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Report of the Informal Workshop on Stakeholders' Information Needs on Chemicals in Articles/Products

Background

1. The sound management of chemicals is one of the key challenges to achieving sustainable development. This is recognized by the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) that has as its overall objective "to achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment". Among the detailed objectives that are set out in the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy (OPS) the one addressing knowledge and information (OPS 15) is directly relevant to the subject of the workshop and states, inter alia:

> "(b) To ensure, for all stakeholders: (i) That information on chemicals throughout their life cycle, including, where appropriate, **chemicals in products**, is available, accessible, user friendly, adequate and appropriate to the needs of all stakeholders. Appropriate types of information include their effects on human health and the environment, their intrinsic properties, their potential uses, their protective measures and regulation."

2. The Global Plan of Action that accompanies the OPS, include three activities of particular relevance:

> *108. Articles and products containing hazardous substances should all be accompanied by relevant information for users, workplaces and at disposal sites.*
>
> *111. For all chemicals in commerce, appropriate information detailing their inherent hazards should be made available to the public at no charge and generated where needed with essential health, safety and environmental information made available. Other information should be available according to a balance between the public's right to know and the need to protect valid confidential business information and legitimate proprietary interests.*
>
> *112. Undertake awareness-raising for consumers, in particular by educating them on best practices for chemical use, about the risks that the chemicals they use pose to themselves and their environment and the pathways by which exposures occur.*

3. There has recently been growing interest and understanding of the release of and possible exposure to potentially harmful chemicals contained in articles and commercial products, such as personal computers, textiles, toys and costume jewelry. The European Union has submitted the issue of information needs for chemicals in articles as an emerging policy issue for consideration at the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) in May 2009. Similar proposals have also been submitted by others, for example Japan and the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) when related to chemicals in toys. Information exchange is one key factor to enable stakeholders to avoid and/or properly manage hazardous chemicals and reduce risks to human health and the environment. The need for better communication throughout the product chain has been identified and the overall aim of the current initiative is to facilitate informed decision-making in relation to chemicals contained in products Ms. Johanna Lissinger Peitz has been nominated to facilitate the preparation of an information document about this emerging policy issue as well as a short document containing possible cooperative actions for consideration by the ICCM at its

second session. Both documents will take into account the outcome of the current workshop and will be developed in consultation with interested stakeholders.

I. Opening of the Meeting

4. The informal workshop on stakeholders' information needs on chemicals in articles/products was held at the International Conference Centre in Geneva, Switzerland from 9 to 12 February 2009. The workshop was jointly organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Chemicals Branch with the Government of Sweden. The workshop was also supported by the Government of Japan and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

II. Organizational matters

A. Agenda

5. The informal workshop carried out its work according to the following agenda:

Opening

Scene setting
- Describing the problem, challenges and opportunities and priorities, and chemicals (presentation of background study)
- Synergies between SAICM and the Marrakech process

The need for better information exchange in the supply chain
- Presentation of different country perspectives (importing versus exporting)

Challenges in the supply chain
- Presentations of case studies and perspectives of different stakeholders

Information sharing and existing tools
- Presentations of existing tools, instruments and systems for information sharing

Communication in the supply chain

Working group sessions
- Discussions around needs, challenges, linkages and possible approaches forward to address the issues at international level

Working Group Reports

Conclusions and Recommendations

B. Organization of Work

6. The workshop undertook its work in plenary and in working groups.

C. Officers

7. The workshop was co-chaired by Mr. Babajide Alo (Nigeria) and Ms. Ethel Forsberg (Sweden).

D. Attendance

8. The workshop was attended by participants from the following countries: Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Canada, China, Comoros, Congo, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Republic of Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Peru, Poland, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, United States of America, Uruguay, Republic of Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

9. The workshop was attended by participants from the following intergovernmental organizations and multilateral environmental agreements: Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Basel Convention Regional Coordinating Centre for Africa for Training and Technology Transfer, European Chemicals Agency, European Commission, Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, World Health Organization, United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

10. The workshop was attended by participants from the following non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and academia and research institutes: Clean Production Action, Clean Production Centre of Tanzania, Environmental Centre for Administration and Technology, Environmental and Health "Ecotox", Finnish Environment Institute, Indonesia Toxics-Free Network, International Chemical Secretariat, International POPs Elimination Network, Tanzania Association of Public Occupational and Environmental Health Experts, Toxics Link, WWF Japan, AGC Chemicals, ASAHI Glass Co. Ltd., BIAC-3M Company, Clariant Products, Dupont de Nemours International S.A., FMEnv/UNILAG Centre for Environmental Human Resources Development, IKEA, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, International Council of Chemical Associations, International Council on Mining and Metals, Japan Chemical Industry Association, Monica Becker and Associates, Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications, Tefal SAS, United States Council for International Business, University of Massachusetts and University of Toronto.

III. Opening session

11. The workshop was opened by Mr. Alo on Monday 9 February 2009, at 2.00 p.m. Opening statements were made by Mr. Alo, Mr. Per Bakken, Head, Chemicals Branch DTIE, UNEP, Ms. Agneta Sunden-Bylehn, Senior Programme Officer, Chemical Branch, DTIE, UNEP, Ms. Forsberg, Director General, Swedish Chemicals Agency and Ms. Johanna Lissinger Peitz, Ministry of Environment, Sweden.

