

UN/SCEGHS/3/INF.5

**Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally
Harmonized System of Classification
and Labelling of Chemicals**
(Third session, 10-12 July 2002)

DRAFT GHS

Note by the secretariat

As requested at the last session of the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, in December 2001 (see para 16, ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/4), the secretariat has prepared a revised version of the GHS which takes account of the decisions taken at the last session.

All changes in the text are visible in the electronic version of the document UN/SCEGHS/3/INF.5 and its addenda that are now available on the web site.

The different parts of the text are referenced as follows:

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UN/SCEGHS/3/INF.5/Add.2	Part 2
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UN/SCEGHS/3/INF.5/Add.6	Annexes 1 to 3
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This is a preliminary version, since the secretariat has noted that further editorial work would be necessary. The Sub-Committee may wish to provide the secretariat with comments on this new presentation and suggestions for improvements.

The document has been reformatted in a similar style than the Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, Model Regulations (SG/SG/AC.10/1/Rev.12). The document has been worked out in the editing mode, making all changes visible on the electronic document. The most important modifications brought into the text by the secretariat are highlighted here below.

1. Part 1, chapter 1.1, sub-section 1.1.4.2, paras 1.1.4.2.1 and 1.1.4.2.2: would better be included either (i) in the foreword; or (ii) in part 4, together with the text dealing with the implementation of the GHS; then paras 1.1.4.2.1 and 1.1.4.2.2 would describe the competent authorities at international level and be inserted under 4.1.2, the rest of the this subsection explaining the responsibility sharing between the other entities, i.e. national authorities, industry, etc.
2. Part 1, chapter 1.1, sub-section 1.1.5.2: former para 14 of Part 4.
3. Part 1, chapter 1.2, Definitions and Abbreviations: we propose to add a few definitions of general interest that are yet contained in different parts of the core text or annexes, i.e acute toxicity, chronic toxicity, degradation, respiratory sensitizer, skin sensitizer, skin corrosion, skin irritation, mutation. Some of these definitions were contained in the glossary of Annex 8 on aquatic toxicity, but would be useful for understanding the core part of the document; therefore we propose to shift them to the definition list.
4. Part 1, chapter 1.2, Definitions and Abbreviations: the words “substance” and “mixture” are in the definition list. Other words are used in the text such as “material”, “chemical”, “ingredient”, “agent”, “product”, “component”; their use is different from one part of the text to another depending on the initial authors of the text. It might be useful in the future to clarify the terminology of these other words for their use in the GHS, introduce their definition in the definition list and systematize their use all through the document (including the annexes).
5. Part 1, chapter 1.3, para 1.3.2.1.1: Reference is made to the definition of “Articles” as included in a US document that is not directly accessible to the reader. The original text should be either (i) reproduced as an annex; or (ii) what is outside the scope of the GHS system should be explicitly spelt out as done in para 1.1.2.4 .
6. Part 1, chapter 1.3, para 1.3.2.4.5: It might be useful here to define what is meant by “biologically available” or bioavailability. (see definition contained in Annex 8 from the OECD, glossary).
7. Part 1, chapter 1.4, para 1.4.4.1 and para 1.4.4.3: reference is made to chapter 4.2 about “Comprehensibility”, a part that is not drafted yet ; same remark for para 1.4.4.3.
8. Part 1, chapter 1.4, sub-section 1.4.7.2., the footnote indicates that the text of this section has not been originally adopted by ILO Working Group on Hazard Communication. However, the present text will be adopted by the GHS Sub-Committee and therefore the footnote should be redrafted (expressing the position of the sub-committee) or deleted. The same remark is valid for the footnotes of sub-sections 1.4.10.5.2; 1.4.10. 5.5.1; 1.5.3.1 to 1.5.3.3.
9. Part 1, chapter 1.4, sub-section 1.4.10.5.2 (d), (ii): the term “Competent Authority” has not been defined in the document (not listed in the Chapter 1.2 definitions, nor in part 4 within “responsibility sharing”. The term is further frequently used in the text. A definition is proposed in the definition list of part 1.2 that is identical to the one contained in the ADR Recommendations.
10. Part 2, sub-section.2.1.5, the footnote indicates that the text of this section has not been originally adopted by the UNCETDG-ILO Working Groups. However, the whole present text will be adopted by the GHS Sub-Committee and therefore the footnote should be modified or deleted; same remark valid for subsections 2.1.5.2, 2.2.5; 2.2.5.2; 2.2.6; 2.3.4.; 2.3.4.2; 2.4.5; 2.4.5.2; 2.5.5; 2.6.5; 2.6.5.2; 2.7.5; 2.8.4; 2.9.5; 2.10.5; 2.11.5; 2.12.5; 2.13.5; 2.14.5; 2.15.4 2.15.4.2; 2.16.5.

