation of a small Co-ordinating Group on Obsolete Chemicals, composed of Mali, Greenpeace, Australia, UNEP, GIFAP to compile information on existing activities. A direct request should be made to FAO for information and their participation in the work of the Co-ordinating Group so that efforts are coordinated. The group will assess the strengths and weaknesses of the programmes and identify further needs.

A20. Based on the outcome of the assessment, the IFCS Secretariat may be requested to invite FAO to consider convening an Ad Hoc Working Group on Obsolete Chemicals with wide participation which could make recommendations to Forum II on further action and the need for improvements.

STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY FOR CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT

A21. Key areas and activities were identified and proposals made for the efforts of each of the participants including the following:

a. ICCA to report on progress in its various activities and efforts to assist in capacity building in developing countries,

b. GIFAP to widely disseminate information on its efforts to train government, local industry and farmers in the safe use of crop protection chemicals,

c. IFCS Secretariat to facilitate
   - the distribution to all IFCS members a listing of all documents produced by international organizations relating to all programme areas of Chapter 19,
   - the avoidance of conflicts in scheduling of meetings of international organizations which are of relevance to IFCS members,
   - better use of regional programmes of IOMC member organizations and other existing regional and subregional networks to enhance the capacity of developing countries to participate effectively in IFCS activities;

d. OECD to develop an information exchange programme to facilitate coordination of capacity building assistance provided by member countries and to disseminate this information to IFCS members;

e. IOMC to co-ordinate national and regional training and capacity building efforts of international organizations, and prepare a progress report for the 1997 Forum II on regional needs based on country National Profiles.
A22 In view of the large volume of documents available on capacity building, UNITAR offered to centrally collect the information.

FORUM II

A23. ISG-2 agreed to the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Forum II in 1997. The Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda was requested to include the following in its discussions:

a. whether more formal fund-raising mechanisms are needed for the IFCS Trust Fund.

b. consider the inclusion of PRTRs on the agenda and develop possible mechanisms to prepare background documents, including possible draft recommendations for future actions on PRTRs.

c. the appropriate role of scientific NGOs in the preparation for the 1997 Forum II.

d. recommendation on establishing a World Chemical Safety Day, noting the concerns expressed about costs and considering potential linkages to World Environment Day.

e. continuing the practice of assigning key topics of concern to the regional working groups or topical working groups for discussion before consideration in plenary.

A24. The ISG agreed to recognize Dr R. Löngren at the 1997 Forum II meeting for his instrumental role in establishing international chemical safety programmes and his contribution to the creation of the IFCS. Other contributors to the progress in international chemical safety work could be recognized at future meetings.

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD) AND SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A25. Members of the Forum are encouraged to bring the chemicals issues to the attention of their delegations to the CSD 4 meeting, 16 April - 3 May 1996, and to propose chemicals as one of the priority issues for the 1997 CSD meeting and the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in June 1997. The President of the Forum should also approach the Chair of the CSD on the same issue.

A26. It was agreed that a country representative, working with the President, would bring forward the translated reports from the 1997 Forum to the Spring 1997 CSD and June 1997 UNGA Special Session.
A27. Other means of informing the CSD and UNGA of the Forum’s work will also be followed, as discussed in Annex 12, including preparing a progress report during the 4th quarter of 1996 and transmitting it to the CSD through a national report.

GENERAL

A28. Recognising the critical role national focal points have in ensuring the success of the Forum, countries were urged to update or designate a national focal point who has the requisite representation for the IFCS.

A29. Noting that intersectoral coordination is crucial to IFCS work, ISG-2 encouraged countries to strengthen their national coordination and regional networks.

A30. ISG-2 requested the President to write to appropriate Heads of Delegation asking them to bring the issue of UNEP funding for chemical safety programmes to the attention of the UNEP Governing Council and also write to the Executive Director, UNEP to advise of this IFCS initiative through Heads of Delegations.

A31. ISG-2 requested that the President communicate to FAO the disappointment of participants that FAO was not able to attend ISG-2 and stress the importance of FAO participation in the work of the IFCS.

A32. It was recommended that the IFCS Secretariat develop an on-going Action List and status report to track progress on the action items decided at each meeting.
INTRODUCTION

1. The second meeting of the Intersessional Group (ISG-2) of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) was held 5-8 March 1996 in Canberra, Australia, hosted by the Australian Department of Health and Family Services and the Environmental Protection Agency. Twenty-four members of the ISG participated in the meeting. Representatives from 14 other countries, the Commission of the European Union (EC), 10 intergovernmental and 13 non-governmental organizations also took part in the meeting. A list of participants is given in Annex 15. Dr G. Bengtsson (Sweden) chaired as President, with Mr Y. Zang (China), Professor G. Kanoute (Mali) and Dr G. Olaiz (Mexico) serving as Vice Presidents.

2. The Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency, Mr B. Carbon, welcomed participants and noted the Australian Government’s strong interest in global chemical safety issues and their potential to impact on Australia's environment.

3. The President noted the substantial progress in IFCS activities since its foundation in 1994. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) plans to review progress on Agenda 21 Chapter 19 in 1997.

4. The President recommended a review of procedures in preparation for the second IFCS meeting (Forum II) in 1997 and thanked Canada for offering to be the host in Ottawa next February. The President also asked countries to think about the year 2000 Forum meeting, as well as subsequent ISG meetings, all of which need hosts.

5. The President noted receipt of a report from Sweden on the outcome of the Round Table Meeting of Ministers and Chief Executive Officers of several chemical industries in January 1996, hosted by the government of Sweden, which had discussed a possible workshop on risk management of chemicals in developing countries and proposed a report from industry NGOs to Forum II on progress on the Responsible Care programme. In view of the industry's offer to report on Responsible Care achievements to the 1997 Forum II, a common interest area might be the initiation by industry of programmes for Responsible Care in more developing countries, including the establishment of the necessary infrastructure in the form of national or regional associations capable of running such programmes.

6. A number of countries questioned the relative priority of the topics selected for the ISG-2 thematic sessions. It was recognized that greater involvement of the members of the ISG was required so that future agenda might more closely reflect current high priorities, including the priorities and special needs of developing countries.

7. After discussion, the agenda was adopted subject to identification of additional priority items for discussion to be proposed by the regional working groups based on topics suggested in plenary.

8. Participants accepted the nomination of a Drafting Group including the following rapporteurs: P. Harris (Australia), K. Garvey (USA), I. Obadia (ILO), G. Lloyd (ICCA), B. Dinham (Consumers International), and J. Stober (IFCS Secretariat). NGO participants
rotated in subsequent days with T. Jacob (ICCA), J. Weinberg (Greenpeace), W. Muir (WRI), and B. Rutherford (WWF) also serving. The Drafting Group was given the task of producing a draft report of the meeting for review in plenary session.

9. After discussion, it was agreed that reports during the course of ISG-2 would be in English with assistance provided in other languages as needed. The final report will be available in English, French and Spanish. Australia volunteered to aid the Secretariat in the translation of the final report.
MEETING SUMMARY

IFCS ACTIVITIES

10. The ISG-2 noted with appreciation Dr M. Mercier's presentation on IFCS activities as described in paper ISG/96.21.

IFCS BUDGET

11. Dr E. Somers presented the IFCS Secretariat's financial situation including the 1996-1997 proposed budget as described in paper ISG/96.3 Rev2. He noted that WHO has provided the services of Drs M. Mercier (Executive Secretary) and J. Stober (Special Advisor) and other support for the past two years. A more consistent and long-term funding approach is required for the future.

12. The President noted the need to consider short term and long term budget needs. The meeting noted with appreciation the increase in support to the IFCS Secretariat for 1996, 1997 and 1998 to be provided by the government of Germany.

13. ISG-2 agreed to the adoption of the proposed budget -- $531,150 for 1996 and $688,904 for 1997 as described in the working paper.

14. As part of the longer term issue, ISG-2 authorized the President to explore the possibility of industry support, taking into account concerns raised by countries and some NGOs about the need to avoid undue influence and the need to avoid long term dependence on a limited number of funding sources.

15. During ISG-2 the President and Secretariat consulted widely on the subject of financing with representatives of countries in different stages of development, public interest groups, industry and intergovernmental organisations. In these consultations, several countries indicated they would address the matter of national contributions to the IFCS budget after ISG-2. Industry indicated a willingness to consider requests for support corresponding to a fraction of the total IFCS budget, at least if they pertained to specific projects that might be of common interest to industry and IFCS. A spokesperson on behalf of the public interest NGOs commented that the process of contributing to the IFCS needs to be transparent. The Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda will consider whether more formal fund-raising mechanisms are needed (see para 17.c.).
16. ISG-2 took note of the President's report and recommended that Governments consider further contributions to the IFCS budget.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS ON IFCS PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

17. The Executive Secretary provided an overview of the progress on IFCS recommendations on priorities for action, as described in paper ISG/96.4. Substantial progress in a number of areas was noted. A number of issues for potential discussion were identified and assigned for further discussion during ISG-2 in regional working groups, plenary sessions and designated working groups.

   a. Regional Working Groups should consider needs in Programme Area A; Prior Informed Consent Procedure (PIC); Programme area D (risk reduction particularly dealing with agro-chemicals); informatics; capacity building coordination; and a World Chemical Safety Day.

   b. The Plenary session should consider the mechanisms for reporting to the CSD4 in April/May 1996 and from the 1997 Forum II to the session of the CSD in April 1997 and the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on UNCED to be held in June 1997. A working group was formed to bring information back to the Plenary. Subsequently the issue was referred to the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Forum II (see para 17.c.).

18. ISG-2 agreed to the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Forum II in 1997. The membership noted in Annex 2 (ISG/96.WG.4.Rev.1) was approved by ISG-2. The report of a meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group held during ISG-2 (Annex 3, ISG/96.WG.7) is summarized in a later section of this report.

19. In addition, Costa Rica stressed the need for free access for developing countries to all chemical safety information.

20. It was also noted that two scientific organizations had offered to prepare a paper on animal testing and possible alternative methods for Forum II.

THEMATIC SESSION ON POLLUTANT RELEASE AND TRANSFER REGISTERS (PRTRs)

21. A panel chaired by Mexico and the USA and including OECD, Czech Republic, UK, Australia, Mexico and UNITAR presented a number of useful experiences in implementing national PRTR programs. These presentations were supplemented by a number of countries and agencies detailing their experiences with PRTRs, and OECD described the development of its PRTR guidance document.
22. An industry NGO outlined key points for national PRTR efforts, particularly the need to focus on environmental releases, and noted that, where responsible PRTR programs have been initiated, the combination of external scrutiny of environmental releases and the chemical industry's Responsible Care program have consistently put chemical companies in the forefront of emissions reductions.

23. A number of countries noted they had not had time to evaluate the OECD guidance document, which had only recently been made available, and determine its national implications. Environmental NGOs supported the PRTR activity in general and particularly supported the OECD guidance document. The NGOs also supported regional workshops to expand implementation of PRTRs, and in this context highlighted the efforts of UNITAR in promoting the design and adoption of PRTRs in developing countries.

24. The USA proposed a draft declaration on PRTRs and the creation of a working group to meet after ISG-2 and further develop the proposed declaration on PRTRs for adoption at the 1997 Forum II. Following detailed discussion, the proposal was referred to regional working groups and an informal working group for further consideration.

25. The informal working group comprised of the Czech Republic, Mexico, United Kingdom, United States, ICCA, WWF, and UNITAR reported back on possible future work in this area (Annex 4, ISG/96.WP.12Rev.1). The report highlighted progress achieved in developing PRTRs, principles for designing national PRTRs and statements from public interest and industry NGOs on the benefits of PRTRs.

26. The working group proposed that the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Forum II consider the inclusion of PRTRs on the agenda and develop possible mechanisms to prepare background documents, including possible draft recommendations for future actions on PRTRs.

REPORT ON THE EXPANDED AMERICAS REGIONAL MEETING (November 1995)

27. Mexico presented the outcome of the Expanded Americas meeting, including activities that were initiated and concerns that were identified, that met in November 1995 in Puerto Rico. Some of the concerns mentioned were: lack of involvement of developing countries in the design of international assessments and related processes; lack of chemical safety training opportunities; regional priorities for action on heavy metals and pesticides; lack of consideration of tropical conditions in risk assessments and labelling; persistent organic pollutants (POPs); and lead risk reduction. OECD noted the recent Declaration of OECD Member Countries on Risk Reduction for Lead and its invitation to non-OECD member countries to associate themselves with it.

