

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?

There are two known ocean dumping sites for chemical weapons in New Zealand. Chemical weapons were dumped at these sites in 1946 following the end of the Second World War. Weapons dumped were from New Zealand's own stockpile of chemical mustard gas artillery shells and mortar bombs.

The health hazards associated with these dumped chemical weapons is considered low. This position is in line with the findings of the publicly available 2003 Australian Department of Defence report *Chemical Warfare Agent Sea Dumping off Australia*.

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?

As far as we are aware, the scientific community in New Zealand does not currently examine the environmental effects of WOCMDS.

Response to incidents

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

As far as we are aware New Zealand does not have experience in responding to incidents related to WOCMDS.

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

New Zealand does not currently have the capacity to respond to incidents related to WOCMDS in the marine environment.

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?

New Zealand does not have an action plan and nor has it built capacity to respond to incidents related to WOCMDS. New Zealand does not intend to do so in the future as this is considered unnecessary.

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 information on the two chemical weapon dumping sites is available to the New Zealand public should they wish to see it. The New Zealand Government does not currently seek to raise awareness on WOCMDS as this is not considered necessary at the present time.

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

There does not appear to be any need to form partnerships with industry and civil society in New Zealand around awareness, reporting and monitoring of WOCMDS.

Cooperation

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

The New Zealand government does not currently cooperate with other States, regional and/or international organizations to assess or increase awareness of WOCMDS.

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

No comment at this point.
