
International Conference on Chemicals Management

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Item 5 (b) (iii) a of the provisional agenda*

**Implementation towards the achievement of the 2020 goal
of sound chemicals management: emerging policy issues
and other issues of concern: existing emerging policy
issues: lead in paint**

Emerging policy issue update on lead in paint

Note by the secretariat

1. The secretariat has the honour to circulate, for the information of participants, a report on the emerging policy issue concerning lead in paint prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) (see annex). The submission is presented as received by the secretariat, without formal editing.
2. The report provides a summary of the work carried out on this issue, within the framework of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (Lead Paint Alliance), since the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management. The report also provides information on planned activities, in line with Business Plan of the Lead Paint Alliance to support the achievement of the 2020 goal.
3. The current document is complemented by the information included in document SAICM/ICCM.4/INF/25 which provides more detailed information in relation to promoting the establishment of appropriate national regulatory frameworks to stop the manufacture, import, export, sale and use of lead paints and products coated with lead paints. This information is in line with one of the priority actions of the Business Plan of the Lead Paint Alliance.
4. Government representatives and other stakeholders are invited to join the Lead Paint Alliance.

* SAICM/ICCM.4/1.

Annex

Emerging policy update on lead in paint

I. Background

1. Lead is a cumulative toxicant that affects multiple body systems. It is particularly hazardous to young children and pregnant women, however, lead causes negative health effects in all who are exposed. Lead exposure can result in learning disabilities, increased risk of antisocial behaviour, reduced fertility and increased risk of renal and cardiovascular disease later in life. Lead can cause irreversible negative effects on health and wellbeing that have both personal and societal impacts. No safe level of exposure to lead has so far been established. There is, therefore, a strong case for preventing exposure.
2. Recent reductions in the use of lead in petrol, paint, plumbing and solder for food cans have resulted in a substantial lowering of the levels of lead measured in populations in many countries; however, significant sources of lead exposure still remain. Lead paint has been, and is still being, used for decorating the interiors and exteriors of homes and schools, public and commercial buildings and structures such as bridges, as well as on toys, furniture and playground equipment. As lead paint ages and decays it releases lead-containing dust and flakes that contaminate the environment. In this form lead is easily ingested by young children who play on the floor and, as part of normal behaviour, mouth objects and frequently put their hands to their mouths. Occupational exposure to lead can occur when lead paint is manufactured, applied and removed. Removal of lead paint can result in extensive environmental contamination if not carried out in a safe manner.
3. Reducing the adverse health effects from lead paints necessitates controlling exposures. National controls on the manufacture, import, sale, use, and export of lead paints are far more cost-effective in reducing exposure risks than any future remediation programmes. Legislation and/or regulation is needed to stop current practices and protect human health and the environment.
4. Although some restrictions on the use of lead in paints were enacted in many countries in the first third of the 20th century, it has become clear in recent years that paints containing high levels of lead are still widely available for purchase and use, for example, for residential purposes in many countries.
5. Available data from paint testing studies in thirty-seven (37) countries have revealed¹ that new paints with high lead concentrations are widely available to consumers in many regions of the world. The data from these studies indicate that without appropriate national legislation and regulation, paints with lead will continue to be available in local markets. The paint testing studies also found that paints containing low lead concentrations were also being sold at a similar price. This provides strong evidence that reasonable substitutes for lead are available, and that the manufacture of paint without the addition of lead compounds is currently feasible.
6. The use of paint is increasing rapidly in countries with growing personal income, and people are putting more of their income into their property and its maintenance. Unless the lead content of new paint is controlled during manufacturing, the exposure of children to high levels of lead will continue in millions of homes and schools, jeopardizing their present and future health.
7. As paints containing lead are still widely manufactured and sold for use in many developing countries, and even in countries that have banned lead paint, there may still be a legacy of lead-painted homes and structures, particularly in economically deprived areas. If all countries banned lead paint this would remove an important source of domestic and occupational exposure and would provide health, environmental and economic benefits.

¹ http://www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste/Portals/9/Mercury/Documents/publications/Lead_in_Enamel_decorative_paints.pdf.

II. Introduction

8. Lead paint was discussed as an emerging policy issue at the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management in 2009. In Resolution II/4/B the International Conference endorsed the creation of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (Lead Paint Alliance) as an international, multistakeholder partnership that would work towards the phasing out of lead paint.

