TAJIKISTAN

Project: Strengthening capacities for national implementation and ratification of the chemicals and waste conventions in Tajikistan

Second Independent Assessment of the Closed Projects under the Special Programme Report (December 2024)

RESULTS

Implementing partner:
UN Environment Programme Europe Office

Agreement timeframe:
1 Jan 2020 – 30 Sep 2022 (initially to 30 Jun 2021, with 1 Amendment)

Budget: 233,904 USD

Overall Assessment

The project made progress across five Core Indicator Criteria, achieving its planned objectives to varying degrees. It successfully established a multistakeholder coordination mechanism with the creation of the Interministerial Chemicals Management Committee (ICMC). The project also improved the capacity of personnel from various government ministries through comprehensive trainings and discussions. The project also contributed to strengthening Tajikistan's legal framework, and developing legal instruments for the country's accession to the Rotterdam and Minamata Conventions. These efforts culminated in the ratification of the Rotterdam Convention in October 2024. Despite these achievements, the project faced a challenge in maintaining the knowledge sharing mechanism: the information portal.

Results & progress by Core Indicator Criteria

The project covered five of the existing eight Core Indicator Criteria, namely:

Criterion 1.1: Level of development of national chemical/waste database

The grey color coding reflects the fact that as of the time of this assessment the portal is developed but not yet operational or integrated as planned.

RATING

- 0 **No database or registry**
- 1 Database or registry covering 1 Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEA)
- 2 Database or registry covering 2 MEAs
- 3 Database or registry covering 3 MEAs
- 4 Database or registry covering 4 MEAs
- 5 **Database or registry covering 4 MEAs and SAICM**

SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- The project reportedly developed an information portal for information exchange on sound chemicals and waste management, available in Russian and Tajik languages. The platform consolidated key data on chemical management, pesticide use, hazardous waste, and legislative and institutional frameworks. Additionally, the website housed valuable resources, including informational brochures, press releases, and training materials, accessible to both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.
- Despite its reported success (with 36,276 users as of June 2022), the portal is no longer functional and is not integrated into the relevant government agency's website as planned. Since at the time of this assessment the data portal was not operational, the progress is represented in grey, indicating that the portal is "developed but not operational yet or integrated as planned."

Criterion 1.2: level of necessary for chemical/waste management expertise

RATING

0 No knowledge or expertise available

1 **Not enough personnel in at least one priority Ministry, Department or Agency have basic training in chemical and/or waste management**

2 Enough personnel in at least one priority Ministry, Department or Agency have basic training in Chemical and/or waste management

3 Enough personnel from 1 or 2 Ministry, Department or Agency have been trained in chemical and /or waste management and know how to apply it into country planning

4 Enough personnel in 3 or 4 Ministries, Departments or Agencies have been trained in chemical and/or waste management and can transfer their knowledge to colleagues for day-to-day use

5 **All the required personnel have necessary expertise and can integrate chemical management into the development planning process**

SPECIFIC RESULTS:

The project successfully enhanced the capacity of key personnel from multiple government ministries, including the Committee on Environmental Protection, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, and the Customs Service. Through comprehensive training workshops and roundtable discussions, which reached a diverse group, participants gained expertise in managing hazardous chemicals, implementing the Basel and Stockholm Conventions, and preparing for the ratification of the Rotterdam Convention.

Criterion 1.3: Existence and level of development of chemical/waste management unit or department

RATING

0 Nothing had been done

1 The Government decided on a mandate to establish a unit

2 The Government developed a framework document detailing how the unit would be established and would operate

3 **The unit was established and had an executive director**

4 **The unit was established and had an executive director. In addition, standard operating procedures were developed, and staff were hired**

5 The unit had all human, financial and physical resources and was fully operational

SPECIFIC RESULTS:

The project assessed the institutional and staffing capacity of the Committee on Environmental Protection (CEP), including the number of staff members required to carry out key functions under the ICMC. Based on this assessment, recommendations were made and later approved. These recommendations outlined the necessary staffing levels to address chemicals and waste issues and to effectively coordinate the work of relevant Ministries and Agencies.