28. Brazil noted the continuing need for greater sharing of information about IFCS activities with developing countries and greater involvement in IFCS-related activities.

29. Note was taken that the UNEP/UNIDO National Cleaner Production Centers in Brazil and Mexico commenced their activities in 1995.
30. The benefit of other regions undertaking this type of regional coordinating mechanism for IFCS activities was noted. The President remarked on the extensive work of the Expanded Americas regional group and suggested that the report be used as background for discussions in the other regional working groups and considered in setting the 1997 Forum II agenda.

NATIONAL PROFILES

31. Australia provided an overview of its principles paper on chemicals management, which noted the importance of recognizing that Programme Area E activities underpin all other initiatives for sound national chemical safety management. Each country must identify its own risk reduction goals based on national situations and develop specific strategies tailored to national needs.

32. UNITAR identified four principles for development of comprehensive national profiles as noted in ISG/96.8. Mexico, the Czech Republic and Zambia presented reports on the development of their national profiles.

33. All three countries referred to the benefits of preparing the national profile through a process involving all interested parties at the country level as a basis for national capacity building. They also indicated that the UNITAR Guidance Document provided useful guidance for preparation of a comprehensive national profiles and that it was flexible enough to meet the needs of different countries.

34. Australia announced its intention to commit resources to a project to support national profile development in the South Pacific region.

35. A draft proposal was brought forward from the Expanded Americas Regional Group suggesting that countries consider developing interim mini-profiles using the Canadian national profile as a model as a means of moving forward to meet the priority for action deadline in 1997.

36. The President summarized the following key points and invited the regional working groups to consider them in their discussions and ensure that comments on this topic are reflected in the regional working group reports (Annexes 5 to 8).

- Profiles are "living" documents that could be developed in progressive stage;
- Profiles must be developed with broad consultation, since the process alone can bring important benefits;
- ISG-2 needs to consider the issue of whether countries should proceed immediately with a comprehensive national profile or do a mini-profile as an interim step.
- UNITAR’s request for feedback on a number of points at the end of its paper (ISG/96.8).
UNITAR’s recommendation for twinning arrangements between developed and developing countries to work jointly on national profile development.

The need for additional feedback to the IFCS on how the work to develop national profiles can best be undertaken and how it can be assisted by international organizations.

Since progress in Programme Area E is slow, there is a need for timely development of some form of national profile by each country with the goal of completion by October 1996.

37. After discussions by the regional working groups, UNITAR stated that it would revise their Guidance Document to include the option of completing a mini-profile as an initial step in the development of a comprehensive national profile. The revised document will be available and distributed by the end of May 1996. Mexico, having completed both a mini and comprehensive national profile, volunteered to assist UNITAR in the revisions.
THEMATIC SESSION ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS (POPs)

38. Canada introduced this item and summarized the general background to the issue, the mandate contained in UNEP GC Decision 18/32 (May 1995), progress achieved to date and the decisions that were required of the meeting. The following paragraphs summarize the decisions taken by ISG-2, the full text of the report of the thematic session is contained in Annex 9 (ISG96/WP.6Rev2).

39. The meeting agreed that the available scientific evidence on tasks a) and b) of Decision 18/32 is sufficient to demonstrate the need for international action on the 12 specified substances.

40. Recognizing the desirability of improving the scientific information base, the meeting agreed that an "open file" be created to provide for more comprehensive reporting of peer reviewed scientific information on tasks a) and b) i.e. the chemistry, toxicology, transport pathways, origin, transport and deposition of the 12 specified substances on a global scale.

41. The meeting concluded that information is needed on the 12 specified POPs to complete the tasks in paragraphs c), d) and e) of Decision 18/32 and to address socio-economic considerations as a basis for development of recommendations and information for international action.

42. UNEP offered to serve as a clearing house for all information and will issue periodic updates on the contents of the file.

43. An IFCS Working Group on POPs was established by adopting the ad hoc working group on POPs that was set up by UNEP within the framework of the IOMC.

44. An IFCS sponsored meeting will be held in June 1996 in the Philippines to address tasks c) and d) of Decision 18/32. This will be followed by an open meeting of the IFCS Working Group on POPs to review the results of the meeting on tasks c) and d), to address task e) of Decision 18/32 and to develop recommendations and information on international action, including such information as would be needed for a possible decision regarding an appropriate international legal mechanism on POPs.

45. The IFCS Working Group on POPs will submit a report containing information and recommendations resulting from the June meetings to all IFCS participants for review and comments by July 31, 1996. A summary of the comments received will be submitted with the report to UNEP and the WHO by August 31, 1996.

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1 The five tasks set forth in section 1 of UNEP Governing Council Decision 18/32 for the POPs short list: (a) consolidate existing information...on the chemistry and toxicology of the substances; (b) analyze the relevant transport pathways and the origin, transport and deposition of these substances on a global scale; (c) examine the sources, benefits, risks and other considerations relevant to production and use; (d) evaluate the availability, including costs and effectiveness, of preferable substitutes, where applicable, and; (e) assess realistic response strategies, policies and mechanisms for reducing and/or eliminating emissions, discharges and losses of POPs.
46. Criteria for adding POPs to the list will not be developed by IFCS in 1996, since other groups will address this during this time period. However, a proposed process for the development of science-based criteria should be included in the recommendations to UNEP GC and WHA, and should build upon ongoing activities such as those under the UN ECE LRTAP Convention. The meeting requested the UK to consider drafting a proposal for this process based on the work of the UN ECE Preparatory Working Group on POPs.

47. There was limited discussion of resources needed to support the work on POPs; however, 3 countries indicated their willingness to support developing country participation at the June meetings and previous discussions on encouraging "twinning" arrangements was reiterated.

**THEMATIC SESSION ON HARMONIZATION OF CHEMICAL CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING**

48. The members of IOMC Coordinating Group for the Harmonisation of Chemical Classification Systems (CG/HCCS) provided an introduction to their work including the need for harmonisation, the guiding principles and the benefits to a harmonised approach. Presentations were given on the 3 work areas (OECD for health and environmental hazards, ILO for hazard communication (which includes labels and material safety data sheets) and UNCETDG for physical hazards). Progress reports were given for each of the areas and future activities noted. Options for an international instrument covering binding, non-binding and intermediate mechanisms for implementation (ISG96/6) were described.

49. A further proposal to those described in ISG96/6 was put forward by the USA for a non-binding international standard as a mechanism for implementation; any country could require that chemical imports meet this standard. If a significant number of countries agreed to use the standard, the trade between them would be greatly simplified and this would be an incentive for other to follow suit, thus avoiding the need for extensive and expensive formal negotiating processes. This proposal was generally accepted as a further option for a non-binding instrument with the understanding that the CG/HCCS would further elaborate and consult on this proposal for development of recommendations to IFCS.

50. It was recognized that as the technical work progresses there may be a need to sharpen the focus of the scope without permanently excluding categories of chemicals. The CG/HCCS will address this issue in conjunction with the groups carrying out the technical work of harmonization.

51. The CG/HCCS presented its report of the thematic session (Annex 10, (ISG/96.WP.13.REV.1), which was endorsed by ISG-2, and includes the following recommendations:

   a. Further development of options for an instrument, including full consideration of the US proposal for the Forum II in 1997.
b. Clarification of the intended scope for the proposed instrument by revision of CG/HCCS terms of reference.

c. Completion of technical work as expeditiously as possible recognising that non consensus issues be clearly identified.

d. For the CG/HCCS to continue awareness raising /information activities involving all interested countries.

52. The experience in Central America on labelling of pesticides was presented by Costa Rica. Meetings with farmers indicate that the current labelling is too complex. Farmers prefer simple information for easy comprehension. Symbols are important since many farmers do not speak Spanish or are illiterate. It was proposed that a Central American group work with CG/HCCS on labelling harmonization issues.

INTERNATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

53. Australia presented the report of an ISG-2 working group meeting on programme area A (Annex 11, ISG/96.WG.5.Rev.1). ISG-2 endorsed the report and agreed to include it in an annex with highlights provided in the following paragraphs.

54. A critical issue discussed by the group was the need to avoid duplication of effort in conducting international assessments on chemicals.

55. ISG-2 noted the report of the October 1995 IFCS Meeting on Coordination of Work on the Assessment of Existing Chemicals in Paris and recommends the continued involvement of this group in coordinating the activities which develop international assessments, to ensure that, as far as possible, there is not duplication of effort and overlap in document preparation. The group should be expanded to include representative regional participation from developing countries.

56. Assessments currently counted as meeting the IFCS targets based on criteria established at the Paris meeting are: IPCS/EHC; IPCS/CICAD; OECD/SIDS. The coordinating group referred to in the previous paragraph was requested to prepare a paper for Forum II in 1997 which outlines the progress in programme Area A including meeting the international assessment targets of 200 additional chemicals by 1997 and another 300 by 2000. The paper should also evaluate the targeted assessment documents referred to in the ISG working paper ISG96.4 by the criteria cited at the Paris meeting, including transparency of the review process, and recommend which ones should count as international assessments based on their relative conformity to those criteria.

57. Brazil noted that the three types of current international assessments (IPCS EHCs & CICADs and OECD SIDS) had varying degrees of usefulness to the global community due to the scope of the assessments and the level of participation by developing countries in their development and review.
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WORLD CHEMICAL SAFETY DAY

58. Participants discussed the advantages and costs of establishing a World Chemical Safety Day. All participants noted the benefits of such a day in communicating the results of the Forum. Concern was expressed about the costs. It was decided to defer this topic to the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Forum II in 1997 to develop a recommendation for this area, noting the concerns expressed about costs. The Ad Hoc Working Group will also consider potential linkages to World Environment Day.

INFORMATION SHARING AND INFORMATICS

59. Australia noted the success of the Informatics Seminar preceding ISG-2. Participants discussed the advantages of continuing this type of information exchange at subsequent IFCS meetings.

60. Costa Rica expressed concern about the lack of access by many developing countries to the Internet.

61. UNEP noted the existence of an IOMC Coordinating Group for Information Exchange. This Group considers all means of communicating information to developing countries and also plans to form discussion groups on technical and policy information exchange issues.

62. The USA noted that countries also share responsibility and must seek feedback on their information sharing outreach efforts.

63. The President noted that the Informatics Seminar provided a good background on current capabilities and requested that the IOMC consider the issues of access to information and implementation of information dissemination mechanisms in countries with varying degrees of infrastructure, and develop a report for the Forum II meeting. The IOMC was also requested to coordinate work in this area with interested countries.

64. The Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Forum II was requested to consider the need and possible scheduling arrangements for future informatics seminars.

65. IUPAC noted the development of the UNEP/ECETOC Inventory on Critical Reviews on Chemicals (ICRC) which will be available on CD ROM.

TREATMENT OF OBSOLETE CHEMICALS

66. Mali presented the Africa Working Group’s recommendations for action on the treatment of obsolete chemicals, a topic that had been identified in Plenary sessions earlier as an important need (Annex 5, ISG/96.RWG-AF.4.Rev.1). One recommendation was to form a small task group to steer and co-ordinate an effort to define the scope of the problem and outline an action plan.
67. A number of participants noted that FAO has on-going work in the area of pesticides and substantial information may already be available. A direct request should be made to FAO for information and efforts should be coordinated.

68. ISG-2 agreed to the formation of a small Co-ordinating Group on Obsolete Chemicals, composed of Mali, Greenpeace, Australia, UNEP, GIFAP to compile information on existing activities. A direct request should be made to FAO for information and their participation in the work of the Co-ordinating Group so that efforts are coordinated. The group will assess the strengths and weaknesses of the programmes and identify further needs.

69. Based on the outcome of the assessment, the IFCS Secretariat may be requested to invite FAO to consider convening an Ad Hoc Working Group on Obsolete Chemicals with wide participation which could make recommendatons to the Forum on further action and the need for improvements.

