

Group sessions at the Workshop on the need for information on chemicals in articles Geneva 9-12 February 2009

Organisation

- Introduction to group sessions in plenary by the co-chairs Wednesday morning
- Parallel working groups, 4 x ca 30 pers. (Chairs, 1. Prof. Oladele Osibanjo (Nigeria), 2. Mr. John Shoaff (USA), 3. Dr. Magnus Bengtsson (Japan) 4. Ms. Ethel Forsberg (Sweden)
- Reporting from group chairs in plenary Wednesday afternoon

Questions for the groups

- 1. Reflection on the information given at the workshop. Discussion on various experiences within the group related to the need for information regarding hazardous chemicals in articles.**

The aim with this question is to find common ground among participants on the extent and character of the problem and to discuss the issue in relation to the "emerging policy issue" criteria as listed by the informal meeting in Rome 23-24 Oct 2008.

Discussion on:

- The magnitude of the problems caused by limited availability of information, and its impact on human health and/or the environment taking into account vulnerable sub-populations and any toxicological and exposure data gaps.
- The extent to which the issue is being addressed by other bodies.
- Extent to which the issue is of a cross-cutting nature, i.e. how the issue may be relevant to different sectors (environment, health labour, industry or other) and in what respects.
- Relevance of the issue to a broad number of countries or regions, and stakeholders, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition and benefits to address this issue at the global level.
- Level of knowledge about the issue, i.e. general understanding of the issue, existing information sources etc.

- 2. What technical issues would need to be considered and/or investigated in order to improve information exchange in supply chains?**

The aim is to discuss and list those technical elements that would need to be investigated further in order to be able to develop systems to enhance information exchange in supply chains. Such issues could for example be to investigate further the various needs for information among actors in the supply chain, develop criteria for which chemicals to include, etc.

- Make a list of key technical issues to consider and/or investigate further without going into too much detail.

3. The way forward with regard to possible cooperative actions

The need for information of substances in articles has been prioritised as an emerging policy issues for detailed considerations at the second session of ICCM in May 2009. Submissions on this topic have been made by the EU, the Government of Japan and IFCS.

The aim is to initiate a process to facilitate the accomplishment of Objective 15 b of the Overarching Policy Strategy of SAICM; to ensure that various stakeholders, such as manufacturers, workers, consumers, recyclers and governments, can get appropriate information for sound decision making.

For each identified emerging policy issue proposed cooperative actions should be developed for further consideration by ICCM 2. One of the original submissions on this topic proposes to start a process aiming at elaborating a proposal for information systems relating to the chemical contents of articles.

Based on the result from the previous discussions within the group the aim with this question is to:

- a) Discuss and further elaborate the original proposal as stated above
 - how can a future process be organised, what key components needs to be considered?
 - which are the key stakeholders in such a process?
 - how would such a process relate to implementing the strategic approach?
 - what time frames would need to be considered?
 - how can such a process be established?

- b) What other possible cooperative actions could the ICCM2 consider to improve information exchange? For each proposed action;
 - what are the key elements to be investigated/considered further?
 - which are the key stakeholders to be involved?
 - how does the suggestion relates to implementing the strategic approach?
 - what time frames would need to be considered?

4. Key elements for conclusions

The participants might want to summarize the outcome of the group discussions and to identify key elements for conclusions and possible recommendations from the Workshop, which will be drafted by the co-chairs and used as an input in further development of background documents on this issue for ICCM 2.