12. Mr. Alo expressed his appreciation to the Governments of Sweden and of Japan and to the Nordic Council of Ministers for their financial support. He said that Sweden had drawn global attention to paragraph 15 of the overarching policy strategy of SAICM on knowledge and information and said there was currently growing understanding of the spread and potential exposure from chemicals in articles. The intention of the workshop was to examine the general problem of that exposure and attendant health problems related to chemicals in articles such as computers, toys, textiles and jewellery, and the lack of knowledge and education with respect to those problems. He drew attention to the difference between products that had chemicals within their components and chemical products themselves. He recalled that the globally harmonized system of classification and labelling was also examining information with respect to chemical compounds and products and noted that there was no intention to overlap with what that system was doing but to look at articles in common day use not necessarily covered by that system. The need for improved communication throughout the production chain had been raised at many forums and highlighted by recent instances of recall of toys containing lead. He said that the substitution of harmful chemicals in articles would be a challenge to sustainable consumption and production. He looked forward to the workshop developing a consolidated paper with conclusions and recommendations on how to further address the issue for consideration at the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) in May 2009.

13. Mr. Bakken welcomed participants to Geneva and thanked the co-sponsors of the meeting. He said the outcome of the workshop would provide timely input to the second session of the ICCM where the need for information on chemical substances in articles would be addressed as an emerging policy issue. He said that UNEP had reorganized its work programme into six priority areas of which harmful substances and wastes was one. UNEP had played a central role for international actions on chemicals and wastes, including through facilitating the negotiations of the Stockholm Convention and Rotterdam Convention as well as discussions leading to the adoption of SAICM and providing the SAICM secretariat. UNEP's mid-term strategy provided vision and direction for a work-plan until 2013 and was adopted at the special session of the Governing Council in February 2008. UNEP would move to enhance strategic alliances, support the evolution of international regimes, such as on mercury, and assist countries to enhance capacities to safely manage chemicals and hazardous wastes. He noted that the current issue was closely linked to another priority area, that of resource efficiency. In that respect the Marrakech process was important in its similarity to SAICM as a multi-stakeholder initiative bringing together the private and public sectors. Information on chemicals in goods and articles was cross-cutting and concerned all steps along the life-cycle of the article from manufacture to disposal and all stakeholders. The current workshop constituted a very important initial step to address the issue of improved information on chemicals in articles. He expected that the outcome of the workshop would constitute a major input to the International Conference on Chemicals Management in May

2009 and hoped that it would generate broad support for continued consideration of the matter at a more formal level ensuring full involvement of all relevant stakeholders during future discussions.

14. Ms. Sunden-Bylehn recalled the need to fill information gaps throughout the supply chain and highlighted that where previously the actions regarding information on chemicals was addressed only to governments currently all stakeholders were to be addressed. Objective 15 of SAICM's overarching policy strategy was aimed at ensuring that sufficient information was available to all stakeholders to adequately assess and manage chemicals throughout their life cycles. Multi-stakeholder involvement was also part of the Marrakech process and the issue of information on chemicals contained in articles was an area that provided for synergies between SAICM and the Marrakech process.

15. Ms. Forsberg expressed the regrets of Mr. Erik Hammarskjöld who was unable to attend the workshop and thanked the Government of Japan for co-funding the workshop. She said the overall aim of the workshop was to improve industry and consumer conditions to make more informed decisions when choosing and using articles. Historically it had been difficult to obtain such information but there was increasing interest to obtain articles that did not contain chemicals that might have negative consequences to the manufacturers, or that might harm consumers or those involved in disposal. She said that in chemical products the whole function was linked to the chemical composition of the products, whereas the functions of articles are mainly linked to their shape and design. She said it would be difficult to have all information on chemicals in an article; as well as to obtain the information and how to establish an information system. For chemical products the need for information was well established internationally and nationally; for articles, information on chemical content rarely existed. While chemical substances were valuable and could be used in a safe manner when good practices were applied, currently there was much exposure to chemical risks in articles as demonstrated by recalls on toys and electronic goods. That resulted in costly effects on health and the environment but was also costly to industry in terms of the recall process and damage to company image. Recalling the SAICM objectives she said there was a need to elaborate guidance on how information on chemicals in articles could be provided. The current workshop was a first and concrete step towards better information on chemicals in articles and preparatory work for discussion under emerging policy issues at the second session of the ICCM. Cases studies to be presented from government, industry and non-governmental organizations would provide good examples. International trade resulted in substances in articles being transported among all regions. Global action was therefore necessary. She said developing country concerns regarding access to foreign markets and improved product information must also be noted. She stressed that the link between sustainable use and sustainable production of articles included recycling of articles containing chemicals. The synergies between SAICM and the Marrakech process which addressed inefficient use of natural resources must also be examined; improved information on chemicals in articles increased the likelihood of reaching the goals of both processes. She hoped the workshop would allow for gathering of experience that would lead to a common understanding of the magnitude of the problem and that the outcome would support the ICCM discussions in May 2009 and propose possible recommendations for a more formal international process to address the issue.

