

Identification of hazardous activities

Observations:

- Limited and incomplete provisions for identification of hazardous activities in the existing legislation
- No system adopted by the legislation for the classification of hazardous substances. Data collection happens but the classification is not harmonized
- Much information is available however dispersed and scattered over several authorities. Existing databases are not unified
- Collected data can be partially used for the identification of hazardous activities under the convention
- Existing data need to be checked and updated
- Lists with industrial activities do exist within different organizations. They are however not harmonized and the data do not relate to the provisions of the convention
- Limited coordination and cooperation among involved authorities regarding data collection and analysis
- CBRN strategy will address the management and use of chemicals

Actions

- To start procedures to adopt the Globally Harmonized System (GHS).
Political_decision!
- To revise the legislation in that way that the identification of hazardous activities will be made possible. Political decision!
- To map responsible organizations with roles and responsibilities
- Create a coordination (and cooperation) team
- Bring all existing data together, check and update the data and create a provisional list (related to the convention)
- Identify and specify the needs for training (identification of hazardous substances and activities and also classification etc.)

Prevention

Observations :

- There seems to be an element of a preventative regime implemented, namely the development of an ecological study within the environmental permitting procedure, however these are not detailed based on common rules
- Competent authorities seem to be little aware of the requirements of the Convention in the area of prevention
- Current legislation seems not to require operators of hazardous activities to demonstrate the implementation of preventative measures in compliance with the Convention
- Capacity is lacking in several areas (staff for drafting legislation, capacity for processing requests for permits, inspections/supervision, and staff capacity for processing permits ...)

Actions

- To start a process to include the preventative measures into the legislation in compliance with the Convention
- To coordinate the responsibilities of the involved ministries and their related authorities. Is an integrated approach possible?
- To train staff about the principles of prevention related to industrial activities and to create awareness about this topic
- The exchange of (international) best practises
- To plan and to establish a dialogue with the industry

Preparedness, response and mutual assistance

Observations:

- An overall national plan does exist and also that the different ministries have/need to have their own sector plans. There is however a need for more improvement and adjustment between the plans because they are separated.
- There are no on- and offsite emergency plans or they are not enough coordinated between the responsible authorities and or they are not in compliance with the convention
- Response is mainly based on a case to case approach
- Not for all ministries and their authorities it is clear how to operate during an incident. There is a lack of response procedures
- Not all responsible stakeholders are involved in the stage of preparedness and consequently also the response. This hinders the effectiveness

Preparedness, response and mutual assistance

- The overall response coordination in practice seems not be enough efficient
- The effectiveness of adequate response actions is hindered by a lack of capacity and capabilities (staff, equipment, availability of sufficient information)
- Bilateral agreements with neighbouring countries do exist. It is however unclear if and to which extent they include aspects regarding preparedness, response and mutual assistance and information exchange in compliance with the Convention
- A communication mechanism does exist. The roles and responsibilities of key players in cases of crisis communication are however unclear

Actions

- To review the existing (national) system for crisis management with focus on preparedness and response
- To analyse and review the existing legislation on these aspects and to include and implement the findings and recommendations in the revision also the provisions of the Convention
- To start the process of networking between all relevant stakeholders to gain 'win-win'
- To identify concrete needs for capacity building and include them in your action plan for improvement

Public information and public participation

Observations:

- Georgia is a party to the Aarhus Convention but the mechanism needs to be improved for its implementation
- There is general information available for the public without request and specific information is available on request. This information however does not contain elements of public information requirements of the Convention
- Public participation is being organized under the responsibility of operators and only the minutes of the public debate is being sent to the competent authority who is obliged to take this into consideration when issuing permits

Actions

- The legislation needs to be analyzed and reviewed and the results need to be implemented to ensure public information and participation in line with the Industrial Accidents Convention (and the Aarhus Convention)
- The capacity of the ministry needs to be strengthened to manage public participation procedures
- To consider to include training on this topic in future actions
- To raise awareness to the public on industrial safety and in particular the Industrial Accidents Convention

Observations and recommendations

- ❖ Potentials exist for improvement and further strengthening!
- ❖ An improved communication, cooperation and coordination is a first step and is essential!!

The different stakeholders need to:

- Talk to each other
- Use each others strengths
- Initiate and further improve cooperation
- Coordinate the activities

Way forward? (1)

- To establish an (inter-ministerial) working group of the involved stakeholders
- To appoint an authority who will lead the process
- To conduct an updated self assessment based on the Strategic Approach (if needed with assistance of the UNECE) with the involvement of all relevant organizations
- To draft a concept document – with the results of the self assessment as basis that includes:
 - the importance and relevance of the topic
 - the need for the execution of this coordinated work
 - a description of the goals, tasks and responsibilities of the working group
 - what needs to be achieved and when
 - etc.
- ❖ To approve the proposed approach on the political level. Political commitment and a back-up for the work of the working group is essential. A minister should be responsible for the process and should express ownership. This is a pre-condition!

Way forward? (2)

- To draft a document that outlines what is needed, what is existing, which gaps are identified etc and the recommendations how to close the gaps
- To draft an action plan that outlines when which tasks must be executed and an estimation of the needed resources (human and/or financial)
- To identify the subjects where (external) support and assistance is needed. Include here the topics where already cooperation with other organizations started and map them
- ❖ Approval of the plan and attached action plan on the political level (essential!!)
- To draft proposals for subjects where (external) support and assistance is needed and conduct research for support (UNECE through the Assistance Program, European Union, bilateral, expansion or continuation of existing programs etc).
- Execution of the plans and the step by step implementation of the results