



BELARUS

Project: Establish a sustainable national infrastructure to join and support the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention in the Republic of Belarus

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

RESULTS

Overall Assessment

The project completed all the activities and outputs as planned. It was also successful with regards to achieving the intermediate outcomes. It strengthened the sound management of chemicals and waste by a) developing a national register of industrial chemicals and pesticides; b) building institutional capacities on the sound management of chemicals; c) developing a national multi-stakeholder approach to manage chemicals and waste and c) preparing the institutional, legal and regulatory basis to join and implement the Rotterdam Convention.

Implementing partner:

Laboratory of Preventive and Ecological Toxicology of the Republican Unitary Enterprise "Scientific and Practical Center for Hygiene"

Agreement timeframe:

May 2018 to June 2021

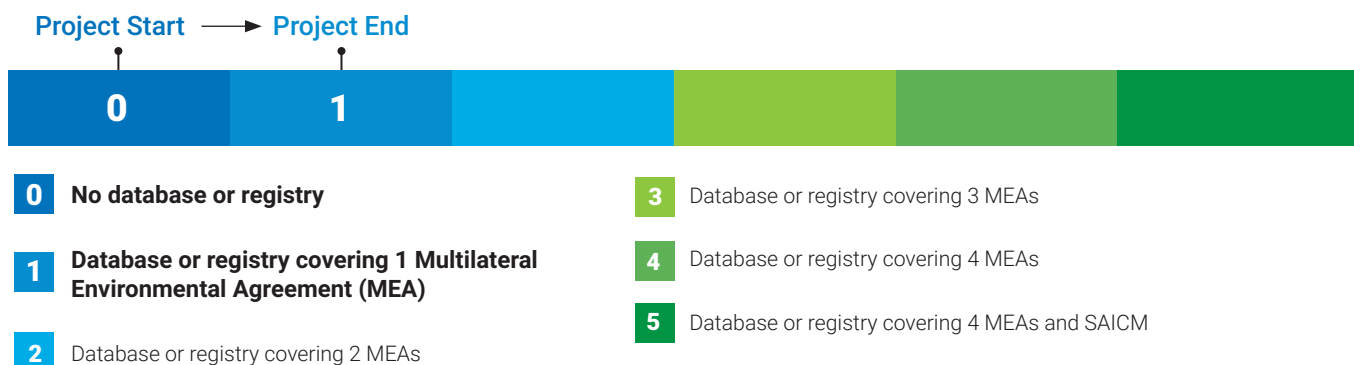
Budget: 249,647 USD

Results & progress by Core Indicator Criteria

The project covered six of the existing eight Core Indicator Criteria, namely:

Criterion 1.1: Level of development of national chemical/waste database

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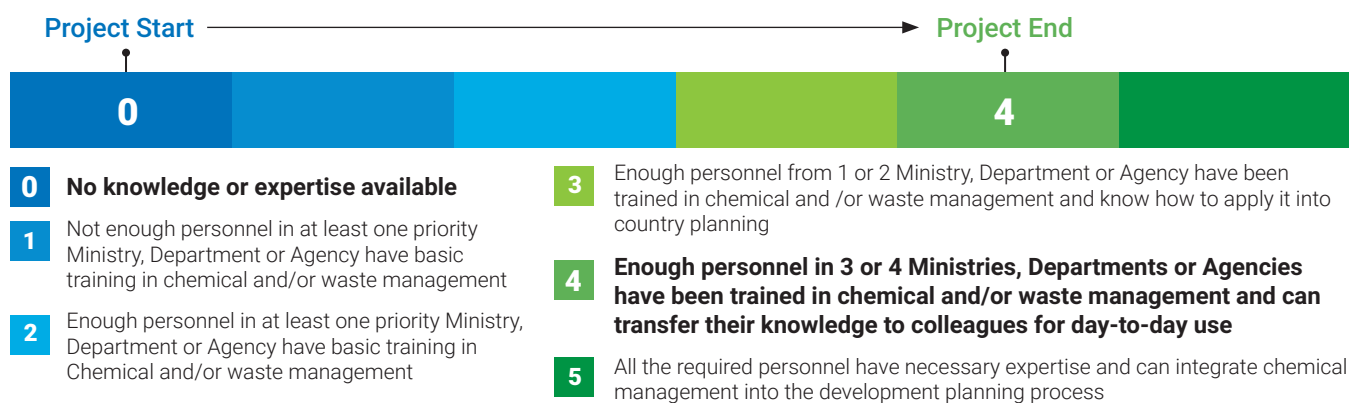


SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- **The project developed a national register of industrial chemicals and pesticides regulated by the Rotterdam Convention¹.** The register includes information on 74 chemicals detailing their hazardous properties, classification and marking in accordance with the Globally Harmonized System.
- The project also created the database of chemicals' manufacturers in Belarus which includes 13 enterprises. The database contains information on manufacturers' address, names and types of manufactured chemicals.
- The inventory of chemicals showed that the chemicals listed in Annex III of the Rotterdam Convention are not used or imported in Belarus. Moreover, the register and screening of legal acts allowed the identification of those hazardous chemicals that were not officially banned in the country.

Criterion 1.2: Level of chemical/waste management expertise

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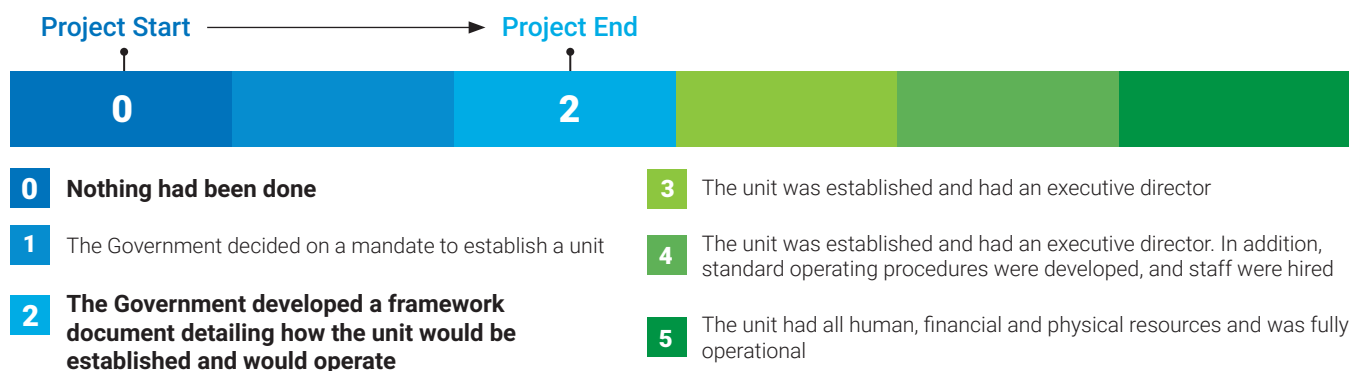


SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- **The project contributed considerably to building institutional capacities of stakeholders regarding the requirements of the Rotterdam convention and the sound management of chemicals (SMC).** Within the project's implementation four seminars² / round table discussions were held.
- As a result of the capacity building activities, a pool of national experts have been formed for the conduct of continuous training events, implementation of PIC procedures, and for the chemicals/wastes management under the Rotterdam Convention (e.g. on the requirements for establishing national registers and databases).
- Furthermore, under the project, the implementing partner elaborated educational programs on chemicals management and started offering them for: a) agricultural specialists in the field of pesticides and agrochemicals, b) specialists in the hazardous chemical industry, c) private businesses - hazardous chemicals in consumer goods, d) specialists of the paint and varnish industry and e) students of higher education institutions studying in toxicological and chemical areas.
- To reach a wider audience, the project made all the project-produced and Rotterdam Convention related materials available on its website (<http://chemsafety.rspch.by/information.html>).

