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The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Guyana to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations and with reference to the latter's Note Reference: DSD/2013/181 dated March 22, 2013 has the honour to forward the completed questionnaire on issues relating to the environment effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Guyana to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) of the United Nations to the assurances of its highest consideration.



Questionnaire on Issues relating to the environmental effects related to wastes originating from Chemical Munitions dumped at Sea

Situation

1. Is there an environmental risk for your country/region to be affected by wastes originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea (WOCMDS)? If so, what are the environmental challenges and effects posed by WOCMDS

Yes there is an environmental risk for Guyana to be affected by wastes originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea. The environmental challenge posed by this is an impact on the marine environment along the coast of Guyana, and wider Caribbean region consequently posing a challenge to the life of the marine diversity dwelling therein. The effects as a result of this challenge are negative impact on the livelihood of artisanal fishers and large-scale commercial fishing groups. As it relates to artisanal fishers, with the tidal seasons comes the mixing of marine waters with fresh waters thus posing a risk to the quality of fresh water if the marine waters are contaminated.

2. Does the Scientific community in your country/region examine the environmental effects related to WOCMDS? If so, what are the findings of such scientific researches?

No, as a country Guyana has not had much experience if any at all, with WOCMDS, hence the need for scientific research is not a priority.

Response to Incidents

3. Does your country/region have the experience in responding to incidents related to WOCMDS?
No

4. Does your country/region have the capacity to respond to incidents related to WOCMDS?
No, Guyana's capacity to respond to these incidents is minimal to none given its lack of experience with such incidents and the limited institutional capacity to respond to such incidents. Presently existing in Guyana is the Maritime Administration Department (MARAD) who is the competent authority for the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from ships (MARPOL)

5. Has your Government /Organization developed an action plan or built capacities to respond to incidents related to WOCMDS? If not, does your Government/Organization intend to do so in the future?

The EPA is unaware of any national plan or built capacities to respond directly to incidents related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea (WOCMDS). Guyana's National Disaster Preparedness Plan (draft), which includes strategies for responding to maritime disasters within Guyana's national jurisdiction, is presently undergoing public consultation before being tabled at Parliament. This Policy will be administered by the Civil Defense Commission (CDC). The Environmental Protection Agency-Guyana (EPA) and the Maritime Administration Department (MARAD) also have legislative mandates as it relates to the protection/defense of Guyana's fresh water and maritime resources but with limited institutional capabilities.

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Raising Awareness and other Actions

6. Does your Government /Organization provide information on WOCMDS to civil society and Industry?
Does your Government/Organization raise awareness on WOCMDS and how?
The Government of Guyana is presently not involved in spreading awareness on WOCMDS nor does it provide information to civil society and industries on this.
7. Are there any partnerships between government, industry and civil society in your country/region on raising awareness, reporting and monitoring of WOCMDS
No

Cooperation

8. Does your government cooperate with other states, regional and/or international organizations to assess or increase awareness of WOCMDS?
No
9. What would be, in your view, possible modalities for international cooperation to assess and increase awareness of WOCMDS
Technical and financial support where there are limitations in Guyana as it relates to issues surrounding WOCMDS