

WELCOME TO THE UCT CHEMICALS NETWORK DISCUSSION



Division of Environmental Health
School of Public Health and Family Medicine
Isikolo Sempilo Yoluntu kunye Namayeza Osapho
Departement Openbare Gesondheid en Huisartskunde

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
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Introduce yourself (name, job title, organization and country) in the **chat section**.

Only the presenter and facilitator will speak. Any comments or questions from attendees should be typed in the **chat section**.

Please kindly keep your microphone muted and cameras off during the discussion

NOTE: If you are having **technical difficulties**, please join the WhatsApp group for assistance:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/CdEJNdPEva30263AB3KYBq>

Discussion Topic: Transfer of information in relation to the import of chemicals

Date: 05th April 2022

- Time: 14h00 – 15h30 (GMT+2)
- Presenter: Gunilla Prideaux
- Facilitator: Andrea Rother, University of Cape Town
- Chair: Eunice Tshilengu, MPH student, University of Cape Town

CHEMICALS NETWORK DISCUSSION

TRANSFER OF INFORMATION IN CONNECTION WITH IMPORT OF CHEMICALS AND
ITS IMPLICATIONS ON CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS



Gunilla Prideaux

Strategic adviser, Swedish Chemicals Agency

INTRODUCTION

PRESENTED BY: GUNILLA PRIDEAUX, KEMI

- Global implementation of GHS is still progressing very slowly. It is clear that increasing the political will to implement GHS is an important prerequisite. The major exporting countries are key players as their decisions influence many other countries with which they trade. Influencing the political will can be cumbersome and time consuming, but there are some paths that are interesting to explore further.
- Therefore, the Swedish Chemicals Agency has developed an internal strategy and conducted a number of activities with the aim of both analysing barriers and challenges for countries wishing to implement GHS nationally and promoting the implementation of GHS globally.
 - Study on the role of national substance classification lists in the implementation of GHS
 - Study on the role of international trade agreements for the implementation of GHS
 - **Analysis of Transfer of information in connection with import of chemicals**
 - Analysis of GHS implementation in the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region
 - Guidance and training on GHS

BACKGROUND TO QUESTION I

PRESENTED BY: GUNILLA PRIDEAUX

June 1992: The mandate to create a globally harmonized hazard classification and labelling system was adopted at the *UN Conference on Environment and Development*.

Purpose

- **Enhance the protection** of human health and the environment by providing an internationally comprehensible system for hazard communication;
- **Provide a legal framework** for countries without an existing system;
- **Reduce the need for testing** and evaluation of chemicals;
- **Facilitate international trade** in chemicals whose hazards have been properly assessed and identified on an international basis

BACKGROUND TO QUESTION 1

PRESENTED BY: GUNILLA PRIDEAUX

- One of the activities in the Kemi strategy was to try to get a better understanding on how much, and what type of information regarding chemical content and hazard information, that is transferred when a country is importing chemicals.
- The outcome of the survey would hopefully shed some light on what challenges there are to make GHS operational in a country which has implemented GHS.
- Based on Kemi's knowledge on international GHS implementation as well as contacts at key Agencies, three different countries were selected for the survey, namely Sweden, Zambia, and Vietnam.

BACKGROUND TO QUESTION 1

PRESENTED BY: GUNILLA PRIDEAUX

Responsibilities for classification and labelling can vary between countries, where some put the full responsibility on importers, producers and suppliers and some put more responsibility on the government through licensing systems where classification and labelling is approved by the responsible agency.

Today we are interested in your experiences from import of chemicals and to discuss possible challenges related to the transfer of information on physical, health and environmental hazards in order to ensure that the chemicals can be correctly classified and labelled.

QUESTION 1

Is the information you receive when chemicals are imported to your country/company fulfilling the national requirements? How is any lack of information handled in your country/company?

There will be 20 minutes to discuss this question in the chat section.

Please keep your cameras off and microphones muted.

Make use of the chat function to discuss

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BACKGROUND TO QUESTION 2

PRESENTED BY: GUNILLA PRIDEAUX

Although the three countries we have chosen to interview (in our attempt to get a better understanding of how and what information is transferred when chemicals are being exported/imported) are situated in different regions, it seems that there are similarities in which countries chemicals are imported from.