9. The Lead Paint Alliance is a initiative to focus and catalyze the efforts of diverse stakeholders to achieve international goals to prevent children's exposure to lead from paints containing lead and to minimize occupational exposures to lead paint. The broad objective is to promote a phase-out of the manufacture and sale of paints containing lead and eventually to eliminate the risks that such paints pose.

10. The Lead Paint Alliance is an important means of contributing to implementation of paragraph 57 of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and to resolutions II/4/B and III/2/B on lead in paint adopted during the second and third session, respectively, of the International Conference on Chemicals Management.

11. The specific objectives of the work of the Lead Paint Alliance are:

- (a) To raise the awareness of government authorities and regulators, the private sector, manufacturers, consumers, workers, trade unions and health-care providers about the toxicity of lead in paint and the availability of technically superior and safer alternatives.
- (b) To catalyze the design and implementation of appropriate prevention-based programmes to reduce and eliminate risks from the use of lead paints and products coated with lead paints.
- (c) To help identify those paint manufacturers, paint formulators and distributors that continue to produce and market paints containing lead in order to foster actions to phase-out lead from their products.
- (d) To promote the establishment of appropriate national regulatory frameworks to stop the manufacture, import, export, distribution, sale and use of lead paints and products coated with lead paints.
- (e) As appropriate, to promote international third-party certification of new paint products to help consumers to recognize paint and coatings without added lead.
- (f) To share guidance and promote assistance to identify and reduce potential lead exposure in and around housing, in childcare facilities and schools in which paint containing lead and paint dusts are present and in industrial facilities producing or using paint containing lead to reduce workers' lead exposure.

12. The Business Plan of the Lead Paint Alliance was developed in response to resolution II/4/B adopted by the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management in 2009. It provides a road map describing the strategies, milestones and means of achieving the goals and overall objective of the Lead Paint Alliance. The Business Plan is addressed to all persons and organizations interested in contributing to the work of the Alliance.

III. Project activities and outcomes

13. Priority actions for 2012-2013 included in the Business Plan of the Lead Paint Alliance were as follow:

- (a) Establishing and launching a clearinghouse or data repository for the Global Alliance that contains available advocacy materials, information on lead paint levels, on blood-lead testing and surveillance, and treatment guidelines etc.. An initial focus of the clearinghouse will include those materials needed to support the marking of an international day of action;
- (b) Developing a proposal and obtaining broad support among Governments, clinical and public health professionals and other stakeholders for the marking of an international day of action on prevention of lead poisoning with an initial focus on eliminating lead paint;
- (c) Filling information gaps on the presence or absence of lead paint on the consumer market in those countries where little or no data are now available; expanding information on lead exposure pathways for vulnerable populations (e.g. children under six years of age, paint users and workers in paint production facilities) associated with different paint categories (e.g. decorative paints; industrial paints; anti-corrosive metal primers; and others)

- (d) Developing technical guidelines for paint manufacturers on alternatives to lead compounds used in paints;
- (e) Developing a framework for the labelling and certification of paints;
- (f) Disseminating a document that presents and discusses the elements of a national regulatory framework for eliminating lead paint (relevant to focal area on legislation and regulation);
- (g) Contributing expertise about lead paint to the finalization of WHO evidence-based guidelines on the prevention and management of lead exposure, including recommendations concerning the establishment of blood lead screening and surveillance programmes for lead exposures;
- (h) Engaging additional stakeholders in the work of the Global Alliance, including through the establishment of national alliances to contribute to implementation activities, and obtaining an increased number of financial contributions and to achieve the goals and objectives of the Global Alliance.

14. The Lead Paint Alliance continues its work along the lines of additional actions for 2014-2015 as described in its Business Plan. Special attention to those activities and outcomes are explained in document SAICM/ICCM.4/9.

15. The following paragraphs make reference to additional progress of the work of the Lead Paint Alliance after having issued document SAICM/ICCM.4/9.

16. On 19 June 2015, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization invited representatives from different Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and industry related stakeholders, to become members of the UNEP/WHO Advisory Group for the Lead Paint Alliance, and therefore to become partners of the Alliance.

