

Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

**Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized
System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals**

8 December 2016

Thirty-second session

Geneva, 7-9 December 2016

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Implementation of the GHS: Development of a list of chemicals
classified in accordance with the GHS**

Report of the informal correspondence group assessing the potential development of a global list of classified chemicals

Transmitted by the expert from the United States of America

1. The informal correspondence group assessing the potential development of a global list of classified chemicals met on the afternoon of 7 December 2016.
2. The OECD delivered a report on the pilot classification as found in in ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2016/18 and Inf. 4. The group thanked the OECD and sponsor countries for their efforts in bringing this project to completion. Experts noted that the project shows that preparing classifications in this way is feasible, and there were a number of valuable learnings from the exercise. However, experts noted that the pilot also showed that preparing classifications in this way would involve a large effort and sustained commitment. Experts also stressed that the project's main result was not the draft classifications obtained, but the learnings about the process and resources needed.
3. One expert noted that in some industry sectors similar exercises were ongoing, where industry organizations were adopting common classifications for pure substances. Some experts suggested that there might be a way to tap into such activities that are already ongoing, and channel them into the process we are exploring in order to develop globally harmonized classifications. It was also noted that the goal for the UNSCEGHS would be to arrive at a process that would create confidence in the resulting classifications.
4. On phase 2 of the pilot project, experts were concerned that the proposal was oriented around a mock exercise about adopting a classification. In particular, experts were concerned that the results of such a mock exercise might be confusing, and might not provide useful information. Instead, phase 2 should look at the issues that would arise, and the resources that would be needed to address them, in raising awareness of the result of phase 1 and consulting with other international bodies. The chairman agreed to revise the proposal for phase 2 accordingly.
5. Several experts noted that they supported this work, and that achieving the ultimate goal of a harmonized list would be helpful for industry. Another expert was concerned about the possibility of conflicts with established lists in existing implementations, and stated that instead future work should be focused in finding commonalities in established lists. Other experts suggested that using the process to resolve conflicts in existing lists would be more helpful to industry. It was agreed that further discussion about next steps in the effort would be held in the next biennium, should there be agreement that there was sufficient interest in continuing the work.

6. The correspondence group agreed to the following work for the coming biennium:
 - (a) Complete chemical classification pilot project
 - (b) Complete proposed list comparison, looking for endpoints in which the EU and Japan classifications agree
 - (c) Consider whether there is sufficient interest to warrant additional work at this time on the Global List project, or whether the work of the correspondence should be put on hold until additional interest develops.
 - (d) If the work moves ahead, consider the proper role of the GHS Sub-Committee in that effort.
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