UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

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UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention

• Adopted in 1992, entered into force in 2000
• Negotiated after the 1986 Sandoz accident at Schweizerhalle and its transboundary effects
• Designed to protect people and the environment against industrial accidents (with transboundary effects)
• Active international cooperation between Parties before, during and after an accident
• Assistance Programme est. 2004 to support countries with economies in transition
Which activities are covered under the Convention?

• Hazardous activities. i.e. those activities that:
  • Involve hazardous substances at or above the thresholds listed in Annex I to the Convention; and
  • Are capable of causing transboundary effects

• A list of substances and categories is included in Annex I to the Convention, aligned with the GHS

• Examples of hazardous activities:
  • Tailings management facilities
  • Fertilizers plants
  • Chemical plants
  • Oil storage facilities etc.
Relevance of the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention to China

- China borders 4 UNECE countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan) and could be affected by an industrial accident with transboundary effects.


- Convention supports transboundary cooperation between countries for disaster prevention, preparedness and response. Convention is expected to be open for accession by UN Member States outside the UNECE region in the future.

- China is Asia’s “most important” upstream riparian country, sharing 110 rivers and lakes with 18 different downstream countries. Convention helps countries to prevent accidental (transboundary) water pollution.
Relevance of the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention to China

- China shares transboundary pipelines with UNECE countries, such as with Turkmenistan crossing Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, and it has at least 11 major oil ports and terminals and approx. 12,000 tailings storage facilities. UNECE Safety Guidelines for Pipelines, Oil Terminals, and Tailings Management Facilities are freely available for China’s use.


- UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention can help China to implement the OBOR (One Belt – One Road) Initiative.
One Belt One Road (OBOR) – Linkages with the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention

- OBOR proposes to connect 65 countries via road, railroad, gas pipelines, oil pipelines, ports, and terminals
- OBOR would pass through at least 16 UNECE countries that are Parties to the Convention or beneficiaries of the Assistance Programme

- UNECE Safety Guidelines would be consulted in the design, construction, and management of the infrastructure as it passes through the UNECE region
- Due to the transboundary nature of the project, engagement under the convention would help streamline cooperation and increase disaster preparedness, reducing risk to all OBOR participating countries
Guidance materials under the Convention

• UNECE Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for Tailings Management Facilities, Pipelines, and Oil Terminals
  • For use by policymakers, public institutions, civil society, and the business sector to enhance awareness and share experiences
  • Provide recommendations for safety in design, construction, operation, and emergency planning of industrial facilities
  • Introduces industrial safety principles for countries, competent authorities, and operators

• UNECE Guidance on land-use planning, siting of hazardous activities, and related safety issues → 2015 Tianjin disaster

• Checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters

• Overview of Methodologies for Hazard Rating of Industrial Sites
Other Materials of Interest

• UNECE online training on industrial safety in Eng, Fre, Rus and Chinese: www.unece.org/index.php?id=32240

• Film on the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention in Eng and Rus: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Ph8jK0oAS0&index=1&list=PL4iZR0KyjSQ9VxjqLHPk0yeXQYssy-Tz

• Cartoons on the Industrial Accidents Convention in Eng and Rus: www.unece.org/index.php?id=36970

• Safety Guidelines and Good Practices in Eng and Rus
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<td>achieve resilience to disasters, in line with the Sendai Framework for</td>
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<td>Responsible Consumption and Production: Provides a framework to prevent</td>
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<td>accidental release of chemicals, thus contributing to their</td>
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<td>Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions: Ensures participatory decision-</td>
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<td>making by involving the public in discussions related to prevention of,</td>
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<td>preparedness for and response to industrial accidents</td>
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Linkages between the Convention and Disaster Risk Reduction

1. **Understanding disaster risk**
   Encouraging Parties to identify potentially hazardous activities to be able to target preventive measures, preparedness and response.

2. **Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk**
   Providing a governance mechanism for regional cooperation to address transboundary disaster risk reduction.

3. **Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience**
   Promoting investments in preventive measures, which cost less thanremedying the consequences of disasters.

4. **Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction**
   Ensuring preparation, review and periodical update of disaster preparedness and contingency policies, plans and programmes.
Key Benefits of Joining the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention

- Avoiding and minimizing the costs of industrial accidents, incl. those from tailings facilities and pipelines
- Enhancing capacity to address transboundary water pollution
- Strengthening regional cooperation and information sharing
- Improving transboundary emergency preparedness and response
- Building support from the community of Parties
- Receiving capacity development and training
- Joining a platform to exchange experience, good practices, technology and information
- China shares borders with four UNECE countries engaged in the Industrial Accidents Convention
Thank you for your attention!

For more information please visit: www.unece.org/env/teia

Or contact:
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Information on upcoming events can also be found on the TEIA website:
1. Global summit on Chemical Safety and Security – 18-21 Sep 2017 (Shanghai)
2. Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention (COP10) – autumn 2018
4. Seminar on Land Use Planning – Early 2018