



## **Chemicals in Products: Strengthening Action Workshop**

**25-26 October 2017, Geneva, Switzerland**

### **Concept note**

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1. This note presents an overview of a two-day “Chemicals in Products: Strengthening Action Workshop” to be held 25-26 October 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland in the Maison de l’Environnement I at 11-13, chemin des Anemones, 1219 Châtelaine, Geneva.
2. This workshop will build on the experiences and information exchange activities of the Chemicals in Products Programme and aims at identifying future steps for this area of work.
3. The workshop will engage SAICM stakeholders in discussions on information needs and on practical means to access information on the chemicals contained in products. Focusing on the availability and access to the information different actors need – throughout the life-cycle of products – the workshop will mainly address three sectors; electronics, toys and building products. The workshop is an opportunity to engage information providers and users and identify core elements needed to enhance understanding and create an enabling space to share and use accurate information in an effective, timely and sustainable manner.
4. The workshop will identify priority actions for these three sectors and will inform the development of a Global Environment Facility (GEF) project proposal.
5. Documents and practical information for the workshop will be made available through the UN Environment web site<sup>1</sup>.

#### **Overall Goal and Objectives of the Workshop**

6. The overall goal of the workshop is to discuss and illustrate how information exchange on chemicals in products can be scaled up to risk reduction actions and to identify related stakeholders’ needs. Furthermore the workshop will discuss whether solutions and tools required to meet these needs exist or would require development / adaptation. To achieve this goal, the

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<sup>1</sup> Accessed through URL: [web.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste](http://web.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste)

workshop will first identify the long term aims of chemicals in products information access and use, and backcast<sup>2</sup> to identify the conditions that must be in place to meet these aims.

7. Through this stakeholder consultation, the activities with the highest potential for delivering reduction of risks from chemicals in the toys, electronics and building products sectors will be identified and prioritized.
8. In order to ensure efficient, long term, sustainable efforts, stakeholder involvement and commitment is a key feature that will be featured in the discussion. As a result a stakeholder map will be prepared.
9. The outputs of the workshop will include:
  - Building blocks towards a comprehensive framework describing the long term objectives and aspirations of the Chemicals in Products Programme as well as the actions required to achieve the desired immediate, medium and long term needs and expectations.
  - A prioritized list of the activities or initiatives for each of the three sectors;
  - A stakeholders map including roles, responsibilities and actions;
  - A list of solutions / tools required to advance on actions included in the comprehensive framework, whether existing or in need of development.

The outputs will be incorporated in a workshop report summarizing the discussions.

## **Participants**

10. The workshop will bring together experts with solid knowledge of chemicals in products information exchange practices and needs, and/or sustainable consumption and production tools and practices for the product sectors.

Representatives from the following specific groups will be invited to participate:

- ✓ Governments;
- ✓ Brands / retailers and manufacturers for the three product sectors;
- ✓ Suppliers of chemicals and materials to the manufacturers;
- ✓ Recyclers / waste handlers;
- ✓ Civil society organizations, including consumers; and
- ✓ Academia.

Participants will be identified through outreach to relevant members of the CiP Programme Steering Group, Advisory Groups to the 10 year Framework of Programmes or other SCP related initiatives, private sector contacts, governments and other stakeholders with significant expertise in the needed domains.

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<sup>2</sup> Backcasting is a planning method that starts with defining a desirable future and then works backwards to identify policies and programs that will connect that specified future to the present.

## **Methods and approach**

11. The workshop will be applying the Theory of Change methodology to consider global requirements and needs of the Chemicals in Products Programme.
12. It will review the results of a preparatory document which will be circulated prior to the workshop and will inform the discussions. The preparatory document will propose an assessment of identified CiP information exchange systems, sustainable consumption and production tools and associated activities for the three product sectors, and present those systems and tools having potential of reducing risks and environmental impacts associated with chemicals, in products and processes, during the life-cycle phases of product design, manufacture, purchase, use and disposal. It will further outline gaps and opportunities, identify stakeholders, beneficiaries and main actors that might play a key role in promoting / pushing the uptake of such tools. Workshop participants will then complement as needed the results of the assessment and provide further input as to systems, tools and practices to be considered in the context of the project.
13. The discussion framed for the Theory of Change approach will be led by an expert facilitator. The discussion will provide input to the identification of priority actions in sectors, and inform the development of a results-focused strategy for this GEF project proposal, including outputs, indicators, targets and activities.
14. The discussion will be framed to cover the entire life-cycle of the product sectors.

