

CHEMICALS

The growing world-wide commitment to protect human health and the environment from dangerous chemicals and wastes has been a catalyst for action in many countries and sectors. Due to the cross sectoral nature of chemicals and waste management and the interests of various government ministries and other stakeholders in this area, well coordinated and integrated management approaches at the national level may achieve maximum impact for the limited resources available worldwide, inclusively in the Republic of Moldova. In order to develop a sustainable society and to prevent impacts caused by chemicals the Republic of Moldova undertakes activities to align to international practices in this area, including Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

With regard to SAICM objectives, each Government has to address the management of chemicals and to determine how to develop concrete actions to ensure, through 2020, a sustainable management of chemicals throughout the cycle. In this context, it was approved the Order No. 49 of 31 July 2006 of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources on creation of the Interministerial SAICM Working Group, which consists of ministries and institutions relevant to the field, including representatives of civil and academic society. With input of this working group and financial support of the "Quick Start" Programme through the Project "Moldova-UNEP Partnership on capacity building for improving the environmentally sound management of chemicals in the Republic of Moldova and the implementation of the SAICM", the national capacities in the field were assessed, findings and recommendations being incorporated in the "National Profile on chemicals management". There is no doubt that a systematic capacity-building initiative, based on upgrading the existing infrastructure is required to improve chemical management and safety in Moldova. As was evident during the drafting of the National Profile, chemicals management is not a stand-alone issue, but has to be seen within the context of national development as chemicals are involved in cross-cutting situations. Mainstreaming of chemicals into ongoing national development activities provides a potent opportunity for national advancement as was laid down in the Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management, a major component of SAICM. These aspects will provide a good basis for planning measures to ensure the national chemical safety through application of an appropriate system for chemicals management.

The National Programme on sound management of chemicals is currently under development and establishes the main objectives of the sound chemicals management system until 2020. The *overall aim of the programme* lies in developing an integrated system of chemicals management being efficient from the technical, economic, social and environmental points of view. The programme promotes a dynamic process of strategic planning in the field chemicals management, which shows the development directions, identifies the ways and mechanisms for achieving the general objectives, being implemented in two stages:

- i. *Stage 1: 2010-2015* - will focus on improving the legal, regulatory and institutional integrity for chemicals management, aligned to international standards, strengthening of human and technical capacities, initiation of activities to reduce risks associated with the priority hazardous chemicals.
- ii. *Stage 2: 2015-2020* - will focus on developing and implementing strategies for assessing and reducing risks associated with management of hazardous chemicals, cleaner production implementation, strengthening analytical capacity through the application of good laboratory practices.

The measures under the National Programme on sound management of chemicals will be implemented taking into consideration the following aspects:

- Transparency in implementing the international treaties according to competences under national legislation;
- Cooperation of all interested parties within the central public administration, private sector and civil society, inclusively enlargement of the network of contacts of those involved in chemicals management;
- Raising awareness and promote the exchange of information between stakeholders in order to facilitate reporting under the international treaties, including the Stockholm Convention, Basel, Rotterdam Helsinki, etc;
- Strengthening national capacities for SAICM implementation.

In frames of implementation of objectives and actions stipulated in the National Programme on sound management of chemicals, responsible institutions will follow the progress indicators and progress achievement stipulated in Programme. As well will be taken into consideration the performance criteria and monitoring indicators for monitoring and evaluation of impact of Programme on general situation on chemicals management. According to objectives and priorities of Programme many monitoring indicators are set, including: national legal and normative framework on chemicals management; number of institutions and civil servants employed in the sphere of chemicals management; amounts of chemicals used in the RM; number of industrial accidents involving chemicals; used agriculture chemicals per ha; etc.

Considered through the concept of sustainable development and the perspective of adhering to EU legislation the new approach for chemicals management proposed in the National Programme in conformity with ratified agreements and conventions is required for the Republic of Moldova, which can be obtained only through intensive cooperation and mutual activity among all the national and international bodies.