FORUM 1997

70. Canada proposed and it was agreed that the Forum II will be held from February 10-14, 1997 in Ottawa.

71. ISG-2 accepted with pleasure Canada's offer to host the Forum II.


73. It was agreed that the members of the ISG should be encouraged to bring the chemical safety work/issue to the attention of their CSD delegations to the CSD-4 meeting from 16 April-3 May 1996 and propose chemical safety as a priority issue for the 1997 CSD and UNGA meetings.

74. It was agreed that a country representative, working with the President, would bring forward the translated reports from the 1997 Forum to the Spring 1997 CSD meeting and June 1997 UNGA Special Session.

75. Other means of informing the CSD and UNGA of the Forum's work will also be followed, as discussed in Annex 12, including preparing a progress report during the 4th quarter of 1996 and transmitting it to the CSD through a national report.

76. The USA proposed, and the ISG agreed, to recognize Dr R. Lönngren at the 1997 Forum II for his instrumental role in establishing international chemical safety programmes and his contribution to the creation of the IFCS. Other contributors to progress international chemical safety work could be recognized at future meetings.

77. The Agenda Working Group plans to meet 6-8 May 1996 in Ottawa with the goal of developing and distributing a list of potential agenda items by the end of May. Sweden will develop an extensive working list of potential agenda items and comments from participants will be requested prior to the May meeting.
PRIOR INFORMED CONSENT (PIC)


79. A representative of Denmark advised that the first Experts (Further Measures) meeting was scheduled to be held in Copenhagen on 16-19 April 1996. It was also suggested that a second Experts meeting may take place in the beginning of September 1996.

80. UNEP expressed appreciation to Belgium for hosting the first PIC Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) meeting scheduled on 11-15 March 1996 in Brussels and for funding travel for developing country representatives; to the EC for offering secretariat support and travel funds; to Switzerland for financial support, and to the Netherlands for offering to host the final negotiating session.

81. Several countries requested that every attempt be made to avoid scheduling meetings in a manner which makes it difficult for experts to participate in related meetings. A representative of UNEP noted that deadlines for completion of negotiations for a legally binding instrument for the application of the PIC procedure for certain hazardous chemicals in international trade had been set by countries and that a lack of funding had resulted in scheduling difficulties. Several countries noted the difficulty of completing Convention negotiations in a timely basis if there were simultaneous discussions that may concern the scope of the PIC procedure in the expert group considering Further Measures.

82. Other countries mentioned the fact that the mandate for the PIC Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC), for which the first meeting is scheduled on 11-15 March 1996 in Brussels, and for the Expert Group on Further Measures was decided by governments at the UNEP Governing Council on 1 May 1995. These countries also proposed a more positive attitude toward the coming negotiations by stating that the scope of the PIC should be settled early and remain as close to the existing procedure in order to achieve the goal of the legally binding instrument within three INC meetings. In order to achieve this goal, the Convention will need to be drafted in a manner which allows compatibility with other legally binding instruments and amendments recommended as Further Measures.

83. A public interest NGO noted that it was important to prioritise candidate chemicals according to criteria. Some countries did not want to overload the PIC scheme.

84. Note was taken of the ISG position taken on PIC after formal discussions at the ISG1 meeting in Bruges.

STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY FOR CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT

85. Australia presented the working group report "Programme Area E: Strengthening of National Capability and Capacity of Chemicals Management" (Annex 13, ISG/96.WP.20.Rev.1). The building or strengthening of chemical management capacity in countries is critical to achievement of the objectives of Agenda 21, Chapter 19.
86. The ISG recognised the need to strengthen efforts to ensure representative and effective participation of developing countries and those with economies in transition in international meetings concerning Forum activities on chemicals management. This input, which reflects a wide range of climatic/environmental conditions and economic, political, social and cultural practices, is important to ensure the success of the Forum activities in implementation of Chapter 19. The main impediments were identified as lack of timely two-way information flow, inadequate representation of developing countries on IFCS/ISG related working groups, including technical working groups, and inadequate co-ordination within countries, within regions and by IOMC in use of existing distribution networks.

87. An essential first step as a basis for capacity building is the preparation by countries of comprehensive National Profiles on their chemicals infrastructure and development needs.

88. The report (Annex 13) outlined a productive partnership approach and sought commitments for increased effort by member countries, environmental and public interest NGOs, industry NGOs, international scientific organizations and international organizations to assist with capacity and capability building in developing countries and in countries with economies in transitions. Key areas and activities were identified and proposals made for the efforts of each of the participants including the following:

a. ICCA to report on progress in its various activities and efforts to assist in capacity building in developing countries,

b. GIFAP to widely disseminate information on its efforts to train government, local industry and farmers in the safe use of crop protection chemicals,

c. IFCS Secretariat to facilitate
   - the distribution to all IFCS members a listing of all documents produced by international organizations relating to all programme areas of Chapter 19,
   - the timely notice of relevant planned meetings of international organizations to all IFCS members,
   - better use of regional programmes of IOMC member organizations and other existing regional and subregional networks to enhance the capacity of developing countries to participate effectively in IFCS activities;

d. OECD to develop an information exchange programme to facilitate co-ordination of capacity building assistance provided by member countries and to disseminate this information to IFCS members;
e. IOMC to co-ordinate national and regional training and capacity building efforts of international organizations, and prepare a progress report for the 1997 Forum II on regional needs based on country National Profiles.

89. Brazil spoke in support of this report stating that it reflects the most important priority for developing countries - strengthening national capabilities for the sound management of chemicals. The report was accepted by ISG-2.

90. ISG-2 considered how national profiles could be used regionally and internationally. The USA noted the regional process in the Americas working group report for highlighting national needs in a regional profile.

91. Noting the need for better coordination of capacity building activities, a number of Western European countries and several NGOs proposed the establishment of a coordinating group comprising international and regional organizations and countries. Australia noted that the need, although different, was as significant among countries as among intergovernmental organizations.

92. OECD, speaking on behalf of the IOMC organizations, stated that the topic of coordinating capacity building activities was on the agenda for the April 1996 meeting of the IOMC/IOCC and that membership in coordinating groups established by the IOMC may be extended to others upon invitation.

93. In view of the large volume of documents available on capacity building, UNITAR offered to centrally collect the information.

REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS

94. Annexes 5-8 contain the detailed reports of the Regional Working Groups. As noted above, Regional Working Groups were requested to consider a number of priority items identified in plenary; the general outcomes of their discussions are reported under the respective action items and topic section of this report. A number of additional items were noted as priority topics, e.g. pesticides risk reduction, poisons control centers.

95. It was agreed that assigning key topics of concern to the regional working groups and ad hoc topical working groups for discussion before consideration in plenary was a useful exercise. The Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Forum II 1997 will consider ways of continuing this practice in the 1997 Forum II.

GENERAL

96. Recognising the critical role national focal points have in ensuring the success of the Forum, countries were urged to update or designate a national focal point who has the requisite representation for the IFCS.

97. Noting that intersectoral coordination is crucial to IFCS work, ISG-2 encouraged countries to strengthen their national coordination and regional networks.
98. ISG-2 requested the President to write to appropriate Heads of Delegation asking them to bring the issue of UNEP funding for chemical safety programmes to the attention of the UNEP Governing Council and also write to the Executive Director, UNEP to advise of this IFCS initiative through Heads of Delegations.

99. ISG-2 requested that the President communicate to FAO the disappointment of participants that FAO was not able to attend ISG-2 and stress the importance of FAO participation in the work of the IFCS.

100. It was recommended that the IFCS Secretariat develop an on-going Action List and status report to track progress on the action items decided at each meeting.

101. A scientific NGO expressed concern about the planned lack of involvement of the scientific NGOs in the preparation for the 1997 Forum II. The President committed to having the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda address this concern in planning for the 1997 Forum II.

102. The President's proposal for the Secretariat to finalize the report by working with the drafting group and rapporteurs from the regional and working group sessions, including their reports in annexes or in the file as noted, highlighting key recommendations and elements in the body of the report, and including a section on action items in the front was accepted.

103. ISG-2 agreed to the adoption of the meeting report.

CLOSING

104. The President closed the meeting by thanking the Government of Australia for hosting ISG-2 and providing excellent support. The President thanked all of the ISG-2 organizers, in particularly Dr K. Bentley and his staff in the Australian Department of Health and Family Services.

105. The President noted that the success of the work of the IFCS depends critically on the efforts of all participants, including the participation of all IOMC organizations.

106. The President noted the deepening of ties among the participants and the significant contributions of all participants to the success of the meeting. He noted the significant accomplishments in addressing very significant concerns. In that regard, he recognized the contribution of the NGO meeting, recommendations of which are documented in the report of this meeting (Annex 14).

107. Dr A. Adams, on behalf of the Australian government, thanked colleagues for their participation in the second meeting of the ISG and wished them a safe return to their homes.
ANNEX 1
27 February 1996

ISG-2 DOCUMENTS

WORKING PAPERS

- Proposed Provisional Agenda ISG/96.1.Rev.2
- Forum Activities, IFCS ISG/96.2
- Financial Statement and Budget ISG/96.3.Rev.2
- Overview of Progress on Forum Recommendations on Priorities or Action ISG/96.4
- Persistent Organic Pollutants, Dr J. Buccini ISG/96.5a
- Persistent Organic Pollutants, IPCS ISG/96.5B
- Harmonization of Classification and Labelling, ILO ISG/96.6
- Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers, Dr L. Goldman, USA/EPA ISG/96.7
- Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers - UNITAR Pilot Projects ISG/96.7a
- Preparation of National Profiles to Assess the National Infrastructure for the Sound Management of Chemicals, UNITAR ISG/96.8
- Strengthening of National Capabilities and Capacities for Chemicals Management: A Principles Paper, Australia ISG/96.8/AnnexI
- Strengthening of National Capabilities and Capacities for Chemicals Management: A Regional Approach, EPA, Australia ISG/96.8/AnnexII

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- World Chemical Safety Day ISG96/B1
- Paper not available ISG96/B2
- List of Acronyms - ILO ISG96/B3
- Assessment of Priority Chemicals, IPCS ISG96/B4
- International Risk Assessment, CICADs, IPCS ISG96/B5
- Inventory of Critical Reviews on Chemicals, IRPTC/UNEP ISG96/B6.Rev.1
- Information Delivery for Chemical Management, IRPTC/UNEP ISG96/B7
- Pesticide Risk Reduction, OECD/FAO ISG96/B8
- Risk Reduction/Poison Control Facilities, IPCS ISG96/B9
- Paper not available ISG96/B10
- Meeting on Coordination of Work on the Assessment of Existing Chemicals, Final Report, OECD ISG96/B12
- Coordinating Group for the Harmonization Chemical Classification Systems ISG96/B14
AD HOC WORKING GROUP FOR THE AGENDA FOR FORUM II, 1997

MEMBERS

President
Chairman local organizing committee
Australia
Brazil
China
Germany
Hungary
Indonesia
Japan
Kenya
Mali
Mexico
USA
Chairman IOCC (IOMC)
Industrial Association
Public Interest Group

+ Executive Secretary
REPORT FROM THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE AGENDA FOR FORUM II

Participants: The President, Australia, Brazil, China, Germany, Hungary, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Mali, Mexico, USA, Canada (ex officio), Chair of IOMC/IOCC, ICCA, WWF, Forum Secretariat.

The President opened the meeting with a few points of procedure before adopting the agenda. It was agreed that although countries or organisations had been selected for the group, it was important to have consistency and involvement in its activities and that therefore alternates should be used only as an exception. It was also agreed that some delegates might need to be accompanied by co-workers, who would then be regarded as observers to the meeting. The meeting also accepted that Bo Wahlström from Sweden be part of the secretariat.

The first item on the agenda was a continuation of the discussion of how to bring the meeting report from the second Forum forward to the CSD meeting in April 1997, and to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, meeting in June 1997. Dr. Kreisel from WHO was invited to this agenda item to give the meeting further information on how best to proceed. After discussing various options (ISG/96.WP.8) the meeting concluded that all possible means should be explored. It was agreed that the members of the Forum should be encouraged to bring the chemicals issues to the attention of their delegations to the CSD 4 Meeting, 16 April-3 May 1996, and to propose chemicals as one of the priority issues for the 1997 CSD meeting and the UNGA session. The President of the Forum should also approach the Chair of the CSD on the same issue. Secondly it was agreed that a country representative, to be chosen at a later stage, should bring forward the expeditiously translated report from the second Forum to the Spring 1997 CSD and to June UNGA Special session. A progress report could also be prepared during the autumn of 1996, in time for it to be translated and fed into the process for documents going to the CSD, i.e. through a national report. The meeting also discussed the process for review by all IFCS participants.

