



**Governing Council
of the United Nations
Environment Programme**

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/GC.22/INF/38
29 January 2003



ENGLISH ONLY

**Twenty-second session of the Governing Council/
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**
Nairobi, 3-7 February 2003
Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Policy issues: State of the environment

**CONTRIBUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON
CHEMICAL SAFETY'S BAHIA DECLARATION AND PRIORITIES
FOR ACTION BEYOND 2000**

Note by the Executive Director

In its decisions 21/7 of 9 February 2001 and SS.VII/3 of 15 February 2002, the Governing Council requested the Executive Director to report to it at its twenty-second session on the contribution of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to the implementation of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety's Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action beyond 2000. Relevant activities are listed below, grouped under the six programme areas of chapter 19 of Agenda 21, which correspond to the headings used in the Priorities for Action. These do not include the overarching work of UNEP on the further development of a strategic approach to international chemicals management, which will build upon the Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action, or its efforts to enhance cooperation and synergies among the cluster of chemicals and hazardous wastes conventions. The text on the activities has been issued without formal editing.

* UNEP/GC.22/1.

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Programme Area A: Expanding and accelerating international assessment of chemical risks

- Development of a global mercury assessment.
- Facilitation of the Regionally Based Assessment of Persistent Toxic Substances.
- Development of the Global POPs Monitoring Network.
- Support for the OECD's work to develop Screening Information Data Sets (SIDS) for High Production Volume (HPV) chemicals.
- Participation in the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS).

Programme Area B: Harmonization of classification and labelling of chemicals

- UNEP is one of the participating organizations in the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) which, led by ILO together with UNITAR, has assisted in the development and promotion of the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

Programme Area C: Information exchange on toxic chemicals and chemical risks

- Co-leadership of the Chemical Information Exchange Network (CIEN), a project designed to improve African countries' access to information needed for the sound management of chemicals, together with the US.
- Jointly with FAO, support for implementation of the voluntary Prior Informed Consent procedure, pending entry into force of the Rotterdam Convention.
- Participation in the development of the Information Exchange Network on Capacity Building for the Sound Management of Chemicals (INFOCAP), led by IFCS.

Programme Area D: Establishment of risk reduction programmes

- Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.
- Jointly with FAO, secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade.
- Support to country efforts to develop of Pollution Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs).
- Development of the Awareness and Preparedness at the Local Level (APELL) programme in order to minimise the occurrence and harmful effects of technological accidents and environmental emergencies.
- Addressing the issue of severely hazardous pesticide formulations and promoting their sound management as joint interim secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention.

Programme Area E: Strengthening of national capabilities and capacities for management of chemicals

- Awareness raising and training in key chemical safety elements, usually in support of the Rotterdam or Stockholm Convention, followed by training through country-based projects to help individual countries.
- Support for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to develop Stockholm Convention National Implementation Plans.
- Management of a donor-funded chemical safety projects in over eighty developing countries and countries with economies in transition, including projects assisting countries to develop inventories of dioxin and furan sources and releases; develop PCB inventories and management plans; identify stockpiles of obsolete pesticides; find and use alternatives to POPs pesticides; and participate in the chemical information exchange network, which has already helped over 20 countries in Africa put in place computer and internet systems to access information on chemical safety.

- Participation in the development of the Africa Stockpiles Programme and an obsolete pesticides project in the Russian Federation that will contribute substantially to the safe management of obsolete stocks in these regions.

Programme Area F: Prevention of illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products

- UNEP has contributed to work on illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products through participation in customs training and as secretariat to conventions where the issue has been considered, including the Basel Convention and the Montreal Protocol.