Intervention by the World Health Organization (WHO)

Implementation of Resolution V/10

Distinguished delegates

Resolution V/10, adopted in September 2023 emphasizes the need to prevent and protect human health from chemical exposure, highlighting national and regional biomonitoring programs, capacity-building, and the involvement of health ministries and WHO.

WHO is pleased to report that this resolution was brought to the attention of the 78th World Health Assembly in May 2025 where the next steps for WHO's engagement in international chemicals management were welcomed and the proposed updates to the WHO's chemicals road agreed. The agreed updates to the Chemicals Roadmap included greater priority to health surveillance, biomonitoring, and poison centers.

Ensuring continued complementarity between the WHO Chemicals Roadmap and the Global Framework is particularly important because the Framework recognizes the Roadmap as an important tool to facilitate cross-sectoral collaboration, identifying the concrete actions that the health sector can contribute towards achieving the strategic objectives of the Framework.

Health surveillance can involve many different aspects including: event based surveillance, biomonitoring, mosty marketing surveillance and improving cause of death certification.

We face significant challenges :

- Over half of all countries lack poison centers.
- Health surveillance and chemical exposure data are fragmented.
- There is a need to strengthen institutional links between poison centers, health and environment ministries, and other stakeholders.

WHO is actively working on several initiatives:

- Establishing and strengthening poison centers, particularly regional networks in Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean.
- Supporting new partnerships, such as the one established by European Health and Environment Ministers during the Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and health

- Collaborating with the Minamata Convention Secretariat to include human exposure data in its effectiveness evaluation.
- Strengthening surveillance and reporting on human exposure to lead.
- Engaging in the measurability work of the Global Framework, focusing on health-related indicators and the global burden of disease.

In conclusion

Effective surveillance for chemicals needs to be a core part of integrated national chemicals and waste management systems. We hope this issue will be emphasized in the development of implementation programs, particularly those strengthening national chemicals management systems.

WHO will prepare a written report on the topic of improving health surveillance systems for the sixth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management. We look forward to discussing actions, investments, and support needed under the Global Framework to further enhance the protection of human health.