The meeting then discussed which items should be on the agenda for the Ad hoc Working Group. It was agreed that administrative issues, the terms of reference and rules of procedure as well as technical issues should be discussed.

The group considered it important to proceed rapidly with the preparations for the next Forum. To that end it was decided that a meeting be held in Canada (exact venue to be decided later) the 6-8 May 1996. Canada would arrange for interpretation facilities into French. In cases of difficulties with financing the participation of members the Secretariat would facilitate twinning arrangements.

In preparation for the Spring meeting Sweden would put together a list of items composed of issues raised at the first Forum, as well as at the first and second ISG. This list would be sent to members to seek their views on priorities as well as on possible sponsors/lead countries or organisations for individual items. The responses should be returned by the end of March, quickly summarised and analysed by the joint Forum/Swedish secretariat and a tentative agenda for the spring meeting discussed, preferably by teleconference before being sent out by early April to allow for regional or subregional consultations. The comments received should also be distributed to all members.
The meeting in May would make a provisional decision as to the issues to bring forward to the Forum, to be finalised after further discussion depending upon input from regional or subregional meetings.

The meeting agreed that general structure of the Forum would be

- reports back to Forum on Chapter 19 activities;
- some focused themes developed in depth;
- discussion on terms of reference and rules of procedure;
- some time for administrative matters, elections and budgets;
- exhibitions/seminars/poster sessions
- Award of Merit to Dr Löngren, Sweden.
ISG-2 POLLUTANT RELEASE AND TRANSFER REGISTER REPORT

Prepared by: PRTR Informal Working Group comprised of Mexico, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, United States, ICCA, WWF and UNITAR

INTRODUCTION

Under Agenda Item 6 "Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers" the ISG was informed about and discussed progress achieved in the implementation of recommendations of Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 to encourage countries to establish emission inventories and to encourage industry to share information on annual routine emissions of toxic chemicals to the environment in the absence of host country requirements.

PROGRESS ACHIEVED

The following significant progress was reported towards implementation of these recommendations:

1. Several countries are now operating national PRTR systems including Canada, France, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

2. OECD, with input from governments, international (UN) agencies, industry and public interest groups developed a Guidance for Governments Manual which outlines various aspects governments may want to consider when designing a national PRTR system.

3. Based on the positive experience gained with PRTRs, several countries have initiated national PRTR design or pilot projects, including Australia, the Czech Republic, Egypt, and Mexico. Other countries have expressed their interest in PRTR systems, including Cuba, Hungary, and South Africa.

4. UNITAR, based on the positive experience gained through PRTR pilot projects conducted in collaboration with the Czech Republic, Egypt, and Mexico, has initiated a Training and Capacity Building Programme to assist interested industrialising and developing countries in designing and implementing national PRTR systems. Complementary to the OECD Guidance Manual, a comprehensive set of training and technical assistance materials has been developed which addresses various aspects of PRTR design and implementation.
POSSIBLE BENEFITS FOR PRTRs

Experience gained through these various initiatives indicates the potential benefits of PRTRs for all main user groups, i.e. governments, industry and the public. These benefits include inter alia,

- providing important information for priority setting and risk reduction
- encouragement of pollution prevention within industry at the source of pollution; and
- enhancing the awareness of the public about toxic releases in proximity of communities.

Experience gained through the United Kingdom and UNITAR pilot projects in industrializing/developing countries has specifically shown that well-designed PRTRs can help to streamline burdensome reporting requirements for industry and help governments save resources by integrating presently scattered information into one inventory covering release and transfers to all environmental media, i.e., air, water and land.

PRINCIPLES FOR DESIGNING NATIONAL PRTRs

When considering the development of national PRTR systems, the following principles should be considered:

- national PRTRs should fully take into consideration the specific circumstances in each country;
- to obtain the full benefits of national PRTR systems all concerned and interested parties should be involved in the PRTR design process;
- countries must strike a balance between the breadth of industries required to report under PRTRs and the overall efficacy of the program; and
- PRTRs should be integrated into national environment programs and development objectives in each country.

STATEMENTS FROM PUBLIC INTEREST AND INDUSTRY NGOs

Statements from industry associations and public interest groups confirmed the potential benefits of PRTRs to promote pollution prevention and risk reduction. Specifically, public interest NGOs pointed out that

- OECD should be commended for opening up the process of developing the PRTR Guidance Manual to all interested parties including developing countries, and
that the UNITAR PRTR programme is considered an important activity to promote PRTRs in industrializing and developing countries.

Industry pointed out that PRTR programs which focus on environmental releases are consistent in spirit with the chemical industry's Responsible Care program and that soundly conceived PRTR programs can contribute to reducing potentially problematic environmental exposures. They emphasize that focusing reporting requirements on environmental releases is a key to achieving such risk reduction.

POSSIBLE FOLLOW-UP STEPS

Due to the significant progress achieved to date both in developed and developing countries with regard to PRTRs it is suggested that the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda of Forum II consider the inclusion of PRTR on the agenda of IFCS II and develop possible mechanisms to prepare background documentation, including possible draft recommendations for future actions on PRTRs.
ISG-2 AFRICA REGIONAL GROUP MEETING

Chairman: Prof. G. Kanouté (Mali)
Rapporteurs: Dr. W.D.O. Sakari (Kenya), Mr. B. Schoeman (South Africa)

A. OBsolete CHEMICALS

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the problem of OBsolete CHEMICALS in African countries and to propose solutions.

2. BACKGROUND

The materials involved are mainly agricultural chemicals (pesticides), which have not been used for various reasons and have now become obsolete. These materials have in many cases been in a country for many years, and the containers and packaging have deteriorated to such an extent that a real threat to humans, animals and the broader environment exists.

From the discussion on 7 March 1996, it became evident that many organisations were made aware of the threat, and that several studies and surveys were carried out by amongst others FAO and UNIDO to some extent.

3. PROPOSALS

3.1 That a small ad hoc task group be formed to steer and co-ordinate this urgent matter. Possible representation: The IOMC, European Commission, two or three African countries, NGOs, e.g. the agricultural chemicals industry, environmental groupings.

3.2 That the FAO and other records on inventory surveys be made available to the task force.

3.3 The funding be negotiated (World Bank, European Commission, OECD countries, relevant industry).

3.4 That data regarding obsolete stocks be extended to include countries not formerly covered and old data updated.

3.5 That suitable technology for the destruction of obsolete pesticides be sourced. Australia indicated the availability of new technology not dependant on incineration. Greenpeace can also assist.

3.6 That the IFCS act as guardian and custodian for the task group in an assisting / enabling role.
B. AFRICA GROUP REPORT ON NATIONAL PROFILES

Chairman: Prof G. Kanouté (Mali)
Rapporteurs: Dr W.D.O. Sakari (Kenya), Mr B. Schoeman (South Africa)

Present: Gabon, Greenpeace, WWF, USA, UNITAR, Australia, EU, UNIDO, UNEP, Consumers Union, ICME, Zambia.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

The preparation of national profiles are crucial to the management of chemicals especially in developing countries. It is through the profiles that the strengths, weaknesses, gaps in the national needs will be known.

AFRICA COUNTRIES:

It was felt that all the countries should have their national profiles prepared by the time of the next IFCS meeting.

As a matter of urgency, UNITAR was requested to facilitate such preparation.

UNITAR agreed to facilitate the regional workshops for that purpose. The workshops have been arranged for June 1996 for West and Central Africa countries. It was recommended that all the countries be convened before the IFCS.

TYPE OF PROFILE:

It was decided that mini profiles are recommended for a start. However, the full national profiles should be the ultimate aim of each country.

C. INFORMATION EXCHANGE (Informatics)

The topic was considered on the lines as given in paper ISG/96.WG.6 of 7 March 1996.

VALUE OF INFORMATICS DISPLAY

This was found to be very useful; it should be repeated in other workshops especially the regional ones.

It was recommended that the developing countries could benefit more if such is printed and distributed through the focal points to reach as many countries as possible.
It was also recommended that the developing countries could indicate what sort of information they required.

ADVANCES MADE IN INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

This Working Group felt that the report is important. Hence, it was necessary to prepare it. Chapter 19 of international linkages can be used to assess the databases and literature.

MEETING OF INFORMATICS EXPERTS WITH IFCS/ISG

The Working Group felt it was not necessary to have the informatics experts in the meeting. It is enough to have the ISG Members.
REPORT OF THE ASIAN REGIONAL MEETING TO ISG-2, (4-5 & 7 March 1996)

1. INTRODUCTION

It was agreed that Dr A. Black would assist the Chairman, Mr Zang, in facilitation of the regional meeting and that Mr I. Coleman would be rapporteur. The meeting agreed that there was a need to address issues relating to all of the four thematic areas of ISG-2.

2. GENERAL ITEMS

In response to a request from the President of the ISG the meeting identified three priority items for consideration by ISG during the Thursday morning session of the ISG. These areas were:

- Enhanced participation of developing countries in the ISG/IFCS process; including participation in the Ad Hoc Working Group on Agenda for Forum II;
- advancing national profiles for chemicals management; and
- the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF ISG-1

The meeting noted that some of the issues considered at ISG 1 did not seem to have been followed up.

The meeting recommended to the ISG that an outcomes/action document be prepared containing outstanding recommendations from ISG-1 together with new recommendations from ISG-2 with their current status.

4. ENHANCED PARTICIPATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN ISG/IFCS

The meeting recognised difficulties experienced by many developing countries in receiving ISG documents and invitations relating to meetings and in participating in such meetings. Material was sometimes received by developing countries in an incorrect area within the country or not at all. There were also occasions when documents were received with insufficient time to consider the issues, particularly if these came from fora such as OECD in which developing countries did not participate.

It was agreed that there was a need for all countries to correctly identify and notify a national focal point to IOMC for receipt of information. The link between the work in national profiles (Area E) and such coordination was stressed. It was noted that each IGO member of the IOMC had its own list of national focal points and these were not necessarily the same as for the IFCS.
It was agreed that the IFCS Secretariat be requested to ensure that documents relevant to the work of the ISG/IFCS and emanating from fora such as OECD be circulated as early as possible.

The meeting noted with concern the non-attendance of certain developing countries to the ISG-2 and suggested that developed countries and international bodies be encouraged to support the attendance of representatives from developing countries.

It was further agreed that developing countries should be encouraged to participate in all stages of international chemicals management, including the generation and availability of national data expertise, and its provision for regional/international exchange through networks and other mechanisms. The informatics Workshop held at ISG-2 was a useful example of such benefits.

5. PARTICIPATION OF ASIAN REGIONAL GROUP IN THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP FOR THE AGENDA FOR FORUM II

Outcome: ISG-2 subsequently agreed that Japan join the Ad Hoc Working Group.

In response to a request from the Heads of Delegations meeting for regional representation in the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Form II, the meeting agreed that the Asian Group should ideally be represented by a developing country. Additionally it was noted that China would participate in the Ad Hoc Working Group as a member of the Bureau. The meeting agreed that Indonesia would be nominated to represent the Asian Group.

The meeting agreed that Japan also be nominated to join the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda of Forum II.

Outcome:

Following the identification of this priority area by the Asian Region, an Ad Hoc Meeting on Advancing the Participation and Interests of Developing Countries was convened and its recommendations were presented to the ISG-2 by the Chairman, Mr Zang (ISG/96.WP15).

Indonesia and Japan were elected by ISG-2 to the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Agenda for Forum II.

6. ROLE OF SCIENTIFIC NGOs

The meeting considered a request to consider the role of NGOs in ISG processes.

It was recognised that NGOs could be drawn from three main groups: public interest groups; industry groups and professional/scientific organisations. There was a recognition that there was difficulty in having representative attendance from all three groups. A member of the scientific NGOs suggested that the professional/scientific organisations be considered as “consultants”
providing scientific input on issues but that they did not represent any particular interest and as such were not specifically required on the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Agenda for Forum II.