Criterion 1.4: Level of development of multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism for chemical/waste management

RATING

0 **There was no multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism**

1 There was a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism with very limited and irregular participation from Government and non-Government bodies

2 There was a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism with more regular and structured participation from Government and non-Government bodies

3 There was a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism with regular meetings and adequate participation from Government and non-Government bodies

4 There was coordinated planning and a common knowledge exchange mechanism in addition to a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism with regular meetings and adequate participation from Government and non-Government bodies

5 **The multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism reached full maturity with full participation from all Governmental and non-Governmental stakeholders and a joint community of practice**

SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- The project established a multistakeholder coordination mechanism through the creation of the Interministerial Chemicals Management Committee (ICMC), which became fully operational. The ICMC was formalized through a decree signed by the Chairman of the Committee on Environmental Protection (CEP), confirming its establishment and associated activities. The ICMC included representatives from key ministries, focal points, non-governmental organizations, the scientific community, and industry.
- The ICMC held regular meetings, discussed priority issues, and developed a work plan to address key areas such as legislative gaps, capacity-building needs, and the drafting of accession documents for international conventions. The committee's work was well-documented, and meeting minutes were shared publicly via the project website.

Criterion 2.2: Level of development of legal framework/primary legislation

RATING

0 Nothing was done

1 **The relevant authority proposed to integrate the MEAs into national legislation**

2 The integration of the MEAs into national legislation was adopted

3 **The MEAs were integrated into national legislation and being implemented**

SPECIFIC RESULTS:

The project made significant contribution to strengthening Tajikistan's legal framework for chemical and waste management. A Legal Working Group conducted a thorough analysis of legislative gaps for the implementation of the Stockholm and Basel Conventions, as well as for Tajikistan's accession to the Rotterdam and Minamata Conventions. Based on their recommendations, the group developed legal instruments for improving the implementation of the Basel and Stockholm Conventions and for Tajikistan's accession to the Rotterdam and Minamata Conventions. These recommendations and legal instruments were shared with relevant ministries, and after being approved, were submitted to the President of Tajikistan. As a result of the project's efforts, Tajikistan ratified the Rotterdam Convention in October 2024.

FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE

Gender: The project was gender-responsive, highlighting the role of women as agents of change in its activities. At all trainings and roundtable discussions, efforts were made to empower women to actively participate in shaping the country's environmental policies. Special focus was placed on women during trainings on illegal pesticide trade. Women made up between 25% and 70% of the participants in various trainings, including those on the BRS and Minamata Conventions, chemicals and waste health effects, and illegal trade in chemicals. Women also comprised 25% to 65% of the participants in roundtable discussions, with the highest participation (65%) in discussions on illegal chemical trade and pesticides.

COVID-19: The COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult to organize face-to-face meetings, especially in remote areas of Tajikistan. As a result, some activities, particularly face-to-face trainings, were delayed.

SUSTAINABILITY

The project results are **mostly maintained** due to the following:

- The Committee on Environmental Protection (CEP) secured financing to continue essential activities, such as organizing working meetings with relevant ministries and agencies, facilitating dialogues with stakeholders, and addressing recommendations on national chemical legislation development. While most project results are being sustained, the information portal, a key component for knowledge sharing, is no longer functional.

RATING
After the End of the Project

Results **not** maintained

Results **partially** maintained

Results **mostly** maintained

Results **fully** maintained

LESSONS LEARNED

Engaging the right mix of implementing agencies can enhance project success: The collaboration between local and Russian NGOs, both with long-standing relationships with the government of Tajikistan, was important to the success of the project. The local NGO played a key role in implementing project activities across the country, including coordinating workgroups, and conducting trainings and outreach in various districts. Their established ties with government ministries were instrumental in ensuring smooth communication and support. The Russian NGO provided technical expertise by reviewing legislative documents and contributing to the development of the information portal. Their partnership, built on mutual trust and government connections, allowed for effective collaboration and the successful implementation of the project. Furthermore, having UNEP as the executing agency proved valuable as it helped to ensure that all outcomes aligned with SP Secretariat's expectations and were properly documented.

Early planning for integration of information portals within government systems is a key for long-term sustainability. The project initially planned for the information portal to be integrated into the Ministry of Environment's official website, ensuring its sustainability and accessibility beyond the project's duration. However, this integration was not realized, and the portal is no longer functional. This experience highlights the importance of securing early buy-in from key government bodies and ensuring that such integration is a core part of the planning and implementation process.

Formalized inter-governmental structures significantly improve coordination of activities in the chemicals and waste sector. At the beginning of the project, activities were significantly impacted by institutional factors, particularly the low level of coordination between relevant Ministries and Agencies. To address this challenge, the project successfully established the InterMinisterial Chemicals Management Committee (ICMC), which played an important role in improving coordination and facilitating the implementation of the project's activities.