



MISSION PERMANENTE DE LA FRANCE AUPRES DES NATIONS UNIES

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La Mission permanente de la France présente ses compliments au Secrétariat des Nations Unies (Département des Affaires économiques et sociales - Division du Développement durable) et a l'honneur de lui adresser ci-joint la réponse apportée par la France au questionnaire concernant la problématique des déchets provenant des munitions chimiques immergées en mer, conformément à la résolution 65/146 intitulée « Mesures de coopération pour évaluer et faire mieux connaître les effets sur l'environnement des déchets provenant des munitions chimiques immergées en mer »./.

La Mission permanente de la France auprès des Nations Unies saisit cette occasion pour renouveler au Secrétariat des Nations Unies (Département des Affaires économiques et sociales - Division du Développement durable) les assurances de sa haute considération.



New York, le 17 mai 2013

SECRETARIAT DES NATIONS UNIES

Département des Affaires économiques et sociales (DESA)
Division du Développement durable
Bureau S-2620
NEW YORK

Questionnaire on issues relating to the environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea

Situation

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

Without neglecting the risk, France considers that this is currently a low risk to the country. But France remains attentive to this issue and is aware of the effects that such waste could have.

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?

The French scientific community does not directly lead research on this issue but monitors it from a scientific and technical perspective. National institutes specialized on chemical issues, industrial chemistry, and terrestrial and marine pollution agencies are aware of this issue.

Response to incidents

3. Does your country/region have the experience in responding to incidents related to WOCMDS?

To date, France has had no real experience in responding to incidents related to WOCMDS.

4. Does your country/region have the capacity to respond to incidents related to WOCMDS?

The first responders of the emergency services have the training and necessary equipments to deal with such risks. The local level also has decontamination capacities that could be mobilized. If necessary, they can mobilize the reinforcements of national civilian specialized capabilities. Depending on the needs, military specialized capabilities can also be deployed.

Finally, hospitals also have capacities to support victims exposed to the danger of a chemical nature.

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?

France has contingency plans in place to respond to chemical incidents whether they are from accidental or terrorist origin. These plans describe the organization of the various actors at local and national level.

As with all chemical incidents, the direction of the operation is ensured by the *Prefecture* of the *department* concerned. Regional and national resources can be used depending on the need and the risk involved.

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?

France has not, to date, implemented a specific action of communication to the civil society and industry. By contrast, as we have already indicated, our specialized research institutes maintain their level of information by following the conferences on these issues and monitoring the scientific and technical literature.

7. Are there any partnerships between government, industry and civil society in your country/region on raising awareness, reporting and monitoring of WOCMDS?

Not to date.

Cooperation

8. Does your government cooperate with other States, regional and/or international organizations to assess or increase awareness of WOCMDS?

Not to date.

9. What would be, in your view, possible modalities for international cooperation to assess and increase awareness of WOCMDS?

France considers that it is necessary to promote a regional approach and could support initiatives to mobilize instruments of European cooperation dedicated to risk assessment and environmental damage management.