**Outcome:** Subsequently ISG-2 agreed that only industry and public interest NGOs would participate in the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda for Forum II.

7. **WORLD CHEMICAL SAFETY DAY**

There was general support for the concept of a World Chemical Safety Day but it was considered that it should occur on the same day each year. It was suggested that if this were to proceed, the date of the formation of the IFCS could be an appropriate date.

The meeting also recognised that work on this concept had resource implications that would have to be taken into account.

8. **ISG-2 THEMATICS**

8.1 **PROGRAMME AREA A**

Assessment Targets

The IPCS/OECD Consultation (ISG/96.4) requested advice whether targeted assessments should be included in the IFCS targets. Other issues to be addressed should be scientific rigour, independence, peer review and consensus

“... if assessments are to the widest possible acceptance these matters must be clear to users”.

The meeting considered the use of targeted (focused) assessments in contributing to the targets of the IFCS and agreed that such focused assessments should be included.

The meeting also agreed that to maintain maximum acceptance and credibility only assessments for which there was consensus and that were scientifically rigorous, independent and peer reviewed should be included in the targets.

The meeting agreed that there was need for the strengthening of reporting mechanisms.

As proposed by the IPCS/OECD Consultation (ISG/96.4 Annex), the meeting recommended that it would be worthwhile to have a periodical listing and to publish by category of the chemicals evaluated and introduce each category with an agreed text indicating the criteria for the evaluation.

It further recommended that the IOMC should produce a periodical listing of assessments by category of chemical and providing the criteria for the review, review date and the status of the review.
8.2 PROGRAMME AREA B

Harmonisation of Classification and Labelling

ISG-1 requested the CG/HHCS to develop guidance on the principles of harmonisation “..... and to consider mechanisms for implementation and how progress could best be made on the political issues, particularly non-consensus matters”.

Three options for an instrument were proposed by the working group (ISG/96.6). The Annex identifies the need for a recommendation on how to proceed to translate the result of the technical work into an international instrument or recommendations applicable at the national level.

A representative of the International Council of Association of Chemicals advised that industry were very supportive of this initiative. The issue of language differences were raised and its impact on implementation. It was noted that the first step would concentrate on harmonisation of classification schemes and that provided that the same message was being conveyed to users/handlers of chemicals it was independent of the language.

The meeting noted the extensive amount of technical work that was happening within the OECD in this area. There was a strong recommendation that encouragement be given to the Asian Regional Group to participate in this technical work within the OECD.

Although the importance of this initiative was recognised, it was agreed that the target date of 2000 was ambitious but the group expressed a wish to see the work proceed.

8.3 PROGRAMME AREA C

Information Exchange

The meeting noted that information exchange was an important aspect of chemicals management and had been raised at ISG 1, Bruges.

The meeting noted developments in information exchange with respect to access on the Internet. Following upon discussion of the ISG 1 Asian Group Meeting in Bruges, the National Institute of Health Sciences of Japan (NIHS), supported by the Ministry of Health and Welfare and collaborating with experts from three IPCS organisations (UNEP/IRPTC, ILO/CIS and WHO/PCS) initiated building of the first prototype of the Global Information Network on Chemicals (GINC). Through this collaboration the GINC Home Page was designed and World Wide Web pages for key organisations and institutions have now been linked to it.

It was noted that Japan and IRPTC were stimulating the availability of chemical safety information through the GINC. GINC (E-Mail) news groups have been established and managed by the IRPTC which are also producing user’s manuals for GINC.
NIHS have hosted two GINC related meetings in December 1995. At these meetings Asia was identified as a suitable region for a Pilot Phase Study of the development and implementation of GINC. An informal inventory has been developed to list potential national nodes of GINC Asia. This work will continue to take advantage of the progressive development of information technology.

It was accepted that information could be widely disseminated if messages could be sent to a news group and then members of that group could then on-forward the messages to other individuals in a wider network. Therefore it was advisable that individuals should list their names and details if they wish to participate. The meeting recommended that the Asian Regional IFCS focal points be encouraged to gain access to the Internet and by that means gain access to the GINC. It was noted that GINC could be initially contacted on the Internet: kaminuma@NIHS.GO.JP

It was agreed to draw this activity to the attention of the ISG.

It was also agreed that there were some countries which still may not have access to the Internet and that there may be a need for countries to collaborate to produce this information in PC format, hardcopy or other means.

Informatics Workshop

There was general consensus that the informatics display had been useful and it was considered that if possible that it be repeated at each ISG/IFCS meeting, recognising the rapid advances in information technology while also appreciating the costs involved in providing such displays.

8.4 PROGRAMME AREA D

Pesticide Risk Reduction

The UNIDO operates a regional network (RENPAP - the Regional Network on Pesticides for Asia and the Pacific) in Asian and Pacific countries which mainly addresses issues related to pesticides production and formulation.

Activities were to establish technical coordinating units on the subjects:

- Use and environmentally friendly pesticide formulation (India)
- Industrial safety, effluent control, and waste management (Indonesia)
- Industrial hygiene and occupational safety (Philippines)
- Ecotoxicology (Pakistan)
- Bio-botanical pesticides (Thailand)
- Data collection/dissemination (India/Thailand)
- Application technology (Malaysia).
FAO has implemented a five year programme in Asia and the Pacific to implement the FAO Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides. A major aspect of the programme was the harmonisation of pesticide registration requirements.

**Pollutant Release Transfer Registers (PRTRs)**

It was general view of participants to the meeting that compilation of inventories of releases of chemicals to the environment represented an important tool in managing chemicals, particularly in pollution control and cleaner production.

There was recognition that the OECD has undertaken considerable work in this area and has produced a Guidance Manual for Governments. It was agreed that the document emphasised a flexible approach to PRTRs, including voluntary industry schemes. It was also noted that an OECD Environment Ministers Meeting in February 1996 Ministers endorsed a Council Recommendation on Implementing Pollutant Release Transfer Registers.

The meeting generally supported the work of the OECD with respect to PRTRs and encouraged governments to explore adoption of PRTRs and similar programmes. Australia advised that it would host a meeting of some regional countries to consider the development of PRTRs later this year.

**Poison Control Centres**

The meeting noted that Indonesia will host in cooperation with IPCS an open workshop on Poison Control Centres, 16-19 September 1996, in Jakarta for Asian/Pacific Countries.

Turkey will similarly host a Poison Control Centre workshop in late 1996 or early 1997 for central Asian countries, also in collaboration with IPCS.

**8.5 PROGRAMME AREA E**

**Increasing Regional Cooperation on Chemical Safety**

The meeting considered that there was a need to ensure that Central Asian countries be included and that they be circulated with documents. It was noted that although UNIDO provided training manuals in several languages, the actual databases were in English and that translation costs were prohibitive. It was commented that there may be an opportunity to utilise software packages that were capable of performing translations in the future.
The meeting agreed that the Philippines POPs meeting intended for June 1996 would provide an opportunity for an Asian Regional Meeting and recommended that such a meeting take place. It agreed that two important agenda items for this meeting would be:

- the development of national profiles; and
- the disposal of obsolete pesticides.

On the latter item it was advised that FAO/WHO/UNEP were collaborating on the production of two documents on this subject and that UNIDO could provide information to this proposed meeting on the disposal of pesticides through cement kilns.

**National Profiles for the Management of Chemicals**

Regional meetings are requested to develop their views on mechanisms for strengthening national capabilities and capacities. The thematic on national profiles include both mini profiles and maxi profiles. UNITAR had provided each participant with a document describing its approach to the development of national profiles.

The meeting considered the National profiles prepared by China, Iran and Korea. It noted that they resembled the UNITAR model.

There was general consensus that national profiles were a valuable tool in identifying deficiencies and duplication of chemical management for countries.

The meeting agreed that Asia region countries should commit themselves to prepare national profiles. The meeting further agreed that the UNITAR process be used as a model to enable comparison of national profiles but also recognised the need for flexibility within the UNITAR framework to accommodate national circumstance. It was emphasised that the UNITAR model was not a requirement but only a guidance.

UNITAR and Australia advised that they would be able to provide limited assistance to some regional countries for the development of national profiles. Tonga, Indonesia, India and the Philippines indicated that they would appreciate such assistance.

It was also suggested that completion of national profiles and reporting of this could form an important component of the ISG report to CSD.

The meeting agreed that countries should be encouraged to identify and nominate national focal points for the work of the IFCS and that these be maintained and supported by national coordination of activities within countries.
REPORT OF THE CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN REGIONAL GROUP MEETING

Chairman: Prof. Dr. Miroslav Cikrt, Czech Republic.

Rapporteurs: Prof. Dr. Tomas Trnovec; Prof. Dr. Ladislav Rosival, Slovak Republic, Prof. Dr. Gyorgy Ungvary, Hungary

IFCS Secretariat: Dr Emmanuel Somers.

Delegates of the Central and East European (CEE) countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Slovenia and Slovak Republic) together with representatives of Australia, Germany, Sweden, USA, and the representatives of UNIDO and some NGOs discussed the present situation in CEE countries and the development since the ISG-1 meeting in Bruges, Belgium.

In view of the importance of chemical problems the meeting expressed its concern that for the second time there was not representation from the Russian Federation at the ISG.

The results of the discussion are as follows:

PROGRAMME AREA A:

Evaluation of chemicals

With respect to Programme Area A the 1994 Forum has adopted the conclusion that 500 chemicals of a high priority should be evaluated or reevaluated by the year 2000. The amount of work to be done is huge and all countries should participate in an extent that corresponds to their capacities and skills. With respect to an effective evaluation of chemicals by the research institutes of the CEE countries three prerequisites have to be taken into account:

- to obtain a thorough information on the list of the 500 high priority chemicals;
- to ensure that the representatives of the CEE countries act in selecting chemicals to be studied by them;
- to participate in OECD/SIDS and CICAD programmes.

The selection of the chemicals taken into consideration is a highly complex problem. An individual approach has to be applied in each country. The procedure should be scientifically based taking into account health effects of xenobiotics as much as possible. Technocratic approaches taking into account such factors as amounts produced should largely be avoided. There was an agreement that the main activities should be targeted predominantly to an improvement of the health status of the population of the post-communist countries. There is a striking difference in
the main health parameters between countries with developed market economy and the CEE countries: life expectancy, incidence of malignancies, cardiovascular diseases, cirrhosis etc. The reasons of this phenomenon are largely unknown and environmental factors may play an important role.

PROGRAMME AREA C:

Information flow including risk communication

The participants noted an improvement in information flow. More information at the national level is available as compared to the past and new communication systems have been introduced. Difficulties, mainly due to lacking resources, in the translation of data and information into national languages was mentioned.

PROGRAMME AREA D

Implementation of the PRTR approach

The Czech Republic gained much experience with PRTR during the last year. In view of this the Czech representative informed about the development of PRTR in their country using Guidance Manual for Governments on PRTR elaborated by the OECD and the recommendations of UNITAR. A report on results of the pilot study will soon be available and a workshop in cooperation with UNITAR, OECD and NGOs will be held in Prague. The countries participating in the meeting:

• expressed an interest on the results of the pilot study;
• acknowledged the OECD Guidance Manual for Governments on PRTR as a suitable tool for PRTR implementation;
• recognized the importance of PRTR as an essential information source for chemical management that can be used for pollution reduction.

PROGRAMME AREA E

1. National profiles

The Czech Republic described the preparation of the national profile for chemical management in compliance with the guidance document elaborated by UNITAR.

The countries participating at the meeting recognized that:

• the UNITAR Guidance Document is a suitable tool for the preparation of the national profile;
the national profile should be developed as an official document involving all parties concerned, including industry and the NGOs;

the national profile should be updated regularly;

the national profile should serve as a strategic document for strengthening of national schemes for sound management of chemicals;

experience gained during preparation of national profiles should be shared with other CEE countries.