IV Scene Setting

16. Ms. Lesley Onyon (SAICM secretariat) made a presentation on SAICM and emerging policy issues. She gave a brief background on the SAICM process and the achievements of the first three years since its adoption in 2006. She provided a report on the preparations for the second session of the ICCM, the expectations from the conference and a status report on work on emerging policy issues. She noted that the conference would provide a first opportunity for stakeholders to review progress and initial implementation of SAICM and to take stock and necessary action. Regarding emerging policy issues, preparatory work had been initiated in June 2008 with a questionnaire requesting identification of such issues. 36 emerging policy issues had been submitted for further consideration. The definition of an emerging issue was decided at a preparatory meeting for the Conference in Rome in October 2008 as follows: an issue involving the production, distribution and use of chemicals which had not yet been recognized or sufficiently addressed but may have significant adverse effects on human beings and/or the environment. Selection criteria were also identified at that meeting as follows: magnitude of the problem, relevance of the issues, extent to which it is cross-cutting, level of knowledge, extent to which it is addressed and feasibility of the actions proposed. Of the 21 grouped issues four were identified for further preparatory work: nanotechnology, chemicals in products/articles, e-waste and lead in paint. Information papers on those topics and a document setting out possible cooperative actions, coordinated by a facilitator, would be submitted to the Conference for its consideration. The Conference would be invited to establish a future procedure to address the emerging policy issues. Issues already nominated but not addressed in detail at the second session of the Conference could be prioritized as part of that procedure in the intersessional period. She concluded by noting the current workshop was being held at a very useful time to help the preparatory discussions on the issue of chemicals in products.

17. Ms. Lissinger Peitz noted that the preparatory work involved all stakeholders. Reiterating that the overarching policy strategy and the global plan of action of SAICM had recognized the need for work on chemicals in articles further steps were now necessary to reach that goal. SAICM and the emerging issues platform was an important platform for that work. National and regional work was being undertaken but there was need for global action to have information systems on chemical in articles. The current workshop, she recalled, would feed into the work-plan and the information paper on chemicals in articles. She said that at present there were three different aims. Firstly, to identify the problems, to learn more on the issue and to hold further discussions; secondly, to use the outcome to feed into the development of the background documents for the second session of the ICCM; and thirdly, and most importantly, establish a programme that could be initiated following the Conference that would work intersessionally and assist developing countries to meet their objectives regarding the safe handling of chemicals by the year 2020.

18. The following additional presentations were made under the agenda item on scene setting:

- Toxic Substances in Articles: The need for information by Ms. Rachel Massey, Policy Analyst, Toxics Use Reduction Institute, University of Massachusetts Lowell, and Ms. Monica Becker summarizing a report specifically commissioned and prepared to elaborate on the benefits from improved information on chemicals in articles.

- Synergies between the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the Marrakech process by Ms. Adriana Zacarias, Programme Officer, Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Branch, UNEP.

V. The need for better information exchange in the supply chain

19. The following presentations were made under the agenda item:

- Information from the WHO Chemical Incident Alert and Response System by Mr. Kersten Gutschmidt, World Health Organization

- Stakeholders' information needs on chemicals in articles/products – IFCS Contribution and supporting work by Ms. Judy Stober, Executive Secretary, IFCS

- Low public awareness and data gaps as drivers for the improvement of environmentally sound management of heavy metals in articles/products in developing countries by Mr. Oladele Osibanjo, Federal Ministry of Environment, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

- How much should products details be gathered and disclosed for chemical safety management by Ms. Varapan Danutra, Head of chemical information management unit, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

- Obstacles in risk management of PFOS by Ms. Yao Wei, Ministry of Environmental Protection, China

20. In the ensuing discussion, it was noted that in many countries producers were knowledgeable on a given chemical but there was almost no awareness of use downstream. Clearly information access was concentrated in a few people and improvement of material safety data sheets might serve to broaden the knowledge base. Other issues highlighted were the need to convince authorities to ban production of polluting substances and to produce safer alternatives; the education of workers and authorities on the risks of substances, the need to identify specific substances involved and the need for careful selection of alternatives or substitutes. With regard to the use by developing countries of the REACH database in response to the need for companies exporting products to the European Union to provide information, it was not yet clear whether those countries would use that data for informing authorities on hazardous substances in the respective countries. The validation of data or "information audit" was noted as critical as was the quantity of data to be included in any information system. Many speakers reiterated the importance of correct identification and nomenclature of the substances in the system.

VI. Challenges in the supply chain

21. The following presentations were made under the agenda item:

- Developing country challenges to chemicals in products by Mr. Ravi Agarwal, Toxics Link, India

- Enhanced information exchange on hazardous substances in electronics: Connecting the production and end-of-life stages by Mr. Magnus Bengtsson, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan

- Surveys of hazardous chemicals and their life-cycle state by Mr. Hidetaka Takigami, National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan

- The International Council of Chemical Associations' (ICCA) contribution to SAICM: the global product strategy by Ms. Melanie Bausen, ICCA

- Strategies for addressing chemicals in articles/products by Mr. Mark Rossi, Research Director, Clean Production Action

- Chemicals in articles: A global automotive manufacturer's perspective by Mr. Thomas Osimitz, Science Strategies (General Motors)

- IKEA's approach to chemicals management by Ms. Katarina Maaskant, Manager IKEA, European Union Affairs

- The sustainability approach and management of substances in products by Mr. Daniel Paska, Environmental Expert, Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications AB

- Experience of downstream users and challenges companies face regarding needs of information by Mr. Nardano Nimpuno, Senior Policy Advisor, ChemSec

22. In the ensuing discussion emphasis was placed on communication with government and customs authorities to obtain action for control of substances and awareness-raising on chemical related diseases to local authorities and education of the general public on chemicals management and the environment. It was suggested that the media could play a role in dissemination of information to the public. Lack of knowledge on chemicals hazard was aggravated by poverty where contaminated containers might be used to store consumables. A core issue was inter-ministerial communication on issues of concern and sharing of information. Additional political commitment on environmental issues in developing countries was necessary. Attention was drawn to the informal sector handling waste and recycling and it was reiterated that industry was best placed to handle waste treatment; however it was difficult if not impossible to completely eliminate scavenging at waste sites. Providing safer sites for disassembling and information on hazardous products would help to alleviate the dangers. Developing countries also faced the problem of dealing with second-hand electronic material that needed recycling as those products often remained in the country as e-waste. It was suggested that product stewardship might be extended on a regional basis not only national basis and was currently being discussed in the Asian region. The value of sound information in safety data sheets and the need to know what information should be included in what type of information system was emphasized.

