

Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals

Inter-Organization Coordinating Committee

Summary Record of the Twelfth Meeting

The twelfth meeting of the Inter-Organization Coordinating Committee (IOCC) of the IOMC was held 2-3 December 1999 at OECD, Paris.

Reports from the IOMC Coordinating Groups (CGs) were reviewed. At their 48th meeting in October 1999, ECOSOC had approved the reconfiguration of the UNCETDG to include the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. A transition plan to transfer the technical work from the IOMC CG to the UN subcommittee on GHS would be developed by a working group under the CG. A guidance document explaining the transition would be prepared. The IOMC CG will relinquish the technical work at the time of its completion (target date July 2001); the successful completion of the work by the IOMC CG will be a notable accomplishment. The IOCC approved CTIF as a member of the IOMC CG. With respect to the adopted Standard Operating Procedures for IOMC Coordinating Groups, the IOCC agreed that the IOMC CG on Harmonization of Classification and Labelling should be exempted from following the procedures. The exemption was granted due to the history of the CG and the nature of its work and future direction. The IOCC noted that this exemption did not set a precedent.

A request from the Chair of the IOMC PRTR CG to expand the membership allocation for NGOs was considered. The IOCC agreed that membership should remain limited to international organizations and respective NGO sectors should coordinate their participation in the CG. The request to expand the number of member seats for each NGO category to three was denied. It was agreed that one (1) membership seat would be allotted to industry NGO.

The IOMC Coordinating Group on Chemical Accident Prevention, Preparedness and Response met in Paris 28 October 1999. The CG had agreed to update the Overview of Activities Report prepared for ISG3. The first meeting of the IOMC CG on the Assessment of Existing Industrial Chemicals and Pollutants is planned for 8 February 2000.

The IOCC reviewed the report of the first meeting of the Working Group on Information Exchange. A draft IOMC brochure listing information/publications available from member organizations will be available for review at the next IOCC meeting. WG members will offer to provide comments and input on the information exchange papers being prepared for Forum III. To strengthen information exchange among counterpart ministries, the IOMC agreed to propose the issue of sharing information at the national level for inclusion in the paper on information exchange for Forum III, promote the publications of

member organizations in various newsletters, and add direct links to the publication lists on each PO's Internet site on the IOMC website.

The IOCC agreed that the IOMC Calendar of Events and Meetings would be made available on the Internet in January 2000 and the next edition of the Inventory of Activities Summary Report would be finalized in June 2000.

The IOCC discussed the outcome of the Thematic Workshop on Strengthening National Legislation and Policies for the Sound Management of Chemicals and considered a number of possible follow-up actions. Input was provided on the development of Terms of Reference for a capacity building network which will be considered by Forum III. The IOCC agree to organize a lunch time round table session - Meet the IOMC - at Forum III to provide information to participants on the work of their organizations and the IOMC mechanism.

The IOCC reviewed the project report on the UNITAR/IOMC Pilot Project to Assist Countries in Implementing National Action Programmes for Integrated Chemicals Management and expressed general continuing support for the work.

Information was provided to members on an US EPA/UNEP Pilot Networking Project for African Countries which aimed to provide assistance to government staff to obtain access to the Internet. A number of IOMC organizations will contribute CD ROMs and databases of their organizations to the project for distribution.

Members were informed on the on going work by FAO to revise the International Code of Conduct for the Distribution and Use of Pesticides. A revised version will be circulated widely for comment. UNEP informed the members that funding for the GEF Project on Regional Assessment of Persistent Toxic Substances (PBT) had received a positive recommendation from the GEF Secretariat and would be considered by the GEF Council within the next several weeks. It was anticipated that it would be approved and activities would likely be started in March 2000. UNEP also provided information on a new GEF proposal that was being prepared on assessing countries needs for the management of PBTs.

In new structure of ILO, Dr Takala is now the Director, InFocus Programme SafeWork and Mr Obadia is the focal point for the environment. Dr Timothy Meredith has been appointed the Coordinator of Promotion of Chemical Safety (PCS) at WHO. He will assume the responsibilities of the post on 1 February 2000.

The next IOCC meeting will be held 22-23 June 2000 at WHO, Geneva.