2. The state of legislation on chemical safety

The representatives of the individual countries reported on the situation in development of chemical safety programs/legislation in their countries. This process is being enhanced and it is in compliance with the efforts of the individual countries for membership in OECD and EU. Compliance with the EU legislation and OECD guidelines is a must. One of the CEE countries already attained a full membership in OECD and some others are observers. The information on the status of legislation for countries not included in the subgroups (I) and (II) (see Final Report of ISG-1, Bruges, 1995) is completely lacking.

3. The intersectorial bodies on chemical safety

The participants stressed the necessity to establish in each country a liaison body on chemical safety. In spite of the fact that this urgent need was stressed in the last report, such a body was established only in two countries. Experience indicates that these bodies should encompass also representatives of industry and NGOs. The purpose of these bodies is to overcome barriers between sectors and to avoid duplication and overlapping as well as to identify gaps in chemical safety issues. The creation of these bodies is strongly recommended to the individual governments of the region.

4. The role of industry in chemical safety at the national level

It has been stated that in the process of economic transformation in the CEE countries a significant portion of the chemical industry has attained an international character. The experience of the multinational chemical companies in risk management should be effectively exploited in CEE countries. The international chemical industry organizations (e.g. CEFIC) could help in identifying partners at the national level for cooperation with intersectorial bodies for chemical safety. The domestic chemical industry should be stimulated to support attaining goals of the national chemical safety programmes. A cooperative climate should be created between the industry and agencies responsible for chemical safety at the national level.
5. Capacity building and manpower development

These problems refer especially to:

- risk reduction;
- risk assessment, characterization and management;
- environmental health.

The representative of CEFIC recommends that the EU program PHARE be addressed (European Commission, DG XI) by the CEE countries in greater extent in view of a support of the following activities e.g.:

- environmental laws preparation and their enforcement;
- environmental supervising;
- education in environmental management of companies;
- education of experts of environmental ministries and authorities;
- chemical safety laws preparation and their enforcement.

It has been recommended by the USA delegate, that the report of the Central and East European Group, note the possibility that the UNECE Committee for Environmental Policy (CEP) considers making chemical safety one of its priorities. This might be done for example, by ensuring attention to chemical safety during environmental performance reviews in CEE countries by supporting implementation of PRTRs on the establishment of emission monitoring capacities. One way to accomplish this would be to provide this report to Mr. Istvan Tokes, CEP Bureau chairperson from Hungary. Members of the CEE group could also notify their delegates to the CEP, for its May 1996 meeting. The USA will be prepared to support this concept at the May CEP meeting.

6. Regional Network of Ecotoxicology/Environmental Monitoring Centres for Ecological Risk Management of Chemicals (REGNECOTOX)

The risk assessment/reduction (Programme area D) and capacity building (Programme area E) have utmost importance for CEE countries. Therefore the UNIDO’s project concept on Regional Network of Ecotoxicology/Environmental Monitoring Centres for Ecological Risk Management of Chemicals (REGNECOTOX) should be endorsed and strongly promoted. Initially six selected countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia) should be involved in this network of which one country (institution) should be charged with a leading position. At later stages further institutions (countries) may join the group. Preliminary talks on this issue will be started as soon as possible at UNIDO in Vienna.
7. Participation of scientific NGOs in chemical safety programmes in CEE countries

The participants recommended to intensify communication with IUPAC, IUTOX, IUPHAR, EUROTOX and other organizations acting in the field of toxic effects of xenobiotics.

GENERAL:

1. Priorities

- It has been unanimously stated that the preparation of the relevant legislation is a priority number one for most of the CEE countries.

- Priority number two is the breaking of intersectorial barriers within the states and an improvement of interministerial cooperation. In each of the countries an interministerial body should be created.

- A National Profile characterizing the situation and the aims of each country should be prepared.

- Establishment of PRTR is a further priority with regard to pollution reduction and public information.
2. World Chemical Safety Day

The various possible approaches to establish such a day (through UN General Assembly, WHO etc.) and its significance and role were discussed. There was a general agreement on usefulness of its establishment.

3. Appointment of the member of the ad hoc group

The CEE working group proposed Hungary as a member of the ad hoc Agenda working group. In this connection Hungary would like organize a regional/subregional meeting in Budapest aimed at formulation of proposals, recommendations and standpoints of the member countries to be presented at the Forum II. Such regional meetings, alternating the host, should be periodically organized also on other grounds (information exchange, harmonization, sharing experience etc.).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Participating countries intend to carry out all recommendations contained in the chapter 19 of the agenda 21 and those of the IFCS.

2. The meeting recognized that the basic recommendations formulated by Regional Meeting of CEE countries at ISG-1 in Bruges are still valid. These are as follows:

   2.1. To accelerate preparation of a comprehensive national policy on chemical safety based on updated national legislation in this field (umbrella act), in harmony with similar legislation of EU and OECD countries.

   2.2. To formulate national priorities in chemical management. For these purposes to use the national profiles as a strategic document.

   2.3. To establish a coordinating body at the national level (intersectorial commission).

   2.4. To develop a national system of information flow and if necessary to provide information on chemicals in national language. To enhance public awareness of the chemical risks.

   2.5. To promote education and training. To build up a capacity of the country for a sound management of chemicals.
3. The meeting emphasized:

3.1. The significance of establishing PRTRs in CEE countries with use of the OECD Guidance Manual for governments. PRTR will serve as a mean of pollution reduction as well as an important source of information available to the public.

3.2. A necessity of the preparation of the national profile for chemical management in the CEE countries with use of the UNITAR guidance document. The National Profile should serve as an official document for the strengthening of national schemes for a sound management of chemicals.

3.3. A more significant involvement of the chemical industry in the national system of sound management of chemicals.

3.4. That for facilitation of the evaluation of the 500 chemicals in connection with the Programme area A activity, it is reasonable to ensure the participation of CEE countries in the CICAD assessment.

4. The countries of the region recognized the importance of organizing both the regional and subregional workshops in the field of chemical management. The main areas of interest are:

- legislation preparation;
- PRTR development;
- risk assessment;
- Agenda for IFCS-2.

5. The meeting recognized that the implementation of the recommendations specified in sections 2. and 3. will be very difficult without an international assistance. In view of this the assistance of the following organizations would be very helpful: member organizations of IOMC, UNITAR, UNDP, UNECE, EU, CEU.

6. The CEE countries request the Secretariat of IFCS to transmit the ISG-2 meeting report to governments and to participants/focal points.
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SUMMARY REPORT OF EXPANDED AMERICAS ISG, 3-8 March 1996

1. Participating in a series of meetings of the Expanded Americas ISG (EA-ISG) at ISG-2 were the Governments of Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, and USA, and a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

2. The participants reviewed progress in implementing action items agreed to at the first EA-ISG meeting held 1-3 November 1995 in San Juan, Puerto Rico, discussed possible regional positions for ISG-2, and agreed on additional follow-up actions.

3. The participants were pleased to note that thus far 12 countries (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, US, Canada, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Nicaragua, Bolivia) in the region have submitted to Mexico abbreviated national profiles (“Mini-Profiles”) of their chemicals management program. It was agreed that the following countries would take the lead in encouraging countries in their sub-regions that have not already done so complete Mini-profiles:
   - Colombia (Andean Pact);
   - Brazil (CONO SUR);
   - Costa Rica (Central America); and
   - Trinidad and Tobago (Caribbean).

The sub-regional leads are to report to Mexico progress achieved by other countries in their sub-region on developing Mini-Profiles by 1 June 1996. Profiles received after this date may not be factored into the regional profile discussed below. Sub-regional leads would also report on progress toward developing sub-regional profiles by 1 September 1996.

4. The participants recognised the importance of countries developing full national profiles based on the UNITAR guidance, but noted that few Governments will be able to complete them by 1997 as called for by IFCS I. The participants therefore proposed the attached (Annex 1) ISG recommendation on National Profiles that encourages the development of Mini-Profiles to meet the 1997 deadline.

5. The participants reiterated the request at ISG-1 that the IOMC members provide an inventory of their chemical safety-related activities in the Americas. It was suggested that activities of bilateral aid agencies and multilateral development banks also be included in this inventory.

6. The participants recalled the request from the November 1995 EA-ISG that NGOs provide information regarding their chemicals management capacity building activities in the region. An environmental NGO present indicated that they did not have a central source of this information. Industry groups offered to provide information on their Responsible Care work in the Americas. Governments are to request that national NGOs provide information on their activities to their IFCS Focal Points which would compile this
The participants reiterated their commitment to develop a Regional Profile, based on the Mini-Profiles received. They also proposed that inventories of IOMC and NGO activities be included. A small drafting group to include Mexico, Canada, US and PAHO would draft the regional profile and distribute by September 15, 1996.

8. The participants recognized the need to increase developing country participation in IFCS meetings and strengthen the role of the IFCS focal point, and recommend that the full ISG-2 adopt the attached text on capacity building (Annex 2) that addresses these issues.

9. The participants recommended that the IOMC Cooperating Organizations, when sending invitations for chemical management-related meetings that they are sponsoring, that IFCS Focal Points are notified of these meetings. They also recommended that IOMC establish an Internet Homepage containing a list of upcoming chemicals meetings of the IOMC Cooperating Organizations and provide links to Homepages of these organizations.

10. The meeting agreed that an Informatics Workshop/Poster Session should be held during IFCS II over a longer period. The organizers of the Informatics Workshop are encouraged to communicate well in advance of IFCS II to ensure greater coordination among exhibits.

11. The meeting agreed with the addition of Japan to the Ad hoc Working Group on the Agenda for IFCS, in light of their possible interest in hosting a future ISG or IFCS meeting. Brazil noted their interest in possibly hosting the IFCS III in the year 2000. This seems appropriate given their hosting of the 1992 UNCED Earth Summit where a number of goals for action by the year 2000 were set in the Agenda 21.

12. The participants took note of the OECD Ministerial Declaration on Lead Risk Reduction and its invitation for non-member countries to enact the provisions contained within it.

13. The participants recognized the value of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers as a pollution prevention and priority setting tool.

14. Given that most chemical risk assessments are based on exposure scenarios that often differ greatly from those common in Latin American and Caribbean countries, the participants recognized the need to better understand potential exposures in the region as the basis for the development of exposure parameters/assumptions that could be factored into chemical risk assessments. The meeting agreed that/to:

- Brazil would make available its requirements document for health and environmental risk assessment to Mexico;
other Governments in the region should submit to Mexico their lists of data requirements for pesticide registration, who would prepare a summary highlighting similarities and differences;

conduct a meeting of experts to review the similarities and differences summary document, and consider further steps to facilitate the exchange of data and reviews within the region; and

invite PAHO to serve as a clearinghouse for Governments and NGOs to exchange information concerning exposures parameters and share experiences on problems associated with chemical use.

The participants also noted that PAHO and the Association of Occupational Clinicians is developing a electronic information exchange network on occupational exposures in the region.

15. Based on the paper provided by Brazil and with the agreement of the participants, Brazil and the USA agreed to approach PAHO concerning the development of an information exchange network for chemical accidents.

16. The Regional leads identified in para # 3 for Mini-Profiles agreed, to the extent practical, to pursue inclusion of IFCS II issues in the agendas of appropriate upcoming meetings of existing sub-regional groups and to provide an interim report of progress to Mexico by July 1, 1996. Governments are encouraged to include a discussion of IFCS activities as a regular agenda item of their sub-regional meetings.

17. The participants agreed that another meeting of the EA-ISG should be held in the Fall of 1996, well in advance of IFCS II. This fall meeting would review progress in implementing agreed upon action items and develop regional consensus positions for issues to be addressed at IFCS II. Colombia and Mexico (in possible connection with a Commission on Environmental Cooperation meeting) expressed possible interest in hosting the fall 1996 EA-ISG meeting. They will consult with their Governments before making any commitments to host this meeting.
Expanded Americas (EA)-ISG Proposal for an ISG Recommendation on National Profiles

The ISG recognises the usefulness of the National Profiles exercise as a catalyst and organiser of efforts to build or strengthen chemicals management capacity within a country. The ISG also recognises the preparation of a Guidance Document by UNITAR under the auspices of the IOMC and the efforts of the Czech Republic, Egypt, Mexico and Zambia to prepare comprehensive National Profiles through a consultative process at the national level. Given that few governments will be able to complete National Profiles by 1997 as called for by the 1994 IFCS in accordance with the UNITAR Guidance Document, the ISG recommends that abbreviated profiles (“Mini-Profiles”) be developed by 1997 based on the Canadian model (attached), which have already been completed by 11 countries in the Western Hemisphere. In the medium term, as an essential component of capacity building, countries are encouraged to complete the more comprehensive National Profiles through a full consultative process. Concerning the above, the ISG invites the IOMC, in cooperation with UNITAR, to help facilitate efforts by IFCS Focal Points.
EA-ISG Proposal for ISG Recommendations on Capacity Building:

In order to promote the building or strengthening of chemicals management capacity in countries as called for in Agenda 21, Chapter 19, Programme Area E:

- The ISG recognises the need to strengthen efforts to ensure representative and effective participation of developing countries and those with economies in transition in international meetings concerning IFCS activities on chemicals management. This input, which reflects a wide range of climatic/environmental conditions and cultural practices is important in order to ensure the success of the activities of the IFCS in the implementation of Chapter 19 of Agenda 21.