23. It was reaffirmed that to obtain a comprehensive information system all producers and manufacturers should provide complete information on substances along the entire value chain for chemicals in articles. An indication of which chemicals should be replaced in articles due to their hazard would provide additional incentive to develop greener products. Improving products can only be done with access to information. It was also recalled that the benefits of having some chemicals in certain articles should not be overlooked such as those added to products for food safety.

24. The increasing commitment from industry to improve products through information exchange was commended. The complexity of the issue facing downstream users was also noted and the difference between knowledge and information highlighted. Company representatives noted that partnerships were being developed with suppliers to encourage them to work in an environmentally safe manner, using fewer chemicals, increasing energy efficiency and stimulating innovation. Having information without stimulating change would also not be useful and having information alone was not sufficient; tools were also necessary. Longevity and durability were also highlighted as part of the sustainable development equation that must not be forgotten.

25. The problems faced to inform consumers on recycling options when different countries might have different recycling schemes were noted. In some situations waste were recycled into valuable "white goods". Consumers had to be educated on the value of recycling to avoid hazardous chemicals ending up in landfill through careless dumping and manufacturers had to consider end-of-life treatment of their products. Take back

schemes were established in some countries but not in others due to difficulties faced in countries with little relevant legislation. In some instances, it was said, industry was able to act faster than governments. Adhering to strict regulations allowed for a competitive advantage as consumers became more discerning and companies did not want products harmful to consumers.

VII. Information Sharing and existing tools

26. The following presentations were made under the agenda item:

- Information requirements on chemicals in articles in the new European Union regulation (REACH) by Ms. Eva Sandberg, European Chemicals Agency, Finland

- Overview of existing information tools and thoughts on the way forward by Ms. Massey and Ms. Monica Becker

27. In the ensuing discussion it was noted that in response to the REACH requirements databases were being established to provide information to consumers. However there was no common standard given the different companies and consumers. Retrieving information from suppliers might currently be difficult but as there is a move towards compliance with REACH there will be a need for suppliers to provide information if they want to remain in business. Many options were available for an information system and if information was being provided on the label of a product it was crucial that it be easily read and understood by consumers and suppliers including small and medium size enterprises. In determining the information to be provided it was also crucial that the format of the data be standard across all countries.

VIII. Working group sessions

28. Mr. Alo introduced the agenda item saying that the main aim was to find a common understanding on the need for information on chemicals in articles and to discuss what would be needed to improve information in the supply chain and what would be the ways forward. Ms. Lissinger Peitz urged the groups to keep in mind the SAICM process and the criteria used to define the current issue as an emerging issue. She reminded the working group of the advantages, in some instances, of having increased information on substances in articles and the advantages to different stakeholders. She noted that the aim was not to find a solution to the problem of chemicals in articles but to identify the problem. She added that the groups might recommend a future process to handle the issue to be considered by the second session of the ICCM and a way forward with regard to cooperative actions.

29. Four working groups were established chaired by Mr. Oladele Osibanjo (Nigeria), Mr. John Shoaff (United States of America), Mr. Magnus Bengtsson (Japan) and Ms. Ingela Andersson (Sweden). The working groups had as their mandate to address the following questions:

1. Reflection on the information given at the workshop. Discussion on various experiences within the group related to the need for information regarding hazardous chemicals in articles.
2. What technical issues would need to be considered and /or investigated in order to improve information exchange in supply chains?
3. The way forward with regard to possible cooperative actions.
4. Key elements for conclusions.

IX. Working group reports

30. The reports of the four working groups were presented to the plenary and are attached as annex 1 to the current report.

X. Conclusions and recommendations

31. Based on the reports mentioned in paragraph 28 above, the co-chairs of the workshop drafted conclusions and recommendations. Those conclusions and recommendations, as amended by plenary and attached as annex 2, will be submitted for consideration by the ICCM at its second session in May 2009.

XI. Closure of the workshop

32. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the workshop was declared closed at 12.30 p.m.

ANNEX 1

Working group reports submitted by the chairs of each of the four working groups

Group 1

Question 1: Reflection on the information given at the workshop. Discussion on various experiences within the group related to the need for information regarding hazardous chemicals in articles.

All regions lack information about chemicals in articles. There is therefore need for appropriate information that could include labelling on chemicals in articles across each stage in the lifecycle. For some regions chemicals management systems are available in production and disposal but information on chemical content is not transferred between those systems. There is hence a need for that information.

Good access to information is very important. The information needs to be presented in a format that is easy to understand. Content and display should be appropriate to every part of the supply chain through, for example, use of local languages, and/or pictures. Users need to interpret the provided information.

The majority of the people in all regions are not aware of the risks associated with chemicals in articles. There is a need for awareness-raising on this issue. For example there is a good use and awareness associated with following prescriptions to take correct medication. Some stakeholders in the supply chain need non-technical language.

Information to all stages of the supply chain, including the consumer is important. Information is lacking even in developed countries. Traders in articles do not know the chemical content of those articles. A system is needed whereby purchaser/retailers can be given adequate information on request from manufacturers.

- *The extent to which the issue is being addressed by other bodies.*

OECD is in a limited way dealing with emission from articles. Pollution release and transfer registers (PRTR) include today direct point emission but are exploring diffuse emissions from other sources eg articles. Flow of information to all stakeholders in the supply chain are not included in the OECD pilot study within PRTR.