11. Part 3, chapter 3, sub-section. 3.1.5, the footnote indicates that the text of this section has not been originally adopted by the OECD Task Force-HCL. However, the present text will be adopted by the GHS Sub-Committee and therefore the footnote should be redrafted (expressing the position of the sub-committee) or deleted. The same remark is valid for the footnotes of para 3.2.5; 3.3.5; 3.4.5.1 and 3.4.5.2; 3.5.5; 3.5.5.3 footnote 3; 3.6.5; 3.5.6.3 footnote 4; 3.7.5. footnote 5; 3.8.5. footnote 2; 3.9.5. footnote 2; and 3.10.5. footnote 1.
12. Part 3, chapter 3.1, para 3.1.2: vapors, dusts and mists needs to be better defined. In note c, of table 3.1.1 this is mentioned as a possible future task of the OECD Test Guideline Programme.
13. Part 3, chapter 2, para 3.2.2.3, note (e): it is mentioned that a validation study has just been completed. Conclusions are now known and have been published as OECD Test Guideline 430 and 431.
14. Part 4, Chapter 4.1, para 4.1.5, has been moved to Chapter 1.1 after former para 31.

Completing the missing parts of the GHS Book

15. Part 1, foreword: an updated foreword will be proposed at a later stage by the secretariat.
16. Part 1, chapter 1.5.3.1.1, table 1.5.1, footnote 2 on Respiratory/skin sensitisation: the footnote indicates that the cut-off values for mixture might have to be reconsidered and that revisiting this issue should be amongst the first priorities of the sub committee before the system becomes implemented.
17. Part 1, chapter 1.5.3.4: it was proposed to insert an example of a GHS Safety Data Sheet that is missing at present. As a suggestion, this SDS example could be inserted as an annex, similar to the examples of GHS label elements (Annex 6) and example of classification in the GHS (Annex 7).
18. Part 3: examples are proposed at the end of chapters 3.1, 3.6 and 3.10. but have not been drafted.
19. Part 3, Chapter 3.4, para 3.4.3.4: it is indicated in the text that this issue is to be revisited as a first priority by the GHS Sub-Committee.
20. Part 3, Chapter 3.7, para 3.7.2.5.10: indicates that further discussion is needed regarding reproductive toxicants.
21. Part 3, Chapter 3.7, para 3.7.3.4: indicates that further discussion is needed about breast milk contamination.
22. Part 3, Chapter 3.10, para 3.10.2.2, note 2b indicates that development of the system to include chronic toxicity data is to be done;
23. Part 4, Chapter 4.2: this chapter entitled Resources is to be drafted.
24. Annex 2 (formerly 3), the summary table for aquatic hazards is missing. OECD will propose a table at the July 2002 Sub-Committee meeting.

The other annexes are still under review.

Translation of the GHS into French and review of the French text:

Annex 8 on aquatic environment is being translated by the OECD as well as Annex 9 on metal toxicity. Both translations will be ready by the July 2002 session of the Sub Committee. The secretariat propose to adjust the text to the most updated English version of it after the 3rd meeting of the Sub-Committee so that both English and French documents would be ready for submission to the 4th Sub-Committee meeting in December 2002.

The Globally Harmonized System for Hazard Classification and Communication

~~IOMC Coordinating Group
for the Harmonization of Chemical
Hazard Classification and Labelling~~

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[FOREWORD (New text will be proposed by the secretariat)]

1. The Globally Harmonized System for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) that is described in this document is the culmination of more than a decade of work. There were many individuals involved, from a multitude of countries, international organizations, and stakeholder organizations. Their work spanned a wide range of expertise, from toxicology to fire protection, and ultimately required extensive goodwill and the willingness to compromise, in order to achieve this system.
2. The work began with the premise that existing systems should be harmonized in order to develop a single, globally harmonized system to address classification of chemicals, labels, and safety data sheets. This was not a totally novel concept since harmonization of classification and labelling was already largely in place for physical hazards and acute toxicity in the transport sector, based on the work of the UN Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods (UNCEDTG). Harmonization had not been achieved in the workplace or consumer sectors, however, and transport requirements in countries were often not harmonized with those of other sectors in that country.
3. The international mandate that provided the impetus for completing this work was adopted in the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), and the work was coordinated and managed under the auspices of the Interorganization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) Coordinating Group for the Harmonization of Chemical Classification Systems (CG/HCCS). The technical focal points for completing the work were the International Labour Organization (ILO); the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); and the United Nations Subcommittee of Experts for the Transport of Dangerous Goods (UNSCETDG). It required a long term commitment from all of these organizations that they maintained exceptionally over the years.
4. The GHS as described in this document is just the beginning of global implementation. Those involved in its development believe that the system must be dynamic, and be revised and made more efficient as experience is gained in implementation. While we think that national or regional governments are the primary audiences for the document at this point, we have also tried to provide sufficient context and guidance for those in industry who will ultimately be implementing the national requirements that are adopted. A new United Nations Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals will be responsible for implementing and maintaining the GHS. The Sub-Committee will provide additional guidance as needs arise, while maintaining stability in the system to encourage its adoption. Through their auspices, this document will be revised and updated to reflect national and regional experiences in implementing requirements into national and regional laws, as well as experiences of those doing the classification and labelling.
5. The Coordinating Group (CG/HCCS) hopes that countries will adopt the GHS in the near future. Availability of information about chemicals, their hazards, and ways to protect people, will provide the foundation for national programs for the safe management of chemicals. Widespread management of chemicals in countries around the world will lead to safer conditions for the global population, while allowing the benefits of chemical use to continue. Harmonisation will also have benefits in terms of facilitating international trade, by promoting greater consistency in the national requirements for chemical hazard classification and communication that companies engaged in international trade must meet.

— Jennifer Silk, Chairperson]

— IOMC Coordinating Group for the Harmonisation of Chemical Classification Systems (CG/HCCS)

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