



# DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

## Project: Strengthening institutional capacity for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Convention and SAICM in Dominican Republic

Independent Assessment of the Closed Projects under the Special Programme Report (December 2022)

## RESULTS

### Overall Assessment

All planned activities were completed. The project contributed to strengthening the sound management of chemicals in the Dominican Republic by focusing on a) the creation of an import and export database of chemicals; b) conducting capacity building activities; c) creating an inter-institutional coordination mechanism for chemical emergency response; d) preparing a National Chemical Emergency Plan and e) updating existing regulations.

**Implementing partner:**  
Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources

**Agreement timeframe:**  
January 2018 to June 2020

**Budget:** 250,000 USD

### 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

##### RAITING



**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

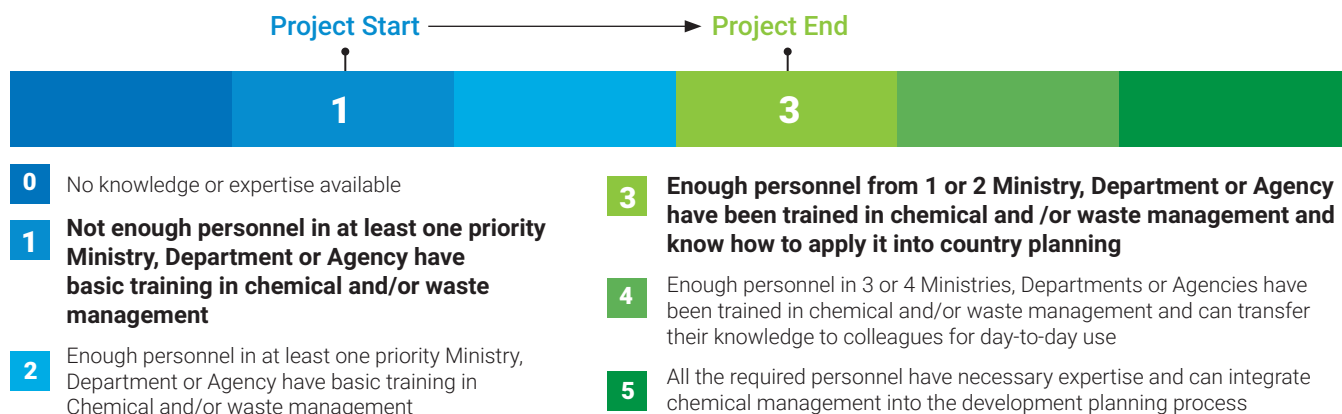
**5** Database or registry covering 4 MEAs and SAICM

### SPECIFIC RESULTS:

**The project supported the design and implementation of an electronic system to record all chemical imports/exports and authorizations for entry into the country.** The Directorate General of Customs worked together with other Government Institutions so as to create a one-stop-shop system. The public version of the system is not available yet. The reason for it is that, given the change in Government, the Technology Directorate requested to modify some criteria. The system is, however, operational internally and environmental quality officials have access to all movements of chemicals regulated by MEAs and to requests for imports.