Within the EU REACH-legislation, producers have to make risk management recommendations – assess the potential risk throughout the supply chain for consumers. It is in its infancy with not much data yet.

- *Extent to which the issue is of a cross-cutting nature, i.e. how the issue may be relevant to different sectors (environment, health labour, industry or other) and in what respects.*

Presentations in the workshop have shown the relevance on every aspect.

- *Relevance of the issue to a broad number of countries or regions, and stakeholders, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition and benefits to address this issue at the global level.*

High relevance shown during the workshop to a broad number of countries, with examples in such sectors as heavy metals in waste, automobile and construction industries.

Flame retardants provide an example from developed countries where regulatory authorities or industries were not aware of the potential risks with exposure at the time they were used.

Need to prioritize which articles require information about their environmentally sound handling and treatment is a global issue.

It is important to find a way to address the specific needs of consumers and how to communicate this information.

One can help to prevent inappropriate use with information, but one cannot stop illegal practices with labels.

Battery content on blackboard for children – this is an example of non-awareness, lack of information, but also misuse.

Example of illegal practices and misuse is exports of e-waste or "gifts" to developing countries. Control of illegal traffic need global efforts – currently there is a boom of illegal exports. "Gifts" without information exploit the lack of information about chemical content.

Providing instructions to manufacturers varies between regions. Some manufacturers lack information about the materials they are using. If a manufacturer does not know the chemicals content a product might not be fit for certain uses – examples glazing of pottery and consumer use for foods.

End of life – need information to ensure the use of appropriate recycling technologies – today some regional and sectoral approaches exist, rather than global approaches.

Better information could promote best practices through global approaches. An example is the General Motors web of suppliers – as they got to have a unified system, all the auto sector uses the same system.

- *Level of knowledge about the issue, i.e. general understanding of the issue, existing information sources etc.*

Understanding is generally low. There is generally minimal knowledge about the problem. Capacity building is necessary for developing countries and countries with economies in transition. For developed countries awareness-raising is important among the general public.

No structured information sources exist but rather information is produced on a reactive basis. (example formaldehyde in indoor environment and plasticizers in PVC). Lack of coordination has led to these issues being re-discovered in several regions.
Detailed Material Safety Data sheets (MSDS) are a main resource for individual chemicals but the information stops at article production.

Question 2: What technical issues would need to be considered and/or investigated in order to improve information exchange in supply chains?

Standardization of Safety data sheets is needed. The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) harmonizes the data sheet for substances and mixtures. Need to develop a safety data sheet for articles. Call it perhaps a Product Declaration Form. This may include relevant chemicals content, relevant risks etc.

Potential future problems of long-life articles need to be addressed.
Development of criteria for inclusion of specific chemicals or classes of articles is needed, for example hazard classification, risk, alternatives and potential of release and risk to consumer.

Need for hazard based information – to prevent misuse or wrong disposal as well as the need for risk based information for consumers.

Mechanism for extended information exchange up and down the supply chain needed.

Development of strategies to implement extended producers responsibility (EPR), Green design, substitutes and alternatives.

Technical issues that need to be explored:
- Network system of information at internet
- Mechanisms and formats for information exchange
- Network with existing databases
- Accessing the information
- Case studies on certain product categories (toys, electronics)
- Format of information
- Labels
- Need for compliance and capacity building for verification and enforcement
- Chemicals criteria of high concern (cancer, PBT, reproduction)
- The specific needs in all the various step in the supply chain
- category of articles

- Identification of common elements that would cover the whole group of articles in order to promote voluntary work by producers

Question 3: The way forward with regard to possible cooperative actions

a) Discuss and further elaborate the original proposal as stated above

How can a future process be organised, what key components needs to be considered?
The establishment of an intersessional working group to further develop the issue is proposed.

How to work?
Electronically, teleconference and if possible physical meetings.

Which are the key stakeholders in such a process?
Non-governmental organizations, industry associations along the supply chain, Geographical UN-regions. Governmental supervision side of the supply chain.

How would such a process relate to implementing the strategic approach?
Enclosed in the European Union submission. Others can be added?

What time frames would need to be considered?
Report on progress to the third session of the ICCM. Interim reporting to regional meetings on progress.

How can such a process be established?
Decision by the second session of the ICCM.

b) What other possible cooperative actions could the ICCM consider at its second session to improve information exchange?

The group prefers that the ICCM at its second session decides upon the working group.
Recognizing the complexity of the issue alternative arrangements could meet the requirements.

Through partnership - encourage voluntary industry efforts to provide information to all stakeholders up and down the supply change, and share examples of best practices.
The ICCM could at its second session assist in drawing up the road map for this partnership, ensuring the information needed to the various groups

Recognize synergies and cooperation with the Marrakech Process and the related multilateral environmental agreements.

Same relation to SAICM overarching policy strategy (OPS) 15 and global plan of action (GPA) as above.

Same timeframe – report to ICCM3.

Key elements for conclusions

The Workshop should recognize that:

- The need for information about chemicals in articles is an issue of global concern. The issue derives from the SAICM OPS 15 and GPA articles 108, 111 and 112.

- Need for information is an issue of high complexity bearing in mind the needs of the various actors along the supply chain.

Concludes that:

- There are initiatives at industry level, regional level but they are not coordinated and insufficient to address the broad range of issues in chemicals in articles.
- Some of the gaps identified in the existing systems include exposure routes and format for information on health and environmental suitability of articles.

- Hence there is the need for a global system of information exchange on chemicals in articles, bearing in mind the entire supply chain.