- The ISG supports continued assistance to IFCS Focal Points in strengthening their role as catalysts for and facilitators of activities related to the sound management of chemicals at the national, subregional, and regional levels.

- The ISG recommends that Governments work to strengthen the role of IFCS Focal Points through various means including:
  
  - establishing inter-ministerial coordinating committees and mechanisms for effective communication and cooperation among ministries involved in chemicals management at the national level;
  
  - increasing communication and collaboration with counterparts in other countries in the region through existing subregional and regional networks or working groups on issues of common interest;
  
  - developing inventories of ongoing assistance projects related to chemicals management at the national level, including those that are part of broader regional or subregional projects, supported by industry, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, bilateral assistance agencies or multilateral development banks; and
  
  - developing regional profiles, based on Mini-Profiles or full National Profiles and national inventories of ongoing assistance projects, that will provide a useful basis from which to identify priorities for action at the national and regional levels and to focus discussion among IFCS Focal Points within a region.
CHAIRMAN’S REPORT OF POPs SESSION

Mr J. Buccini introduced this item, referencing the documents ISG/96.5a and ISG/96.5B, and summarized the general background to the issue, the mandate contained in UNEP GC Decision 18/32 (May 1995), progress achieved to date and the decisions that were required of the meeting. Following extensive discussions, the meeting agreed on the following.

1. The available scientific evidence on tasks a) and b) of Decision 18/32 is sufficient to demonstrate the need for international action on the 12 specified substances.

2. An "open file" will be created to provide for more comprehensive reporting of new peer reviewed scientific information on the chemistry, toxicology, transport pathways, origin, transport and deposition of the 12 specified substances on a global scale.

3. Information (in addition to a trade survey compiled by UNEP) is needed on the 12 specified substances to complete the tasks in paragraphs c), d) and e) of Decision 18/32 and to address socio-economic considerations as a basis for development of recommendations and information on international action.

4. UNEP will serve as a clearing house for information on tasks a), b, c) and d) and will issue periodic updates on the contents of the file, perhaps using the INTERNET (subject to the availability of resources).

5. An IFCS Working Group on POPs was established by adopting the Ad Hoc Working Group on POPs that was set up by UNEP within the framework of the IOMC.

6. An IFCS sponsored meeting will be held to address tasks c) and d) of Decision 18/32. Several delegates described ongoing work that could contribute to this meeting. In nominating participants for the meeting, IFCS contact points will be encouraged to include experts that can address tasks a) and d).

7. An open meeting of the IFCS Working Group on POPs will be convened to review the results of the meeting held to address tasks c) and d), to address task e) of Decision 18/32 and to develop recommendations and information on international action, including such information as would be needed for a possible decision regarding an appropriate international legal mechanism on POPs.

8. The meetings to address tasks c), d) and e) will be held in June 1996 in the Philippines, with only a short break between them. Efforts will be made to encourage the widest possible participation of IFCS delegations, especially developing countries.

9. IFCS will not develop criteria for adding POPs to the list during 1996. However, a proposed process for the development of science-based criteria should be included in the recommendations to UNEP GC and WHA, and should build upon ongoing activities such as
those under the UN ECE LRTAP Convention. The meeting requested the UK to consider drafting a proposal for this process based on the work of the UN ECE Preparatory Working Group on POPs.

10. Consideration should be given to the need for obtaining information on the production, use and release of POPs and to monitor trends following implementation of future measures.

11. Consideration should be given to the need for monitoring networks to establish baseline levels of POPs in environmental and biological media and to monitor trends following implementation of future measures.

12. Coordination among different regional and international initiatives on POPs is essential to ensure mutually supportive, harmonized and effective programs that do not result in the development of policies with conflicting objectives.

13. There is a need to improve access to national information on POPs, as well as to improve access to information by all countries, especially developing countries.

14. The IFCS Working Group on POPs would submit its report containing recommendations and information resulting from the June meetings to all IFCS participants for review and comments by July 31, 1996. A summary of the comments received would be submitted with the report to UNEP and the WHA by August 31, 1996.

Some delegates (Australia, New Zealand, UNIDO, IUPAC, WRI, etc.) offered to provide additional scientific, national, regional (Southern Hemisphere) and sub-regional (Gulf of Guinea) information to improve the data base for the assessment. Consideration may also need to be given to forming an ongoing assessment process for peer review of new data as they are made available.

GIFAP reported that a survey of manufacturing sites of PIC chemicals was conducted in 1992 by the American Crop Protection Association. The information was provided to UNEP and GIFAP offered to coordinate the update of the information with UNEP.

Several delegates thought that it was important to recognize that the 12 specified POPs comprise pesticides, industrial chemicals, and unintentionally produced by-products and contaminants, and that this would need to be taken into account in the deliberations of the IFCS meetings.

In order to facilitate coordination with POPs work under the UN ECE, interested non-ECE countries were encouraged to consider participation in relevant meetings, according to the terms of reference applied by the Executive Body for the Convention on LRTAP, which would allow for such participation.

The Philippines requested guidance on the participation and agenda for the two June meetings. It was agreed that these issues would have to be addressed at the meeting of the Working Group on POPs on March 9, 1996.
There was limited discussion of resources needed to support the work on POPs; however, 3 nations indicated their willingness to support developing country participation at the June meetings and previous discussions on encouraging "twinning" arrangements was reiterated.
CHAIRMAN’S REPORT ON PROGRAMME AREA B - HARMONISATION OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING

REPORT OF THEMATIC SESSION: Wednesday 6 March 1996

The Chairman provided an introduction to the work of the IOMC Coordinating Group for Harmonisation of Chemical Classification Systems (CG/HCCS). The need for harmonisation, the guiding principles and the benefits to a harmonised approach were covered. The focal points for the technical work were introduced and presentations given on each of the 3 work areas (OECD for health and environmental hazards, ILO for hazard communication (which includes labels and material safety data sheets) and UNCETDG for physical hazards). Progress reports were given for each of the areas and future activities noted. At the first meeting of ISG-1 the CG/HCCS were requested to consider possible mechanisms for implementing a globally harmonised system for classification and labelling of chemicals at the national level. A presentation was given by the secretary of the CG/HCCS (ILO) on the options for an international instrument covering binding, non-binding and intermediate mechanisms for implementation (ISG96/6).

ISG were asked to comment on the following:

1. Preference for an instrument to implement the harmonised system.
2. Expanded membership of the Group.
3. Information exchange and awareness raising activities.

A number of countries expressed caution about the adoption of a legally binding instrument. However, there was also a question as to whether the alternative option of a non-binding instrument would be sufficiently adequate to facilitate international adoption of a harmonised system.

A further proposal to those described in ISG96/6 was put forward by the USA for an international standard as a mechanism for implementation. The USA proposal is ISG96.WP.11. The USA noted that for those countries with well regulated systems e.g. European Union and USA, this would provide for a voluntary non-legally binding approach. This could be picked up as an international standard which countries could implement at their own pace. Recognition of such an international standard under existing trade agreements and by the international organisations and the IFCS would allow all countries to participate in the development of the international standard and to implement harmonisation at their own pace. This proposal was generally accepted as a further option for a non-binding instrument with the understanding that the CG/HCCS would further elaborate and consult on this proposal for development of recommendations to IFCS.

Industry representatives strongly supported the work on harmonisation and noted the importance and need for harmonised systems particularly for small businesses.

The European Commission and Australia requested clarification of the scope of the harmonisation activity. The Chairman informed ISG that the harmonisation activity is intentionally broad as it is intended to cover all chemicals. It was recognised that as the technical work progresses there may be a need to sharpen the focus of the scope without permanently excluding categories of chemicals.
The CG/HCCS will address this issue in conjunction with the groups carrying out the technical work of harmonisation.

In response to a question from Canada regarding labelling, the Chairman noted that while the work has started on hazard communication, decisions regarding label warnings etc. cannot be completed until the technical work on criteria is finished.

Extended membership of the group was welcomed while recognising that the CG/HCCS should not be too large because it plays a managerial role.

Dissemination of information on the progress of programme area B will be by circulation of papers to appropriate national authorities and as part of awareness raising schemes currently being conducted by CG/HCCS, with follow up prior to IFCS in 1997.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That CG/HCCS further develop options for an instrument, including full consideration of the US proposal, and will invite the IFCS to make a decision on the general form of the instrument in Ottawa.

2. That CG/HCCS will revise its terms of reference to clarify the intended scope for the proposed instrument and will provide this to the IFCS in 1997.

3. Technical work be completed as expeditiously as possible recognising that non consensus issues be clearly identified.

4. CG/HCCS continue awareness raising/information activities involving all interested countries.

5. A progress report will be made to IFCS in 1997 on the work completed to date. This report will also include identification of areas where work still has to be done.
BACKGROUND

One of the objectives of Programme A of Chapter 19 of UNCED Agenda 21 (Expanding and accelerating international assessment of chemical risks) is to strengthen international risk assessments, with the target that several hundred priority chemicals or groups of chemicals be assessed by the year 2000.

The Programme Advisory Committee of the IPCS had strongly recommended in November 1993 the development of more concise EHCs, based on national documents, as a means of speeding-up international chemical assessment work.

At a joint IPCS/OECD Consultation on Priority Chemicals and Related Issues (30th Jan. - 3rd Feb., 1995, Research Triangle Park (RTP), USA), it was recommended that the IPCS produce a new short document as a model for using existing national/regional reports to develop globally-acceptable assessment monographs. The recommendations of this meeting were noted at ISG1.

The first meeting of an IPCS Steering Group on the Development of CICADs was convened in Washington DC on 30th May - 1st June 1995. A draft format was developed and, in a pilot phase, it was agreed to prepare CICADs on 16 industrial chemicals and 5 pesticides.

A second meeting of the Steering Group was held in Ottawa on 21st - 23rd February 1996. The meeting discussed (1) size, format and content; (2) the peer-review process for draft CICADs; (3) quality of supporting documentation; and (4) review of mechanisms for priority setting and selection of chemicals for the next phase. A draft CICAD had been circulated to IPCS Contact Points for consideration. Using the draft CICAD as an example, the format was modified according to the wishes of the meeting and the other feedback obtained, retaining as much as possible, the format of EHC monographs, but with a focus on conciseness, briefly summarising non-critical studies and only providing detail for critical or pivotal parts of the hazard assessment. Furthermore, the preface would indicate the purpose and content of the document, highlighting that hazard characterisation and dose-response assessments are globally applicable whilst the risk assessment, based on one or several exposure scenarios, is given for illustration and example only. The Steering Group recommended that CICADS contain only example risk assessments. Other countries could use the example(s) as the starting point for developing their own exposure and risk assessments, based on the hazard information and exposure/risk scenarios contained in the CICAD.

It was noted that of 21 CICADs promised in May 1995, 15 first drafts had been delivered by Feb. 1996. This indicates the strong commitment of participating countries to the CICAD process.

It is important to maintain this momentum to facilitate achievement of Agenda 21 risk assessment goals.
BREAKOUT GROUP MEETING - KEY ISSUES DISCUSSED AND AGREED

1. CICADs would be based on one or more source national assessments, which would be readily available and act as reference documents. There would be no need to make changes to these source documents as a result of the CICAD preparation process.

