

**FOURTH UNECE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

GENEVA, 1-2 December 2009

Agenda item 6. Chemicals

Intervention by the Eco-Accord¹

I would like to bring to your attention the need to strengthen civil society participation in decision-making on chemicals management because we think it is an important way to build capacity in chemicals management. Public participation in chemical assessment and management is still inadequate, lacking in resources and commitment and is not consistent with Rio Principle 10 which states that "Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level".

For the ICCM2 the IPEN (The International POPs Elimination Network which is a huge network of more than 600 organisations globally) made a survey of SAICM implementation in 8 regions of the world including the ECE region. The survey revealed inadequate public involvement in chemicals management in the region. SAICM Focal points often do not involve public organisations into the decision making process, projects initiated by NGOs are not considered a priority for support.

At the same time NGO initiatives and projects on chemicals proved to be effective. In some countries the capacity of civil society organisations is even higher than those of other stakeholders and even state authorities. A good example is a recent project on local PRTR development in the South-Eastern part of Kazakhstan which was initiated and implemented by non-governmental organisations as well as numerous initiatives of civil society organisations aimed at tackling the problem of obsolete pesticides.

The SAICM Quick Start Program is a good approach for SAICM implementation but it is underfunded and only one NGO project received funding under this program so far.

Olga Speranskaya
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¹ The text is presented as received from the author.