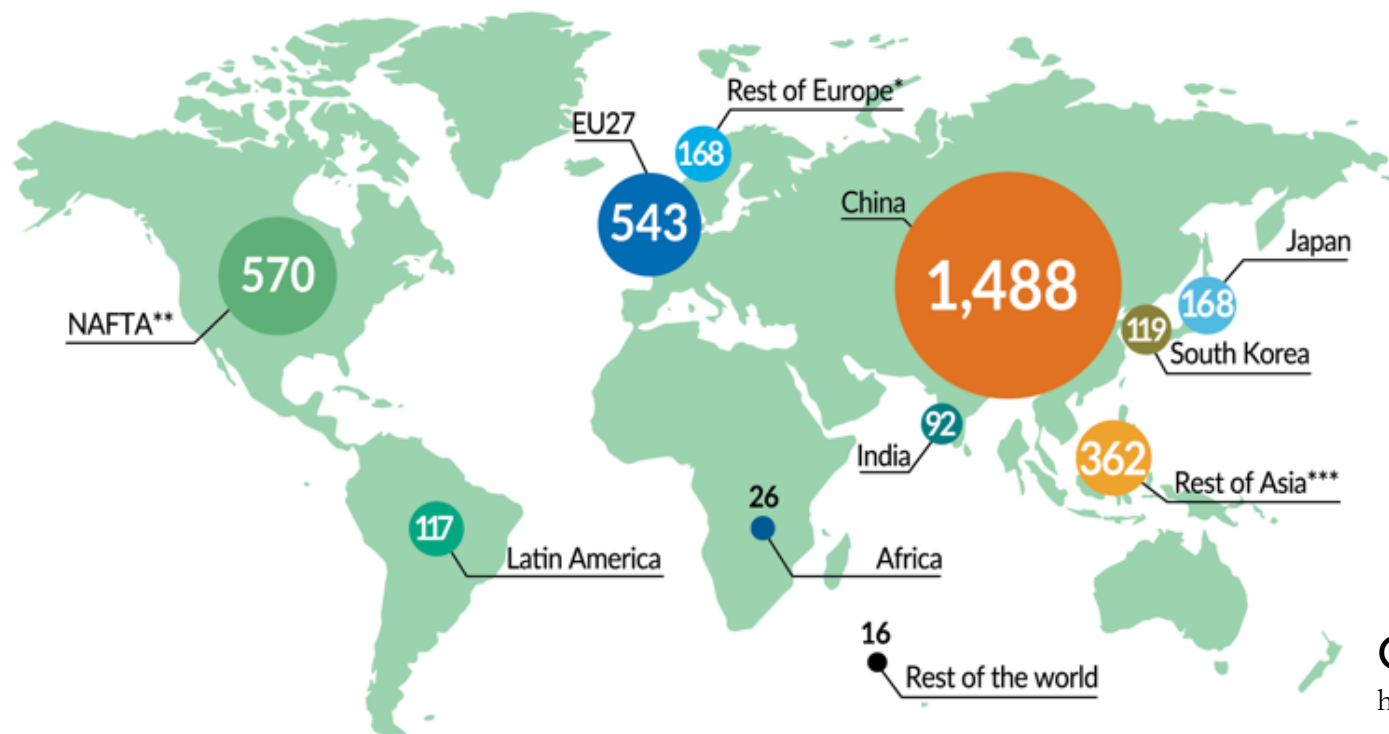
The amount of information available for classification and labelling varies depending on issues such as

- Exporting country
- Type of chemical
- Type and size of supplying company

BACKGROUND TO QUESTION 2

PRESENTED BY: GUNILLA PRIDEAUX

World chemical sales (2019, €3,669 billion)



CEFIC (2021)

<https://cefic.org/a-pillar-of-the-european-economy/facts-and-figures-of-the-european-chemical-industry>

BACKGROUND TO QUESTION 2

PRESENTED BY:

Also, suppliers of chemicals (exporting companies) are sometimes not confident to provide certain information (considered to be Confidential Business Information, CBI) to the importer and/or the authority.

This creates problems both for the importing companies and the authorities.

QUESTION 2

Is the chemical information provided understandable and usable? Are certain suppliers/exporting countries/types of chemicals more problematic than others, and how come?

There will be 20 minutes to discuss this question in the chat section.

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BACKGROUND TO QUESTION 3

PRESENTED BY: GUNILLA PRIDEAUX

There may be different ways to improve information provisions and thereby enable correct classification and labelling of chemicals.

- A legal framework that also defines roles and responsibilities is a fundamental starting point.
- Cooperation between different authorities or governmental departments, such as customs and border control, authorities responsible for registration of chemicals, occupational safety as well as local authorities
- Creating awareness and demand – increased knowledge among professional users as well as consumers about the possibilities to demand and receive information

BACKGROUND TO QUESTION 3

PRESENTED BY: GUNILLA PRIDEAUX

- The labels gives a very brief information to private consumers and professionell users of the hazards of a chemical and also on precautions.
- The SDS gives more detailed information to professional users of the chemical such as information about
 - Personal protection equipement (PPE)
 - First aid measures
 - safe storage
 - how to take care of spills.

QUESTION 3

What more than a correct classification and labelling of chemicals is needed to reach the goal of reduced risk when handling products for professional and non-professional use? Which drivers are the most important for classification and labelling?

There will be 25 minutes to discuss this question in the chat section.

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THANK YOU FOR JOINING UCT'S CHEMICALS NETWORK DISCUSSION

**Save the date:
Chemicals Network
Discussion 03
7th June
14h00 - 15h30
(GMT+2)**

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The views herein shall not be taken to reflect the official opinion of Sida or the Swedish Chemicals Agency.