Recommends that:

- an international process [working group] to be established by ICCM at its second session including scope and terms of reference.
- issues to be investigated in that process include how to find synergies between the other emerging policy issues and work within other related multilateral environment agreements.

Group 2

Question 1: Reflection on the information given at the workshop. Discussion on various experiences within the group related to the need for information regarding hazardous chemicals in articles.

The aim with this question is to find common ground among participants on the extent and character of the problem and to discuss the issue in relation to the "emerging policy issue" criteria as listed by the informal meeting in Rome 23-24 Oct 2008.
- The magnitude of the problems caused by limited availability of information, and its impact on human health and/or the environment taking into account vulnerable sub-populations and any toxicological and exposure data gaps.

- Ubiquitous health impacts and-or exposures
- Need to inform decision making with various stakeholders and along supply chain
- Toxins in consumer products, for example toys, mercury-soaps, building materials,
- Risks at the end of the life-time, recycling, waste handling in developing countries (electronics, toys,)
- Very limited data/information available or totally absent for articles
- Information is a preventive approach to avoid and handle risks
- Recalled products have to be treated as hazardous waste => costs. Make external costs included in the product cost. Enable full assessment of costs.
- Importers not aware of the danger of certain articles. Build awareness among the ones producing the articles and the public.
- Need a globally harmonized system to handle this. Most systems today do not include end-users. Need a comprehensive list of articles that should be covered. REACH does not cover this adequately.
- Standards that will give information on the chemical content, that it fulfil permissible limits for chemicals.
- Educate the people that chemicals may be toxic, and that it is important to make them read the information.
- Chemicals in products may also be a risk to the environment.
- Direct human exposure and exposure to humans also through the environment, for example brominated flame retardants
- When the consumers get the information they can change their behaviour, and choose better products
- Difference between chemicals and articles containing chemicals, the latter focus from the end of the chain

- The extent to which the issue is being addressed by other bodies.

- GHS not applicable to articles
- IFCS resolution and background paper but no active work ongoing

- Extent to which the issue is of a cross-cutting nature, i.e. how the issue may be relevant to different sectors (environment, health labour, industry or other) and in what respects.

- Yes

- Relevance of the issue to a broad number of countries or regions, and stakeholders, in

particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition and benefits to address this issue at the global level.

- Globalisation gives that this is a global issue
- Free trade of articles made this a global issue
- Economic benefits related to innovation opportunities

- Level of knowledge about the issue, i.e. general understanding of the issue, existing information sources etc.

- The need to look at examples to address problems
- This information does not get through to the policy level

Question 2: What technical issues would need to be considered and/or investigated in order to improve information exchange in supply chains?

The aim is to discuss and list those technical elements that would need to be investigated further in order to be able to develop systems to enhance information exchange in supply chains. Such issues could for example be to investigate further the various needs for information among actors in the supply chain, develop criteria for which chemicals to include, etc.
- Make a list of key technical issues to consider and/or investigate further without going into too much detail

Questions in the background report are relevant for further work on this issue.
- What are the needs of various target audiences for the information system?
- What chemicals should be included?
- What articles should be included?
- What information should be provided?
- In what format should the information be provided?

What are the needs of different stakeholders in the supply chain?

The eventual use of the data or system.

Identify target audiences

Capacity needs and willingness of small and medium-sized enterprises to provide the information. Can be difficult for developing countries. How to design something that is relevant to the country? Complex systems can be difficult to implement for some countries.

Need for synchronisation, but no one size fits all.

Need to prioritise chemicals and articles to include. How? Start from lists? Important to focus on SVHC (ex Pb, Cd, Hg). Hazard – risk?

Prioritize articles; for example vulnerable populations use, or prioritize articles where we know that SVHCs are used…

Infrastructure to control that the information is correct.

Epidemiological studies needed to show exposures associated with chemicals in articles to convince decision makers and consumers of the risks.

Study of what chemicals are present in articles in developing countries.

SAICM Global Plan of Action (GPA) 191 relevant for this issue.

How do you build a system that take into account confidentiality of business information?

Technical solutions to provide the different kind of information relevant to different stakeholders.

Info needs and technical challenges of providing info to recyclers and waste handlers.

Multisectorial network between consumers, designers, authorities, customs, industries etc.

Possibilities of translation of information collected to different languages

Question 3: The way forward with regard to possible cooperative actions

The need for information of substances in articles has been prioritised as an emerging policy issues for detailed considerations at the second session of ICCM in May 2009. Submissions on this topic have been made by the EU, the Government of Japan and IFCS.

The aim is to initiate a process to facilitate the accomplishment of Objective 15 b of the Overarching Policy Strategy of SAICM; to ensure that various stakeholders, such as manufacturers, workers, consumers, recyclers and governments, can get appropriate information for sound decision making.

For each identified emerging policy issue proposed cooperative actions should be developed for further consideration by ICCM 2. One of the original submissions on this topic proposes to start a process aiming at elaborating a proposal for information systems relating to the chemical contents of articles.

Based on the result from the previous discussions within the group the aim with this question is to:

a) Discuss and further elaborate the original proposal as stated above
How can a future process be organised, what key components needs to be considered?
-Look at the technical issues identified by the workshop.
-Seek synergies with the Marrakech process
-Seek advice from IFCS on experience from this area
How to work?
-Working by e-mail
Which are the key stakeholders in such a process?
-All UN-regions, multi stakeholder, stimulate regional activities to connect the working group to the regions.
-Consumers representatives, recyclers, retailers, procurement officers, companies, Governments, product designers, labour representatives, representations from the users, customs officials, WHO
How would such a process relate to implementing the strategic approach?
What time frames would need to be considered?
How can such a process be established?

b) What other possible cooperative actions could the ICCM consider at its second session to improve information exchange? For each proposed action;
What are the key elements to be investigated/considered further?
Which are the key stakeholders to be involved?
How does the suggestion relate to implementing the strategic approach?
What time frames would need to be considered?

