

Global best practices on emerging chemical policy issues of concern under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)

Background and Policy Context: Lead is a cumulative toxicant particularly harmful to young children and pregnant women. The cost of reduced cognitive potentials (loss of IQ points) due to preventable childhood lead exposure in low and middle-income countries is estimated as \$977 billion annually. The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) has estimated that in 2015 lead exposure accounted for 494,550 deaths due to long-term effects on health, with the highest burden in low and middle income countries. IHME also estimated that lead exposure accounted for 12.4% of the global burden of idiopathic intellectual disability, 2.5% of the global burden of ischaemic heart disease and 2.4% of the global burden of stroke. Lead in paint is a major source of childhood lead exposure.¹ Children are exposed to lead from paint when lead-containing paint on walls, windows, doors or other painted surfaces begins to chip or deteriorate, since this causes lead to be released to dust and soil.² When a surface previously painted with lead paint is sanded or scraped in preparation for repainting, very large amounts of lead-contaminated dust is produced, which, when spread, can constitute a severe health hazard.³

Regulatory controls and best practices for lead in paint are already established and adopted in many developed countries and in some transition and developing countries. However, legally binding regulatory controls are still lacking in two thirds of the countries of the world.⁴ To encourage a global ban of lead in paint, nations participating in the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), agreed to phase out lead in lead-based paints as part of their 2020 goal.⁵ To support the achievement of the 2020 goal, a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral Preparatory Committee developed the policy framework of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). The overall SAICM objective is the achievement of the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle so that by the year 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on the environment and human health. SAICM stakeholders have collectively identified eight emerging policy issues, including lead in paint.

In 2009, under the SAICM framework, the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM2) identified lead in paint as an emerging policy issue and invited the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization (WHO) to establish a global partnership to promote phasing out the use of lead in paints and

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http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Portals/9/Lead_Cadmium/docs/Interim_reviews/UNEP_GC26_INF_11_Add_1_Final_UNEP_Lead_review_and_appendix_Dec_2010.pdf

²World Health Organization. Childhood lead poisoning. 2010.

³ Clark, S., et al., Occurrence and determinants of increases in blood lead levels in children shortly after lead hazard control activities. *Environmental Research*, 2004. 96(2): p. 196-205.

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<https://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/sites/unep.org.chemicalsandwaste/files/Status%20of%20Limits-Lead-Paint-2016%20Report-Final.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.un.org/events/wssd/summaries/envdevj1.htm>

serve as its secretariat.⁶ UN Environment and WHO jointly initiated this partnership under the name Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (the Lead Paint Alliance).⁷ Follow-up resolutions at ICCM3 and ICCM4 has reconfirmed the participating countries' commitment to eliminate paint by the year 2020.⁸

Today, the Advisory Council of the Lead Paint Alliance is chaired by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and consists of representatives from governments, civil society and industry working together to promote global lead paint elimination. Its Business Plan provides a road map describing the strategies, milestones and means of achieving the goals and overall objective, which is that by 2020 all countries should have "...adopted legally binding laws, regulations, standards and/or procedures to control the production, import, sale and use of lead paints...".⁹

The Lead Paint Alliance works towards **the goal of having such laws or regulations in place in all the countries by 2020**, by developing regulatory guidance for governments and raising awareness through an annual International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action (end October). Widespread public awareness of both risks and alternatives can provide additional pressure on decision makers to take the regulatory steps needed to reduce exposure and risks to people, especially vulnerable populations who are disproportionately affected. 'Champion countries' in East Africa and CEE have already taken a proactive approach and sought support from the Global Alliance to introduce new legal approaches. The Action Plan for 2015-2016 includes a target that "20 more countries will have adopted new legal limits on lead paint, bringing the total countries with existing legal limits to 72"; according to the most recent estimate by WHO (February 2017), 67 countries have verified that they have introduced laws or regulations.¹⁰ Such laws or regulations can include legal limits, certification standards, or labelling requirements.

The Global best practices on emerging chemical policy issues of concern under the SAICM Project:

In May 2017, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) reviewed and approved the Project Information Form (PIF) for the Full-Sized Project *Global best practices on emerging chemical policy issues of concern under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)*. The **Project Objective is to accelerate and measure adoption of national activities to control Emerging Policy Issues to achieve the 2020 implementation of SAICM goal and support early planning for chemical management in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

Project Component 1 focuses on **Promoting regulatory and voluntary action by governments to phase out lead in paint.** The intended component outcome is that **40 countries restrict the use of lead in paint.**

⁶ <http://www.saicm.org/About/ICCM/ICCM2/tabid/5966/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

⁷ <http://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/what-we-do/technology-and-metals/lead/global-alliance-eliminate-lead-paint>

⁸ <http://www.saicm.org/About/ICCM/tabid/5521/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

⁹ http://www.who.int/ipcs/assessment/public_health/business_plan_en.pdf?ua=1

¹⁰ http://gamapserver.who.int/gho/interactive_charts/phe/lead_paint/atlas.html

The project will stimulate national regulatory action and engage the private sector in addressing selected known toxic chemicals, and provide global best practice on the necessary conditions and inputs that are most effective in generating political will to take action at the national level. It will support achievement of the aspirational target of the Global Alliance strategy for all countries to have legal limits on lead in paints in place by 2020.

Project Component 1 includes three outputs, together with indicative activities. This are included below.

Output 1.1 Demonstration pilots with paint manufacturers in Small and Medium Enterprises. Indicative activities elaborated in the PIF include:

- Best Available Technology (BAT)/Best Environmental Practice (BEP) demonstration through investment for the phase-out of lead containing paint in companies selected in close consultation with the relevant governments according to technical and feasibility criteria.
- Establishing public and private partnership, strengthening institutional framework and capacity, and raising awareness in selected countries.
- Extending the public private partnership approach to other countries through the Global Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production network.

Output 1.2 Global Technical guidelines on BAT/BEP for manufacturers: Indicative activities elaborated in the PIF include:

- Global Technical guidance will be produced on the pilot projects, including technical detail on phase out, on waste management, and financial incentives and new business models that can support phase out.

Output 1.3 Policy advocacy and public awareness campaigns generate support for lead phase-out. Indicative activities elaborated in the PIF include:

- Strengthening and developing technical resources, including an online toolkit, with a guide for regulating lead in paint, including sample legal language & examples of national legislative instruments.
- Promotion of the Toolkit through regional workshops and development of regional action plans to coordinate national commitments, establish regional mechanisms, regular reporting on progress to the Global Alliance.
- Targeted support for 40 countries on request to apply the Toolkit resources in their own context and introduce legal limits and other measures.
- Supporting the established Lead Poisoning Prevention Week campaign, delivered by health and environment partners all over the world, to promote consumer awareness, particularly among women, children, and other highly exposed groups of the risks of leaded paint. As well as changing purchasing decisions, public awareness via the Week of Action can stimulate political will for regulatory measures that can achieve lead phase out.