CONCEPT NOTE

Towards a coordinated, multi-sectoral lead management approach in the Latin America and Caribbean region

Date: 30 October 2025

Time: 9:00-11:00 (Panama time – GMT-5; 15:00-17:00 CET)

Location: Online event, Zoom (English/Spanish)

Registration link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_QoDu32jFTWCDKfbNc8-XRA

Background

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), with the support of the European Union, is facilitating consultation on lead sources and management in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). This event is organized in collaboration with the Global Alliance on Health and Pollution (GAHP).

This initiative comes at a crucial juncture, as previous international efforts around lead exposure reduction primarily targeted single sources of lead contamination, such as leaded petrol and paint. However, a growing body of research highlights the wide variety of sources impacting lead exposure, particularly in developing countries, encompassing various industries and consumer products.

Recognizing that policy and regulatory approaches to addressing sources of lead exposure may vary, adopting a comprehensive look at lead management policies in developing countries across sectors holds immense promise. By embracing a holistic perspective, it becomes feasible to discern the primary drivers of lead exposure with greater clarity, increase awareness of policymakers, and pave the way for the development of cohesive, enduring mitigation strategies, action plans, and other relevant instruments Moreover, addressing lead management on a multi-sectoral basis empowers stakeholders to forge vital connections between lead mitigation efforts and broader development objectives or societal priorities, thereby enhancing the mobilization of resources towards this critical cause. Through promoting collaborative action and a multifaceted approach, these consultations aim to catalyze impactful change in safeguarding public health and environmental well-being across the LAC region.

Objectives

The aim of this consultation is to explore the feasibility of a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach by national governments in LAC to manage sources of lead exposure.

The objectives of the consultations include to:

- facilitate the exchange of information among LAC countries on existing lead management activities and needs;
- understand sources of lead exposure and applicable regulations identified at the country or regional level;
- present examples of coordinated multi-sectoral lead management approaches, including country-level efforts;
- discuss current barriers and opportunities for lead exposure reduction action, including a coordinated and multi-sectoral lead management approach.

AGENDA

Moderator: Ms. Mihaela Paun, Officer-in-Charge, Head of Knowledge and Risk Unit, Chemicals and Health Branch, United Nations Environment Programme

Welcome and introductions (10 min.)

Knowledge and Risk Unit, Chemicals and Health Branch of the Industry and Economy Division, UNEP

Setting the scene on lead management (30 min.)

Overview of Lead Pollution Issues in Latin America and the Caribbean (10 min.)

***Ms. Mihaela Paun**, Officer-in-Charge, Head of Knowledge and Risk Unit, Chemicals and Health Branch, United Nations Environment Programme*

Country-level whole of government examples (10 min.)

***Mr. Elmer Quichiz Romero**, Hospital Solid Waste Coordinator, Directorate General of Environmental Health and Food Safety, Ministry of Health, Peru*

Introducing the new Regional Action Plan - strengthening regional cooperation on lead and chemicals management in LAC (10 min.)

***Ms. Christina Steinhart**, Chemicals and Pollution Action Programme, UNEP LAC Office*

Panel discussion – Country Representatives (30 min.)

***Ms. Judith Torres**, International Agenda and Cooperation Area Manager, National Directorate of Climate Change, Ministry of Environment of Uruguay* - ULABs

***Ms. Trecia David**, Registrar, Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board, Guyana* – Lead in paint

***Dr. Martha María Téllez Rojo**, Medical Sciences Investigator, National Institute of Public Health* Mexico – BLL surveillance/lead-glazed pottery

Panel discussion – International Organizations and Civil Society Representatives (30 min.)

Mr. Luis Francisco Sánchez Otero, *Advisor for Health, Environment and Climate Change at the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)* – PAHO/WHO related interventions in LAC countries

***Mr. Alberto Santos Capra**, Director, Basel Convention Regional Centre for Training and Technology Transfer for the South American Region, Argentina (BCRC Argentina)* – Basel Convention ULABs guidance update

***Dr. Dan Kass**, Senior Vice President of Environmental, Climate and Urban Health Vital Strategies* – Institutional capacity building

***Dr. Lilian Corra**, Senior Advisor, Global Alliance on Health and Pollution* – GAHP support in addressing ULABs (Brazil case study)

Questions and Open Discussion (15 min.)

- *All participants*

Conclusions and Final Remarks (5 min.)

Questions for panelists:

1. What strategies have been successful in identifying and addressing sources of lead exposure in LAC countries? This could be either high concentration sources (such as industrial hotspots), or more diffuse sources of exposure (that may be lower concentration, but more ubiquitous). What sort of monitoring mechanisms are required and what are the current challenges?

2. How can LAC countries leverage existing lead management activities to enhance collaboration and knowledge sharing nationally and across the region?

3. What practical steps can be taken to overcome barriers to implementing a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach to lead management, and how can stakeholders collaborate to address these challenges effectively? What are the roles of various stakeholder groups (government, NGOs, academia, industry, local communities)?

4. How can stakeholders in LAC countries align their efforts in lead management with broader development goals and societal priorities, and what strategies can be implemented to improve the mobilization of resources for this purpose?

5. How can the international community support LAC countries in developing and implementing comprehensive and multi-sectoral lead management strategies that align with broader development objectives and priorities?