Information sharing on
- emissions from articles,
- on restrictions/regulations in countries, legislation standards, control measures
- the use of certain chemicals in articles,
- company case examples
- hazard information on chemicals, including information on how to handle articles safely to avoid misuse.
- central clearing house: compilation of systems that are available to identify hazardous articles and scoring systems/ develop a centralised system on information of chemicals in articles.
- link databases, for example through CAS numbers
- examples on models for Extended Producers Responsibility
- info on procurement standards
- compile the measures in SAICM OPS and GPA

Set up a working group to continue the work with the technical elements identified in question 2. Cooperation between different stakeholders in the supply chain. All UN-regions, multi stakeholder, working by e-mail, advice from IFCS on experience from this area, stimulate regional activities to connect the working group to the regions. Look at the technical issues identified by the workshop.

Solicit and consolidate information to develop information systems on chemicals in articles

Seek regional input and information on information systems of chemicals in articles

Capacity building in developing countries to enable them to participate in an information system.

Cooperation from countries to provide info in articles

Technology transfer from developed countries to developing countries

Initiate awareness raising programs

Reporting progress on cooperative activities

Financial assistance for collecting information

Key elements for conclusions

The participants might want to summarize the outcome of the group discussions and to identify key elements for conclusions and possible recommendations from the workshop, which will be drafted by the co-chairs and used as an input in further development of background documents on this issue for ICCM at its second session.

There have been impacts and there is potential risk for future health and environmental impacts from chemicals in articles

There are different impacts and information gaps between audiences and along the life cycle of chemicals

The group agrees that there is a need for more information on chemicals in articles. Information can also lead to innovation and have economic benefits.

There is a need for greater information sharing, the needs of what is communicated vary with different audiences and confidentiality of information also needs to be considered.

There is a need to prioritise what chemicals and articles to target.

There is a need to better understand who will use the information and how information might be used.

Capacity building needs of developing countries and small and medium-sized enterprises also need to be addressed.

A working group or similar body should continue to explore this issue and proposed cooperative actions including a review of existing tools and information

Group 3

The group focused on information needs regarding chemicals in articles as a vital element towards risk reduction recognizing that many other aspects are important for effective risk management, such as capacity building and awareness-raising

Question 1

Magnitude of problems:

- A global problem
- Numerous examples available from all over the world

Issue addressed by other bodies?

- There are no international initiative addressing the issue directly, however, there are some relevant activities undertaken by other bodies:
- GHS standards regarding nomenclature and labeling could be utilized
- OECD harmonization of exposure scenarios. A global problem
- OECD Sustainable manufacturing project / eco-innovation
- Information systems developed by industry, NGOs and others

Cross-cutting nature?

- several sectors affected/concerned
- lack of coordination
- no clear roles and responsibilities
- lack of communication between companies along the supply chain

Relevance to many?

- many could benefit but needs may be different
- global supply chain makes global response necessary

Level of knowledge of issue?

- lack of systematic overview of magnitude of problems and issues and solutions are not well explored

Other considerations?

Need for information exchange system

- for safe use,
- safe recycling and waste disposal,
- prevention of business risks
- addressing articles in a life-cycle approach;
- fostering substitution;
- Efficient use of resources
- right to know and empowerment

Question 2

Key technical issues needing investigation?

- identifying and analyzing existing information exchange systems (IESs)
- identify roles and responsibilities and information needs of different stakeholders and capacities for utilizing the information,
- Identifying legal barriers and regulatory system that may support the IESs
- Intellectual property rights and security issues for companies
- Tools/instruments for information exchange as well as nature, type, quality and validation of data
- Pros and cons of standardized approaches for IESs across sectors
- criteria for including chemicals in IESs
- limitations in collecting, assessing and using information (language barriers, costs etc.)
- Sustainability of the IESs
- definition of articles to be covered

Question 3

Ways forward?

- clear need to initiate process after the second session of the ICCM and report back to its third session
- currently no clear vision, specific objectives, milestones
- establishment of networks to support the establishment of IESs
- all stakeholders to be involved
- selecting pilot articles / chemicals
- coordination
- ensure coordination with other international initiatives such as sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and exploit opportunities for establishing synergies in reducing risks and ensuring sustainable use of resources
- Recommend that ICCM establishes, at it's second session, a mechanism to address the issue and explores ways of funding the mechanism

<u>Group 4</u>

Question 1: Discussions on the need for information regarding hazardous chemicals in articles

The magnitude of the problem:
Lack of information is a widespread problem for consumers, workers and government authorities. Consumers could make informed decisions if they have information available. Consumers could also handle the articles in a safer manner if they have the needed information. The stimulus to improve then can travel up the production chain via user pressure.
Waste phase – this is a big problem already, and could benefit widely from article-specific information being available.

Are other bodies addressing the issue?
There are a number of related initiatives (PRTR, national and regional legislative initiatives and voluntary systems) but there is no other global initiative that has the scope of information sharing on chemicals in articles.

To what extent is this a cross-cutting issue?
Clearly cross cutting. Health, environment and industry sectors are all involved.