## Criterion 1.2: Level of necessary chemical/waste management expertise

### RAITING

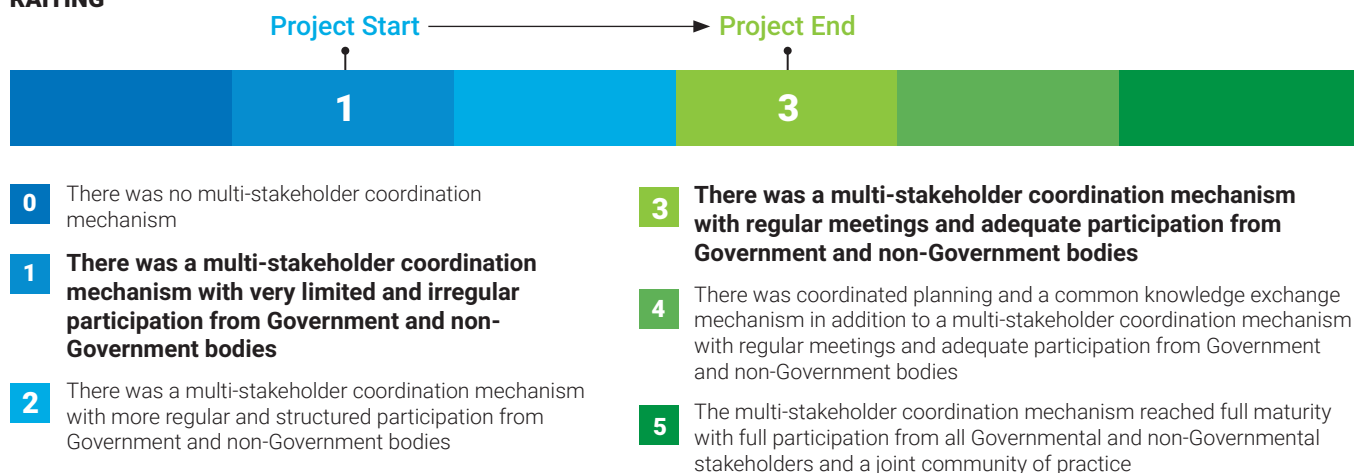


### SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- The project strengthened the capacities through two streams of training activities.
- **Capacity building for the use of one-stop-shop system for chemical imports** (see criterion 1.1).
  - Staff from the Department of Hazardous Substances of the Environmental Quality Directorate were trained on how to use Microsoft Excel and to manage the one-stop-shop system for chemical imports, and
  - Staff from the Directorate General of Customs were trained on the Global Harmonized System and on how to use one-stop-shop system for chemical imports.
- **Emergency response training for chemical substances**
  - The Department of Hazardous Substances developed a specific emergency response training for chemical substances in coordination with the Emergencies Operation Center, the Fire Department and the National Defence Directorate. Throughout 2019, the project organized eight training sessions for first emergency response teams and members of the National System of Chemical Emergencies.

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

### RAITING



### SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- **The project supported the creation of an inter-institutional coordination mechanism** to respond to chemical emergencies. The coordination mechanism is called *Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive Response System*. The system was developed based on the Risk Management Law 147-2 and comprises the Emergency Operations Center of Chemical Substances Management Directorate, the National Emergency and Security Response System 911, and the National Institute of Transit and Land Transportation.
- Among the members of the coordination mechanism, a procedure to respond to chemical emergencies was developed to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each entity.

## Criterion 2.1: Level of development and implementation of chemical/waste management policy, plan or strategy

### RAITING



**0** There was no strategy, policy or plan

**2** The strategy, policy or plan was adopted

**1** The strategy, policy or plan was proposed

**3** The strategy, policy or plan was in place and being implemented

### SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- **The National Emergency Plan with Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) substances** was proposed, adopted and is being implemented by the Emergency Operations Centre<sup>1</sup> in collaboration with the Department of Hazardous Substances.
- As part of the implementation of the plan, a chemical emergency drill was conducted in 2019 to ensure that the emergency response mechanisms are ready for any emergency.
- In parallel, a national risk guide for management of CBRNE substances was developed which creates a scientific & technical consultation mechanism to best manage the risk of CBRNE substances before, during and after any response measure.

## Criterion 2.3: Level of development of regulatory framework/secondary legislation

### RAITING



**0** Nothing was done

**2** The regulations were adopted

**1** The relevant authority proposed to develop regulations

**3** The regulations were in place and being implemented

### SPECIFIC RESULTS:

**The project supported updating the existing environmental regulatory framework for chemicals management.**

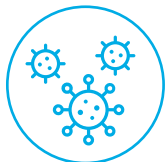
In specific terms, it

- updated the Environmental Technical Regulations for the management of hazardous chemical substances and wastes in the Dominican Republic<sup>2</sup>. The purpose of these regulations is to establish the legal responsibilities and technical requirements for all stages of the management of chemical substances and wastes with hazardous properties, characteristics, or conditions, to ensure the safety and protection of human health and the environment. Meetings were held with relevant stakeholders and a public hearing was conducted to obtain feedback on the Environmental Technical Regulations. These regulations were approved by Resolution No. 0016/2020 of the Ministry of the Environment of the Dominican Republic.
- updated the Environmental Technical Regulations for the Land Transportation of Chemical Substances and Hazardous Materials<sup>3</sup>. These regulations oblige all companies to register with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources to obtain an authorization to transport hazardous substances over land. After a public consultation on the regulation, these regulations were approved by Resolution No. 0020/2020 of the Ministry of the Environment.
- updated the Technical Regulations for the Transportation of merchandise in the Dominican Republic in which the regulations for the transportation of dangerous merchandise by roads are included. (rev. 2018-2019). This was done in dialogue with the Department of Hazardous Substances, the National Institute of Transit and Land Transportation (INTRANT).

# FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE



**Gender:** The overall level of women participation in capacity building activities was 16%-30%. The reason for this percentage was that most capacity building activities were targeting first aid teams for chemical emergencies, and in the Dominican Republic most members of these teams are men for the moment. The remaining activities as such did not have a gender component.



**COVID-19:** The pandemic stopped the project activities, a 3-month extension was granted due to COVID-19.

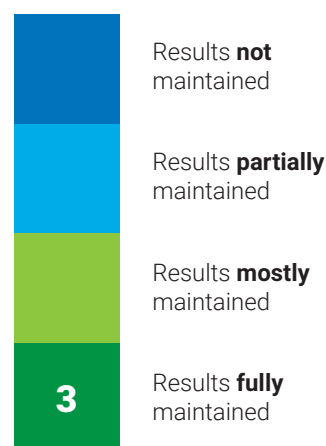


**Other:** During the lifetime of the project, the person from the SP Secretariat responsible to follow up with the project focal point changed several times. This in combination with the language barriers between the SP Secretariat and the project focal point made the liaison and communication more difficult.

## SUSTAINABILITY

- All the results achieved by the project have been maintained to date.
- In specific terms, there is a National Budget line for chemicals management which includes an amount aimed at maintaining the results.
- In addition, most of the results of the project are regulatory documents which are currently in force.
- Two major political events impacted the work of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources after the project closure: the assassination of its Minister and the overall change of Government structure. However, this did not impact the maintenance of results of the project, except for the full development of the database and its maintenance which will depend on the decision of the new authorities.
- The country also has the technical and financial support of UNDP in the GEF project<sup>4</sup>, which shows the authorities' interest in deepening the lines of work in the management of chemical substances.

### RAITING After the End of the Project



## LESSONS LEARNED

The Dominican Republic provided a positive example of how a small team (between 5 and 10 people) can achieve favourable results if the tasks are correctly distributed and everyone is aware of their responsibilities.

Splitting the tasks of the project - technological component, transport regulations and emergency plan - based on their area of expertise of each staff helped the project to be very effective.

The institutions rely on a very small number of employees with strong expertise on the sound management of chemicals and waste. This might be a risk for sustainability in case any expert decides to leave.

The development of partnerships with other government agencies (as DNA or INTRANT) with specific capacities that were able to provide the necessary technical expertise was fundamental to achieve the objectives of the project.

<sup>1</sup> The Emergency Operations Center (COE for its acronym in Spanish, Centro Operativo de Emergencias) is the operative body of the National Risk Management System, which is responsible for promoting and maintaining coordination and joint operation between the different levels, jurisdictions and functions of the institutions involved in the management and attention to emergencies and disasters in the country.

<sup>2</sup> <https://ambiente.gob.do/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/BORRADOR-Reglamento-gestion-sustancias-y-desechos-peligrosos.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ambiente.gob.do/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Reglamento-Técnico-Ambiental-para-la-Transportación-Terrestre-de-Sustancias-y-Materiales-Peligrosos.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> The Dominican Republic participates in the "Implementation of the Sustainable Development of Chemicals and Non-Chemicals in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) - Caribbean Child Project". This program addresses the sound management of chemicals and wastes by strengthening the capacity of subnational, national and regional institutions and reinforcing the policy and regulatory framework in these countries. Its main objective is to prevent the build-up of materials and chemicals in the environment containing POPs (Persistent organic pollutants) and mercury and other harmful chemicals in SIDS, and to manage and dispose of existing harmful chemicals and materials in SIDS.

See url: [https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/10279\\_CEO\\_Endorsement\\_Package.pdf](https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/documents/10279_CEO_Endorsement_Package.pdf)

