

UN/SCEGHS/5/INF.14

**Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally
Harmonized System of Classification
and Labelling of Chemicals**
(Fifth session, 7-9 July 2003,
agenda item 3)

COOPERATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Other international instruments closely related to the GHS

Submitted by the secretariat

1. To its fifth meeting, the SCE GHS has invited the Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the transboundary movements of waste and their disposal and the Ozone Secretariat of the Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting Substances to respectively report on their approach to take into account the GHS system and its provisions regarding the classification and labelling of chemical products and how they would incorporate relevant GHS provisions in their own instruments.
2. Also, IMO who at the fourth session of the SCE GHS has pointed out the difficulties they are encountering for the classification of certain categories of chemicals, has also been invited to report on those problems with more details to the SCE. Recently, IMO informed the secretariat that they will do so at the sixth session of the SCE, in December 2003.
3. Similarly, at its sixth session, the SCE GHS may wish to continue being informed of the position of other international instruments dealing with chemicals about their approach to the GHS. The next two instruments of interest in this respect could be the POPs and the PIC Conventions.

Persistent Organic Pollutants

4. The 2001 Stockholm Convention is a world-wide instrument which regulates the release of a few persistent organic pollutants. This instrument is not yet in force.
5. The Stockholm Convention regulates 12 chemicals (aldrin, chlordane, DDT, dieldrin, dioxins, endrin, furans, hexachlorobenzene, heptachlor, mirex, PCBs, toxaphene) that persist in the environment, bioaccumulate in the food chain and cause a risk for human health and the environment. According to its article 9, information on health and safety of humans and the environment should not be confidential. Access to the public of all information on POPs should be facilitated (article 10-1(b)). Industry and professional users should be encouraged to provide this information (article 10-3), using SDS, reports, mass media and other means of communication (article 10-4). Classification and labelling are not explicitly mentioned in the text although in Annex E (information requirements for the risk profile) information on hazard assessment for the endpoint or endpoints of concern should be produced. So far, there is no reference to the GHS.

The Prior Informed Consent Procedure

6. The Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure aims at protecting human health and the environment from the hazards of chemicals, while they are being traded, through relevant packaging and labelling provisions. The Convention applies to strictly regulated (banned or severely restricted) chemicals and hazardous pesticides preparations. The Convention is not yet in force, but interim arrangements have been put in place for its immediate implementation (interim PIC procedure).

7. The Convention and interim procedure cover 21 pesticides and 5 industrial chemicals (Annex III of the Convention) and 5 severely hazardous pesticide formulations; more are expected to be added in the future (Article 3). Under the Convention, every chemical should be marked with a code (Harmonized System Customs Code), labelled for its hazards and risks according to relevant international legislation, and complemented with a SDS (article 13 and annex 1). The SDS should follow "an internationally recognized format". Informations on precautionary measures, including the kinds of hazard and risk, and precautionary statements regarding measures to take should be provided, as well as the results of physicochemical, toxicological and ecotoxicological testings and properties (Article 14 and Annex 1). The notification form requests information on whether the product is classified or not, and under which classification system. So far, there is no reference to the GHS.

Conclusions

8. In both instruments, labelling and classification of hazards are mentioned as important information elements; SDS are also requested. However, at the moment, there is no explicit reference to the GHS. The SCE GHS may wish to inform both Conventions of the recent adoption of the GHS and ask them if and how they are envisaging to take into account the GHS provisions in their approach.
