
International Conference on Chemicals Management

Second session

Geneva, 17–21 September 2012

Agenda item 4 (f)

**Implementation of the Strategic Approach to International
Chemicals Management: information exchange and scientific and technical cooperation**

**Performance of information clearinghouse functions by the
secretariat for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals
Management**

Note by the secretariat

1. One of the functions of the secretariat for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) as set out in paragraph 28 of the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy includes the provision of information clearinghouse services. The clearinghouse service is envisaged to be a collection of descriptive information on the Internet. It is to facilitate the provision of advice to countries on the implementation of the Strategic Approach, refer requests for information to relevant sources and facilitate access to information to relevant sources.
2. The clearinghouse is available at the following web address: www.saicm.org/ich/. In addition, Annex I to the present note includes screenshots from the current information clearing house developed by the secretariat, which includes the homepage, the format of information presented in the clearinghouse website and the information submission form.
3. The descriptive information contained in the clearinghouse service is collected in a standard format and in a consistent presentation to enable different individuals, organizations, or geographically-defined communities to collaborate together and promote their available digital information. The clearinghouse is also designed to minimize duplication of efforts in the collection of digital information related to the implementation of the Strategic Approach, and to assist in the coordination of data collection and research activities by standardizing the format and quality of the information presented.
4. Since its inception, the clearinghouse service has incorporated the information contained in the Information Exchange Network on Capacity-building for the Sound Management of Chemicals (INFOCAP). This was done in accordance with a recommendation from the Committee of the Whole, convened during the first session of the Conference in Dubai.
5. A further dimension to the clearinghouse is the provision for individual SAICM stakeholders to present information on their implementation activities, either through links to existing websites or, where none exist, by making the information available through the Strategic Approach clearinghouse. The success of the clearinghouse will be dependent upon the participation and involvement of stakeholders, and the information that is shared between them.
6. The clearinghouse is also envisaged to make provision for regional and other groups of stakeholders to interact electronically to exchange information. A dedicated space is provided for

regional and other groups of stakeholders to share materials specific to the regions, which may be provided in languages other than English¹. A Document Management System (DMS) will be set up to help manage the exchange of information from and between the users in the regional and other groups of stakeholders.

7. The clearinghouse utilizes a Content Management System (CMS) to manage and maintain the daily operations of the services. This decision was made to ensure that the clearinghouse service would be easily maintainable and extendable in the future if so required. The clearinghouse uses readily available web technologies for the publication and discovery of resources, to enable access from a broad range of participants with access to the Internet.

8. The clearinghouse services were not active during most of 2011, owing to technical problems and lack of resources that also affected the performance of the SAICM website. In June 2012, the secretariat engaged the services of an information technology consultant and a public information specialist to support the operation of the information clearinghouse and the SAICM website. Consequently, the clearinghouse services have been reactivated as of August 2012, and the technical problems affecting the SAICM website have also been resolved.


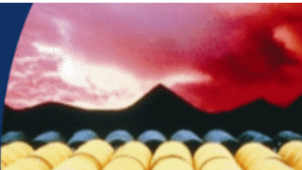
9. As a preventive measure to avoid the technical problems encountered with the clearinghouse previously, an information validation system and user authentication will be set up. The information validation system will ensure that the correct information is given to the relevant areas, and the user authentication system will certify that the information is given from accurate and reliable sources. These improvements will give the information contained in the clearinghouse a degree of protection from unauthorized access and malicious software, as well as add consistency to the way the information is presented across the platform.

10. The Conference may wish to note the progress in the development of the secretariat's information clearinghouse and encourage all SAICM stakeholders to use the clearinghouse service and to participate in its activities by sharing relevant information in the information clearing house.

¹ English is the official language of the SAICM information clearinghouse.

Annex I

Information Clearinghouse Homepage


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The SAICM Information Clearing House is both a centralized place for news relevant to chemicals and a repository of core resources.

The functions of the [SAICM secretariat](#) include to provide information clearing-house services, such as provision of advice to countries on implementation of SAICM, referral of requests for information to relevant sources, and facilitation of access to information and expertise in support of specific national actions. This clearing-house function is performed principally on the basis of this web-based facility. The clearing house also incorporates the Information Exchange Network on Capacity building for the Sound Management of Chemicals (INFOCAP), previously administered by the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS).

Who can contribute to the SAICM ICH?

Only people who have been granted the right to contribute to the SAICM ICH can add information in the form of weblinks and documents.

If you think that your contribution will be valuable, please email us: momotola@chemicals.unep.ch

Contact

SAICM Secretariat
Chemicals Branch
Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
United Nations Environment Programme
Chemin des Anémones 11-13
CH - 1219 Chatelaine
Geneva
Switzerland
Tel.: +41 22 917 8532
Fax: +41 22 797 3460
Email: saicm@unep.org
Website: www.saicm.org

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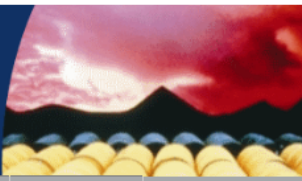
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The Chemicals Policy & Science Initiative

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The [Chemicals Policy and Science Initiative](#) (CPSI) is a project of the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production (Lowell Center) at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. CPSI achieves its objectives through research and strategic engagement with a range of stakeholders.

Informaworld

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This journal serves as an international forum for the critical review of current knowledge on the broad range of topics in environmental science. The "[Critical Reviews in Environmental Science and Technology](#)" section provides comprehensive and timely reviews by the leading authorities in each subject area. Some topics covered include waste reduction, recycling, and reuse; air, soil, and water contaminant biogeochemistry; environmental toxicology and epidemiology.

Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health Sciences

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The Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health Sciences (JTEHS) is an open access journal that provides rapid publication (monthly) of articles in all areas of the subject. [Read more](#)

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Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
United Nations Environment Programme
Chemin des Anémones 11-13
CH - 1219 Chatelaine
Geneva
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 917 8532
Fax: +41 22 797 3460
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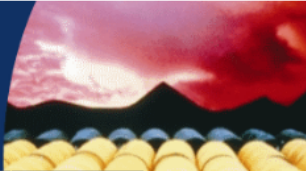
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