## **Preparation for the workshop**

15. Participants should be prepared to share their experiences and perspectives on information needs and on practical means to access information on the chemicals contained in products around the following questions, which form the base of the Theory of Change methodology:
  - What is the overall change desired?
  - Which is the path that will enable us to achieve the expected change?
  - What are the pre-conditions required to achieve the overall change?
  - What are the risks we may face in achieving the overall change?
  - What is your contribution?
  - What does progress look like (i.e., what indicators should be used)?

## **Background and context**

16. Many stakeholders, within numerous product sectors, have for years made significant efforts and progress to plan and implement a wide range of actions on 1) sustainable production and consumption, and 2) information-sharing about chemicals in their products. The automotive, textiles, electronics and other sectors, for example, have developed advanced systems for exchanging information about the chemical content of their products. The information made

available through these systems has brought major benefits to manufacturers and to the consumers of the final products<sup>3</sup>.

17. The global chemicals-policy community, through SAICM, has long recognized the critical importance of knowledge on the chemicals placed into products towards achieving the 2020 goal of SAICM. One of the six core activity areas of the SAICM Overall Orientation and Guidance is to promote information access, increasing the accessibility of relevant information and making it understandable for all levels of society. SAICM stakeholders developed the CiP Programme as a means for stakeholders to collaborate. They have called for significant and concerted actions by stakeholders to strive towards the objectives of the CiP Programme and to use CiP information for actions which fulfil the SAICM goal. The CiP Programme objectives are:

- **Within supply chains, to know and exchange information** on chemicals in products, associated hazards and sound management practices
- **To disclose** information of relevance to stakeholders outside the supply chain to enable informed decision-making and actions about chemicals in products
- **To ensure** that, through due diligence, information is accurate, current and accessible

The SAICM CiP Programme is facilitated by UN Environment through its Chemicals and Health Branch, Economy Division.

18. SCP tools provide an array of practices related to resource efficiency, ranging from Life Cycle based tools, cleaner and responsible production, eco-innovation, consumer information and sustainable public procurement. They intervene at different stages of the value chain: design, production, purchasing, use, end of life. They could support Chemicals in Products information and use, through a specific adaptation. In the context of a circular economy, they would be needed to ensure the adoption of a holistic approach that would not create wider issues in other environmental domains, and support the appropriate use of instruments and tools which proved successful in other sectors.

19. The GEF is a major instrument for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to access financial resources which assist them to meet their obligations under international environmental treaties and conventions. GEF support activities on SAICM under its Chemicals and Waste Focal area. GEF projects must demonstrate Global Environmental Benefits, and be incremental in nature, with GEF funding as an add-on to existing programmes, in order to achieve environmental benefits that will contribute to implementation of the international conventions.

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<sup>3</sup> See advantages and examples in Box 2 and Annex I of the [Guidance for stakeholders on exchanging chemicals in products information](http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/14482/K1502355%20SAICM-ICCM4-11-e.doc?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) (http://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/14482/K1502355%20SAICM-ICCM4-11-e.doc?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

20. A Full Size Project concept note (PIF) was approved by the GEF Council in June 2017<sup>4</sup>. The project will address three separate components: 1) Lead in Paint; 2) Chemicals in Products; and 3) Knowledge Management and Strategic Planning. This workshop will inform the CiP component only. It will provide input from expert stakeholders on activities to take place should the project be approved for full scale implementation. The full project document is being developed and is planned for submission to GEF Council in December 2017. In the PIF, the anticipated outcome and output of the CiP component are:

- Outcome: companies in the building products, toys, and electronics sectors track and manage chemicals of concern (CoC) in their products
  - i. Output 2.1: Platform to identify and quantify CoCs present in supply chains, based on existing and expanded CiP initiatives
  - ii. Output 2.2: Green Economy /Sustainable Consumption and Production tools and guidance refer to CiP data to improve product design, purchasing and use practices

## Contact

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<sup>4</sup> See [Global Best Practices on Emerging Chemical Policy Issues of Concern under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management \(SAICM\)](https://www.thegef.org/project/global-best-practices-emerging-chemical-policy-issues-concern-under-strategic-approach) (URL: <https://www.thegef.org/project/global-best-practices-emerging-chemical-policy-issues-concern-under-strategic-approach>)