

Advancing work on lead: lessons learned from the work on lead in gasoline, lead in paint and used lead-acid batteries

10th International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week Webinar co-hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Health Organization (WHO) and the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm Conventions Secretariat

Tuesday 25 October 2022, 2:00pm - 3.30pm CET (3:00pm – 4:30pm Nairobi Time)

Location: Online event Webex

Background and context

Lead is a cumulative toxicant that poses serious risks to human health and development, with children being especially vulnerable. There is no known level of lead exposure without harmful effects, and even low levels may cause lifelong health problems and adverse environmental impacts.

UNEP has been working on addressing the health and environmental impacts of lead since 2001, when a decision of the UNEP Governing Council “emphasized the importance of accelerating the process of eliminating the unsafe uses of lead and called upon Governments who had not yet done so to eliminate the use of lead in gasoline.” UNEP was [mandated](#) to initiate work on lead in petrol, lead in paint, [leaded ammunition](#) and used lead-acid batteries.

WHO identifies lead among the top 10 chemicals of public health concern with almost 1 million attributable premature deaths. WHO provides countries with evidence-based norms and standards for exposure to lead in air, water and food and recommendations and technical support for preventing exposure and for the clinical management of persons exposed to lead from different sources. An annual campaign known as the International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week is organized in the third week of October each year and serves to raise awareness about the health effects of lead exposure and highlight the efforts of countries and partners to prevent lead exposure, particularly in children.

The Basel Convention adopted in 2004 two technical guidelines to enhance the environmentally sound management (ESM) of lead in wastes. The technical guidelines on ESM waste lead-acid batteries and the Technical guidelines on the environmentally sound recycling/reclamation of metals and metal compounds (R4). In 2022, the Basel Convention initiated the updating of the Technical guidelines on ESM of lead-acid batteries published in 2004.

Many international initiatives have taken place to support progress in this direction, as well as guidance and technical assistance, from a wide range of players. These include the campaign to eliminate lead as part of the [Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles \(PCFV\)](#), the [Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint \(Lead Paint Alliance\)](#), the completion of a component on promoting regulatory and voluntary action by government and industry to phase out lead in paint in [SAICM GEF Project issues of concern under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management \(SAICM\)](#), the development of a [Guidance Manual for Africa on the Environmentally Sound Management \(ESM\) of Waste or Used Lead Acid Batteries](#).

To celebrate more than 20 years of efforts on lead and the 10th International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week, UNEP, WHO and the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm

Conventions are organizing this webinar to reflect on global efforts, successes and lessons learned in tackling lead done within the organization and with partners and to discuss with interested stakeholders the way forward.

Overall goal and objectives of the webinar

This webinar aims to provide a space to highlight successes made at the global level with the support of UNEP and key partners including WHO and the BRS Secretariat, by:

- Sharing best practices, experiences and lessons learned from work on addressing different sources of lead exposure.
- Gather views on key opportunities in addressing the problem of lead globally and explore synergies between the work of UNEP, WHO and the Basel Convention and other key partners.
- Build momentum for action to tackle lead as an overall pollutant, as part of celebrating the 10th International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week.

Agenda

2:00 – 2:10	Welcome and introduction (Moderator – Ms. Mihaela Paun) Ms. Maria Neira, Director of Public Health and the Environment, WHO Mr. Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions Ms. Maria-Cristina Zucca, Head, Pollution and Health Unit, Economy Division, UNEP
2:10 – 2:50	Session 1: Best practice and lessons learned
2:10 – 2:30	<i>Presentations:</i> Lessons learnt from Lead in Petrol – Ms. Jane Akumu, Sustainable Mobility Unit, UNEP Lead in Paint – Ms. Lesley Onyon, Unit Head, Chemical Safety and Health, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health, WHO Waste lead Acid Batteries – Ms. Francesca Cenni, Science and Technical Assistance Branch, BRS Secretariat,
2:30 – 2:50	<i>Countries' experience from addressing lead</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Aryanie Amellina, Environment and Climate Specialist, UNICEF, Indonesia
2:50 – 3:25	Session 2: Opportunities and remaining challenges on lead: view from panelists and discussion
2:50 – 3:15	<i>Moderated panel discussion</i> Presenters from session 1 and invited panelists will highlight opportunities and remaining challenges on lead, and interact with the audience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Angela Bandemehr, Senior International Program Manager, Office of International Affairs, USEPA • Ms. Rachael Kupka, Executive Director, Global Alliance on Health and Pollution (GAHP) • Mr. Abheet Salomon, Global Programme Lead, Healthy Environments for Healthy Children, UNICEF • Ms. Sara Brosche, Science Advisor, IPEN
3:15-3:25	Q&A and interaction with audience
3:25 – 3:30	Conclusion: key lessons learnt (UNEP)