Criterion 1.3: Existence and level of development of chemical/waste management unit or department

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SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- **The project prepared the institutional basis to join and implement the Rotterdam Convention in Belarus.** For this purpose, the project conducted a situation analysis based on which it developed a Roadmap for establishing the relevant national infrastructure.
- Based on the Roadmap, the project facilitated the elaboration of the draft law and supplementary justification documents for joining the convention. This legal act identified the Ministry of Health as a national designated authority (NDA) for the Rotterdam Convention's implementation. Moreover, the Scientific and Practical Center for Hygiene (one of the units of which implemented the project under the assessment, later referred to as the Center) was identified as an entity for the PIC's implementation.
- The project also helped with the development of justification documents detailing, among many others, the financial needs for the NDA's functioning over the course of four years, starting from 2021. The government financed one of the major activities of the Center, which was the inventory of all the chemicals³ in use in Belarus.
- Another important result in terms of institutional strengthening was the establishment of the educational center under the Scientific and Practical Center for Hygiene and the development of educational programs on sound management of chemicals. These educational programs were incorporated into the Center's curricula and are offered on a regular basis to different audiences, including to the representatives of government, academia and business sectors.

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

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| <p>0 There was no multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism</p> <p>1 There was a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism with very limited and irregular participation from Government and non-Government bodies</p> <p>2 There was a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism with more regular and structured participation from Government and non-Government bodies</p> | <p>3 There was a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism with regular meetings and adequate participation from Government and non-Government bodies</p> <p>4 There was coordinated planning and a common knowledge exchange mechanism in addition to a multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism with regular meetings and adequate participation from Government and non-Government bodies</p> <p>5 The multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism reached full maturity with full participation from all Governmental and non-Governmental stakeholders and a joint community of practice</p> |
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SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- **The project facilitated the establishment and functioning of a multi-stakeholder approach to chemical and waste management at a national level.** Following the Order of the Ministry of Health of August 2018 an Interdepartmental Working Group (IWG) was established for the implementation of the project under the assessment. This group involved the representatives of all the relevant government institutions, NGO and a private sector and according to progress reports the IWG was involved in the review and discussions of project outputs. The IWG was also involved in all the capacity building events held by the project.
- It should be noted that the meetings of the IWG are not documented. The progress reports do not provide information on the number of working group meetings held and they also do not include the minutes of the meetings.
- After the end of the project, the members of the IWG continue working in the SMC area under a second project funded by the Special Programme.

Criterion 2.2: Level of development of legal framework/primary legislation

RAITING



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| <p>0 Nothing was done</p> <p>1 The relevant authority proposed to integrate the MEAs into national legislation</p> | <p>2 The integration of the MEAs into national legislation was adopted</p> <p>3 The MEAs were integrated into national legislation and being implemented</p> |
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SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- **The project contributed greatly to the development of a legal framework for the accession of the country to the Rotterdam Convention.** As noted earlier, the project developed a draft Law on "Accession to the Rotterdam Convention on the PIC for Certain Hazardous Chemical Substances and Pesticides in International Trade", as well as the relevant accompanying documents. These documents included the justification of the need for adopting the law, financial and economic justification, and the list of legal acts for revision upon the country's accession to the convention.
- To guide the process of adopting the draft law, the project developed an algorithm for actions and by the project end it implemented most of the actions. 13 government institutions reviewed the draft law and accompanying documents and many of them provided their approval without any comments. The only comment received was from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection (MNREP). This ministry, along with the Ministry of Health, was identified by the draft law as a government institution responsible for Rotterdam Convention implementation. The MNREP considered that the relevant responsibilities were falling mostly under the Ministry of Health's competence and requested to be removed from the list of responsible parties.
- For the government's 2022 spring session all the documentation was ready for submission, however, due to the challenging geopolitical situation connected with the war in Ukraine, the government's spring session was not held. The implementing agency planned the submission of the draft law for the approval by the Council of Ministers for the government's fall session.