Is this an issue of a global nature, and are there advantages to dealing with it on a global level?
This issue would preferably be dealt with on a global level, as trade is global in many sectors. Waste is also an issue and would benefit from fuller information disclosure.
Different standards in different countries would make the market more difficult for the private sector, as they would need to deal with multiple systems.
A harmonized global instrument would give information as a basis of protection of workers and consumers in both developed and developing countries.

What is the level of knowledge on this issue?
There is not a widespread systemic level of knowledge on this issue, but a wide body of experiential knowledge exists from different product groups, and if this was gathered it would provide a good picture.
There is a general lack of awareness among many consumers, companies and authorities

Question 2: Technical issues to be considered (and examples of issues to consider further in relation to these)

Various needs for various target audiences
Which substances should be included?
- low-hanging fruit (Article 14 of the SAICM overarching policy strategy – OPS, and the footnote in 14.d.i referring to "Groups of chemicals that might be prioritized for assessment and related studies"), more…..

Which articles should be included?
- defined by substances and where they occur
- vulnerable groups
- high-volume
- more…..

What information should be provided?
- substance name?
- hazard (could be built upon GHS)?
- risk?
- recommendations for risk handling, including waste management?
- confidentiality issues to be considered

In what format should the information be provided?
- labeling, databases
- language issues
- can existing information streams (manuals, etc.) be used?

Can existing instruments be built upon?

Question 3: The way forward

Which are the key stakeholders?
Private sectors: Industrial associations, manufacturers, importers, formulators, chemical producers, retailers, recyclers, waste management operators
Governments: Ministries of industry, commerce, health, environment, labor, customs, agriculture; laboratories; local authorities, intergovernmental organizations

Public / at-risk population representatives: non-governmental organizations (consumer, product safety and environmental groups), academia, media, labor representatives, unorganized labor, consumers, lawyers

How does this relate to implementing SAICM?
Implementation of Article 15 of SAICM OPS
Broad stakeholder participation

What time frames are involved?
In the short time frame, awareness-raising of the various stakeholder groups.
Medium time frame (intersessional period): Further investigation of the points identified under item 2. Case studies and pilot projects – e.g. highly hazardous chemicals in prioritized product groups / product chains.
Begin development of policy guidance for policymakers.
Longer time frame: Globally harmonized instruments rolled out and utilized

How to establish the process?
An information paper to the second session of the ICCM to request a mandate for further work.
A working group in the intersessional period

ANNEX 2

Conclusions and recommendations

The Workshop

Recognizes that:

- hazardous chemicals in articles/products are transported globally through international trade and have caused adverse impacts and may pose future risks to human health and the environment at different stages of the life cycle of an article/product: during production, use, recycling or disposal

- knowledge and information about chemicals in articles/products is fundamental to the sound management of chemicals throughout the life cycle of articles/products and is an important cross-cutting issue involving a broad range of stakeholders with specific information needs

- initiatives have been taken by Governments, industry and others to facilitate information exchange on hazardous substances in articles/products in some areas, but to date no comprehensive global action has been developed

- there is a global need for awareness-raising on the potential risks associated with chemicals in articles/products and on available alternatives especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition having a low level of awareness

- subparagraph b (i) of Objective 15 of the Overarching Policy Strategy of SAICM on knowledge and information states *inter alia* that: information on chemicals throughout their life cycle, including, where appropriate, chemicals in products, is available, accessible, user friendly, adequate and appropriate to the needs of all stakeholders.

- information on chemicals in articles/products is a vital element supporting capacity building and other actions in SAICM

Concludes that:

- current efforts and capacities to provide information about chemicals in articles/products and alternatives are not sufficient for informed decision making to protect human health and the environment throughout the life-cycle of articles/products

- for effective and efficient information generation and accessibility, cooperative action is needed at all levels (international, regional, sub-regional, national and intersectoral) with the involvement of all relevant sectors

- international cooperation on this issue is essential and urgent action is needed to ensure global harmonization of information flow and access, avoid the creation of a patchwork of information systems and maximize the benefits to all stakeholders

- improved information flow stimulates development of new articles/products and processes through innovation, reduces business risks and has economic benefits

Recommends that:

- a working group be established by the ICCM at its second session that responds to the need for information on chemicals in articles/products in the supply chain and throughout the life-cycle with a mandate to review existing information and develop a proposal for an information system or framework of systems and/or actions

- the working group may be open-ended and be comprised of stakeholder groups on the basis of equitable geographical distribution including a number of countries per region, relevant experts, industry and other actors in the supply chain and non-governmental organizations

- the working group addresses a range of issues and goals, including
    - which chemicals and articles/products to prioritize;
    - identification of the relevant stakeholders and their specific information needs
    - what information to provide and in what format;
    - appropriate technical and other solutions
- the working group takes into account the following key elements identified by the workshop:
    - where appropriate, complementary activities of other relevant emerging policy issues
    - work undertaken in international fora, including the Marrakesh process and possibilities for synergies
    - work and activities in other multilateral and international processes that are relevant to information systems such as the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals
    - specific challenges and needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, such as capacity building, technical and financial assistance and technology transfer
    - special needs of small and medium sized enterprises and the informal sector
- the working group make use of the outcome of the workshop when carrying out its tasks
- the working group incorporate any further guidance that the ICCM may provide at its second session
- during the intersessional period, the working group conduct its business primarily through electronic means and teleconferences, meeting in person and on the margins of other existing meetings as appropriate
- the working group may work with the SAICM secretariat to help facilitate the development and use of relevant information, case examples, approaches and tools that might be compiled consistent with its clearinghouse function
- the working group provide a report on the progress of its work through the SAICM website and to the third session of the ICCM