17. As a result of the invitation the following Governments have nominated a representative to serve in the capacity as Advisory Group members: Colombia (Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development), Kenya (Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development), Moldova (Ministry of Health), Thailand (Ministry of Health) and the United States of America (US Environmental Protection Agency)

18. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has also responded to UNEP and WHO's invitation by nominating a representative to the Advisory Group.

19. AkzoNobel and the International Paint and Printers Ink Council (IPPIC) have also responded positively to the above-mentioned invitation.

20. AkzoNobel has also been recognised by UNEP and WHO as a partner of the Lead Paint Alliance as *"AkzoNobel is committed to delivering safer and sustainable products to our customers and as you know in 2011 we became the first global paint company to completely phase out the use of lead compounds from all of our products and processes throughout the world"*.

21. The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) have also responded to the above-mentioned invitation.

IV. Planned activities and implications for the goal to eliminate lead paint by 2020

22. Table 1 provides additional actions for 2014-2020 included in the Business Plan of the Lead Paint Alliance to promote action and achievement of its goals and objectives. The actions are listed in no particular order, and there are subject to be carried out based on availability of funds.

Table 1. Additional actions for 2014-2020 of the Lead Paint Alliance, indicators and targets.

Lead Paint Alliance Additional actions for 2014 - 2020	Indicators and targets
(a) Promoting the establishment of appropriate national regulatory frameworks to stop the manufacture, import, export, sale and use of lead paints and products coated with lead paints;	(a) Number of countries that have adopted legally binding laws, regulations, standards and/or procedures to control the production, import, sale and use of lead paints with special attention to the elimination of lead decorative paints and lead paints for other applications most likely to contribute to childhood lead exposure;
(b) Promoting third-party certification of no added lead in new paint products, especially in countries which may face challenges with the comprehensive enforcement of national regulatory frameworks to stop the manufacture, import, export, sale and use of lead paints and products coated with lead paints;	Targets: 2013 30 countries 2015 70 or more countries 2020 All countries
(c) Identifying the information that small and medium-size paint manufacturers may need to cost-effectively reformulate their paint products to eliminate the use of added lead compounds, and establishing mechanisms to provide them with such information as needed;	(b) Number of paint companies that have committed to the work of the Global Alliance and have eliminated the use of added lead compounds in all of the decorative paints that they manufacture; Targets: 2013 5 paint manufacturers publicly committed to the work of the Global Alliance 2015 50 large paint manufacturers have eliminated the use of added lead compounds 2020 All paint manufacturers have eliminated the use of added lead compounds in priority areas
(d) Preparing and disseminating guidance materials on how to minimize potential lead exposure in and around housing, childcare facilities, schools and other buildings where lead paint has been used in the past, including information on proper procedures for repainting surfaces, remodelling and demolition;	(c) Number of countries with national awareness activities about the risks of lead paint; Targets: 2013 5 countries with national awareness days for prevention of lead poisoning with an emphasis on the risks of lead paint 2015 10 countries with national awareness days for prevention of lead poisoning with an emphasis on the risks of lead paint 2020 40 countries with national awareness days for prevention of lead poisoning with an emphasis on the risks of lead paint
(e) Preparing and disseminating guidance materials on how to avoid or minimize workers' lead exposure in industrial facilities producing or using paint that contains added lead compounds;	(d) Number of contributors ² participating in the work of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint
(f) Increasing capacities to conduct blood-lead testing and surveillance programmes, to assess residential and occupational risks and to implement public and professional education on the mitigation of lead poisoning.	Targets: 2013 30 contributors (Governments and organizations) participating in the work of the Global Alliance 2015 50 contributors (Governments and organizations) participating in the work of the Global Alliance 2020 70 contributors (Governments and organizations) participating in the work of the Global Alliance

² Currently known as PARTNERS.

23. In order to facilitate implementation of the long-term Business Plan of the Lead Paint Alliance, a two-year action plan is being developed by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization, in consultation with the UNEP/WHO Advisory Group for the Lead Paint Alliance.

24. The Action Plan will highlight the need for near-term efforts, in particular by encouraging governments to establish national legal limits on lead in paint. It is also intended to encourage and support priority activities in 2015 and 2016 by Alliance partners and other stakeholders that will help move toward the overall goals and objectives of the Lead Paint Alliance, and therefore, contributing with the 2020 goal.

25. The Advisory Group plans to have its first face to face meeting on 27 September 2015 to discuss further the Action Plan.