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

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| 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 |

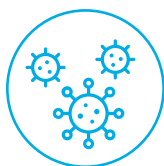
SPECIFIC RESULTS:

- The project assisted the government with the elaboration of two draft regulations relevant to Rotterdam Convention implementation: 1) A draft Regulation on the exchange of information on chemicals regulated by the Rotterdam Convention between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, and the Ministry of Emergency Situations; 2) A draft Regulation on the exchange of information on chemicals within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). The approval of these regulations is expected by the end of 2022.
- Moreover, as a follow-up on the chemicals inventory process (see Criterion 1.1), the team of project experts reviewed relevant legal acts and discovered that while many of the chemicals subject to PIC were banned for use in Belarus, a few of them were not officially prohibited. Based on this discovery, the project team initiated the introduction of a ban and through working with the Council on Pesticides under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the ban on relevant chemicals was approved by the Council prior the project's end.

FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE



Gender: About half of participants of the project-organized events were women and the content of developed materials was equally applicable to both women and men.



COVID-19: The COVID-19 pandemic did not allow to conduct in-person meetings at the final stage of the project's implementation and online sessions were held instead. This resulted in the costs savings (e.g. on international consultants' travel) and the saved funds were used for the establishment of a distance learning platform on SMC.



Other: Access to international expertise and information exchange helped with the development of educational modules for continued education/training courses and strengthening the potential of national trainers.

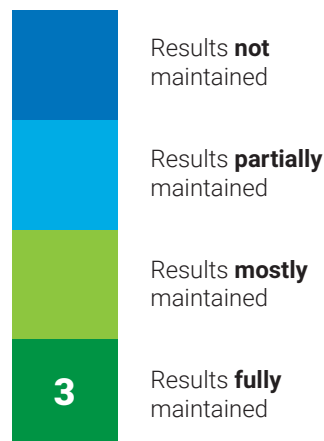
SUSTAINABILITY

The project fully maintained the results achieved by the project's end. More specifically:

- The training center on SMC continues its functioning and delivers training sessions to interested stakeholders. All the ten trainers, whose capacities were built on the Rotterdam Convention and SMC, continue delivering capacity building events.
- As the government staff turnover, especially at mid-level, is low, the built capacities remain in the government.
- Members of Interdepartmental Working Group continue working in the SMC area under the second phase of the SP project.
- Based on the project-created chemicals database (chemicals regulated by the Rotterdam Convention), the government updated and conducted an inventory of all the other chemicals with budgetary resources, encompassing over 60,000 chemicals.

The project implementing team provides follow-up for the adoption of the draft law for the RC's accession.

RAITING After the End of the Project



LESSONS LEARNED

Inclusion of international experts in capacity building events promotes the exchange of international experience.

Bringing diverse governmental stakeholders together for joint work and capacity building events builds/strengthens partnerships and inter-governmental cooperation through understanding each other's challenges, arriving jointly to possible solutions and forming closer working relationships. At the beginning of the project there were challenges with inter-governmental cooperation that were overcome through the provision of avenues for joint planning and discussions.

Having a stable government institution (with low rate of staff turnover) as an implementing partner promotes ownership of results and the provision of necessary follow-up.

¹ A special questionnaire was developed and sent out to industrial organizations and suppliers of chemicals for creating a registry.

² Two seminars included the start-up and final seminars on presenting the project and its results respectively (with about 50 participants each). The third seminar was held on the implementation of the technical regulation of the Eurasia Economic Union No 041/2017 on Chemicals Safety which incorporates the provisions of the Rotterdam Convention (43 participants). The fourth international seminar was held on the topic of Capacity Building for Chemicals Life Cycle Management under the Rotterdam Convention (attended by 61 participants) which included practical simulation exercises for the implementation of certain provisions of the convention..

³ The Center collected information on over 60,000 chemicals and by the time of this assessment the data is being processed.