2. There need to be clear criteria for the selection of chemicals and the progression of national assessment documents through the CICAD process. These were agreed at the June 1995 CICAD Steering Group meeting in Washington (IPCS/CICAD/95.49, Appendix 3).

3. There needs to be effective cooperation and coordination between regional and international agencies and document producing countries in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

4. The proposed CICAD international peer review process promises efficiencies which need to be tested. The review process also commits to involve all interested countries through their IPCS Contact point institutions.

5. The OECD/SIDS programme is one of the main providers of data on chemicals. IPCS could also feed into this procedure by alerting OECD to data gaps on HPV chemicals identified in EHCs or CICADs and to candidate chemicals for initial assessment. Items under both these headings would be presented to the OECD/SIDS programme for possible adoption by OECD countries and industry. There is no need to generate further data under the CICAD project. Chemicals that are of concern for developing countries but no longer produced within the OECD should not be excluded, but it was recognized that obtaining data could be difficult.

6. The IFCS Meeting on Coordination of Work on the Assessment of Existing Chemicals (Paris, 23rd - 24th October, 1995) noted that key elements in determining whether particular documents should count as international assessments were: the transparency (openness, inclusiveness and accountability); scientific rigour; independence; peer review; and consensus of the process. Based on the criteria developed at both Research Triangle Park and Paris, the following documents were considered to satisfy the IFCS criteria:

- IPCS/EHC - these have a long history of acceptance as internationally peer-reviewed documents;
- IPCS/CICAD - these are to be based upon national assessments, have a format comparable to the EHC, and will be carried through a similar international peer-review process;
- OECD SIDS/SIAR - These initial assessment documents include EU HPV assessments.
7. The main unresolved issue is which other documents satisfy the IFCS criteria. Some of the candidates considered at Paris include: IARC Monographs; WHO air and water quality guidelines; JECFA monographs; JMPR and JMP monographs; IPCS PIMS.

Whilst these documents are produced by a process which includes peer review, they tend to have a more specialised use and are not generally comprehensive risk characterisation documents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ISG-2 should note the report of the October 1995 IFCS Meeting on Coordination of Work on the Assessment of Existing Chemicals in Paris and recommend the continued involvement of this group in coordinating the selection of chemicals and the preparation of respective documents which are developed as international assessments, to ensure that, as far as possible, there is not duplication of effort and overlap in document preparation. The group should be expanded to include representative regional participation from developing countries.

2. Assessments currently counted as meeting the IFCS targets based on criteria established at the Paris meeting are: IPCS/EHC; IPCS/CICAD; OECD/SIDS. The coordinating group referred to in 1 above should be asked to prepare a paper to IFCS which outlines the progress in the programme for Area A. The paper should also evaluate the targetted assessment documents referred to in the ISG Working Paper ISG96.4 by the criteria cited at the Paris meeting, recommending which ones count, based on their relative conformity to those criteria.
SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY - FIVE YEARS AFTER UNCED, NEW YORK, 3-7 J une 1997

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. The UN General Assembly has decided to convene a special session of the General Assembly at the highest level at the UN in New York, 3-7 June 1997.

2. This session is requested to review progress in implementing the agreements reached at UNCED in Rio in 1992, i.e. the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and international conventions and agree on a course of action, including priorities for the future.

3. The session will be prepared by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), which will function as the Preparatory Committee and supported by the UN Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (UNDPCSD) and the Interagency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD).

4. The preparation will start by the CSD which will have its 4th session (CSD 4) in New York from 16 April - 3 May 1996, particularly through its high-level segment to be held at ministerial level on 2-3 May 1996.

5. During this high-level segment, a panel of the three past chairmen of the CSD and possibly one or two additional eminent persons will take place to, among others, identify priorities to be endorsed by the special session.

6. Background documents to be prepared for the special session consist of (as far as known as of today):

   a report by the UN Secretary-General on the status of implementation of UNCED’s agreements which will be based on reports of Task Managers on achievements/failures, policy shifts as a result of UNCED, etc. and a comprehensive analytical report on global socio-economic trends.

7. These documents need to be finalized by late January 1997 for translation and meeting the six-week rule to be available in advance of the CSD 5, March/April 1997 (exact dates not fixed yet).

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1 Task Managers have been designated by UNDPCSD for each chapter of Agenda 21
POSSIBLE PROCEDURE FOR PROVIDING INPUT INTO THE SPECIAL SESSION IN JUNE 1997 ON CHAPTER 19 OF AGENDA 21

A. NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

National Reports

B. REPORT OF IFCS II

In view of time constraints the Government of Canada as the host of the IFCS II could submit a Conference Room Document on the outcome on IFCS II and make an oral presentation.

C. CSD 4

Government may utilize CSD 4 in April/May 1996 to initiate a process that priority be given to chemical safety in the special session and beyond. The high-level segment is crucial in this regard.

D. INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Task Manager Report on Chapter 19 (UNEP in collaboration with its partners in IPCS, IOMC and others).
REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON PROGRAMME AREA E: STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY OF CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT

ISG-2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The building or strengthening of chemical management capacity in countries is critical to achievement of the objectives of Agenda 21, Chapter 19. ISG recognises the need to strengthen efforts to ensure representative and effective participation of developing countries and those with economies in transition in international meetings concerning Forum activities on chemicals management. This input, which reflects a wide range of climatic/environmental conditions and economic, political, social and cultural practices, is important to ensure the success of the Forum activities in implementation of Chapter 19.

An essential first step is the preparation by countries of comprehensive National Profiles on their chemicals infrastructure and development needs as a basis for capacity building.

The IFCS provides a unique forum to progress this issue through partnerships involving member countries, environmental and public interest NGOs, industry NGOs, International Scientific Organisations, and International Organisations. Accordingly, ISG-2:

- recognising the special role of Member Countries, invites countries:
  - to establish National Focal Points for IFCS activities;
  - to establish national co-ordination of chemicals management programmes;
  - to commit to the preparation of a mini or comprehensive National Profile, as national circumstances dictate, using the process developed in the revised UNITAR guidance document;
  - to report on progress on National Profile preparation to the 1997 Forum;
  - to promote bilateral, subregional and regional co-operation.
- recognising the special role of Environmental & Public Interest NGOs in promoting community right to know, policy analysis, networking, advocacy, clean production and technology transfer and sustainable alternative practices:
  - encourages efforts to enhance the capacity and skills of communities in the area of chemical safety, particularly in developing countries and economies in transition.
recognising the special role of Industry NGOs in implementing safe chemical management practices:

- welcomes the efforts of ICCA to assist capacity building in developing countries, including through formation of industry associations, implementation of responsible care and product stewardship programmes, application by multinational companies in all countries of consistent and high standards, and support for the UNEP-APELL programme and national workshops; and invites ICCA to report on progress to 1997 Forum;

- welcomes the efforts of GIFAP in training government, local industry and farmers in the safe use of crop protection chemicals, and encourages wide dissemination of this information to developing countries to support their capacity building efforts.

recognising the special role of International Scientific Organisations:

- welcomes the initiative by scientific organisations to establish jointly a mechanism to support the building of scientific capacity in developing countries in the fields of environmental and human health monitoring, exposure analysis and ecotoxicology.

recognising the special role of International Organisations:

- invites the IFCS Secretariat to ensure that:

  - a listing of all documents relating to all programme areas of Chapter 19, including all relevant activities of member organisations, is regularly distributed to all Forum members so that interested countries may request full documentation;

  - through co-ordination of IOMC and IFCS National Focal Points, all Forum members receive timely notice of all planned meetings and that meeting locations and dates are co-ordinated to maximise participation of all countries;

  - increased efforts are made through better use of regional programmes of IOMC member organisations and other existing regional and subregional networks to enhance capacity of developing countries to participate effectively in Forum activities, and to bring to the attention of the Forum their special needs and priorities;

  - Forum financing arrangements provide for the needs of developing countries; and
- preparation and dissemination of guidance material on the development of legislative framework on chemical management are co-ordinated.

- invites UNITAR to revise the National Profile guidance document to facilitate the development of mini profiles as a first step towards development of a comprehensive National Profile.

- invites all international organisations to mobilize support for developing countries to undertake a comprehensive assessment of national capacity.

- invites the OECD to develop an information exchange programme to facilitate co-ordination of capacity building assistance provided by member countries and to disseminate this information to IFCS members.

- invites the IOMC to co-ordinate national and regional training and capacity building efforts of international organisations, and to nominate a lead agency in each Region to co-ordinate IFCS activities and prepare a progress report for the 1997 Forum on regional needs based on country national profiles.
REPORT OF NGO MEETING

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) wish to help create a strong and well-directed Intergovernmental Forum for Chemical Safety (IFCS), which will provide leadership for and improve coordination of international activities for sound chemicals management and thereby improve standards of health and environmental protection around the globe. We recognize the efforts being made through the IFCS to fully involve the various NGO interests as being integral to accomplishing this end in a positive and constructive manner. It is in this spirit that representatives of industry, scientific and public interest NGOs participated in a session to discuss and formulate recommendations regarding the interaction of NGOs with the IFCS. The following organizations were represented:

INDUSTRY NGOs

- International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA)
- European Chemical Industry Association (CEFIC)
- World Chlorine Council (WCC)
- International Council for Metals in the Environment (ICME)
- International Agricultural Chemical Association (GIFAP)

PUBLIC INTEREST NGOs

- World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)
- Greenpeace
- Consumers International (IOCU)

SCIENTIFIC NGOs

- International Union of Toxicology (IUTOX)
- International Union of Pharmacology (IUPHAR)
- International Union of Pure & Applied Chemistry (IUPAC)
- International Council of Occupational Health (ICOH)
- German Advisory Committee on Existing Chemicals (BUA)

Following the discussion among NGOs, Dr. Gunnar Bengtsson, President of IFCS, and Dr. Michel Mercier, Executive Secretary of IFCS, joined the meeting and received from the NGO’s the following comments and recommendations:

- The changes planned in the structure of the IFCS plenary meetings, calling for separation of ISG-representative countries from NGO’s, other countries and IGOs; designation of prescribed seating arrangements allotting no more than two seats with microphones for each delegation, etc. are positive steps that should lend greater order and discipline to the
conduct of these sessions. The NGOs support these measures and urge the President to use his power as the Chair to reinforce these measures to the end of providing a forum in which all parties are given a reasonable opportunity to participate in forum discussions.

- The NGOs consider all meetings held in conjunction with the ISG, including this NGO meeting, to be part of the Forum activities and subject to the urge that they be reported to the ISG and conducted in manner consistent with the spirit of participation and partnership which sets the Forum apart from other international venues.

- The NGOs regard all regional meetings held in conjunction with the ISG or Forum meetings to be part of the Forum and intend to participate fully in these meetings.

- The NGOs consider the planned "Heads of Delegation" meeting to be part of the Forum activities as well, and would urge that it be conducted with similar responsiveness to the spirit of participation. However, we recognize the desire of the ISG countries to meet independent of other groups and accept this as an exception which will not compromise the rights of participation in other contexts. The NGOs urge, however, that agendas for these sessions which may deviate from the formal ISG or Forum agendas be communicated to other participating groups; and that any discussions taking place at these HOD meetings be reported-out to the other participants, with full opportunity given to provide comments and input on these items prior to any formal action.

- The NGOs recognize the pathbreaking nature of the IFCS, and view follow-through on the theme of NGO participation to be vital to achieving the full potential of the Forum. We believe the steps to ensure that follow-through in the future should be determined in consultation with representatives of the NGO participants. To this end, we recommend establishment of a type of "planning/steering group" which would involve the various groups more centrally in the planning and functioning of IFCS; and a first step toward this could be NGO participation in the Ad Hoc Working Group for the Agenda being formed to plan the 1997 Forum meeting.

- The NGOs noted discussions regards a probable meeting in the Philippines to address the issue of POPs, and noted that the relation of this meeting to the Forum is unclear. However, it clearly has some relation and should be approached with the same spirit of participation and involvement characterizing formal Forum activities. We recognize that the need for a manageable process may argue for this to be through representation from among the NGO organizations rather than a plenary-type open participation for all recognized groups.
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Second Intersessional Group of the Forum Meeting
5-8 March 1996, Canberra, Australia

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