

Practical aspects of SAICM implementation at national level in Belarus

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In Belarus activity regarding to chemical safety is implemented in frame of governmental programs such as National Strategy for Sustainable development, National Action Plan for Environment Protection, National Environmental Health Action Plan, National Plan "Children and Environment", National Implementation Plan for Stockholm Convention, etc.

SAICM implementation at national level gives new possibilities for chemical management to reach the Millennium goal to minimize the harmful effect of chemicals to health and environment. There are some obstacles to implement SAICM for short period of time:

- limited information at all stakeholders (government, industry, public society);
- not evident profit of SAICM implementation;
- misunderstanding of new role of all players;
- economic and other social priorities (except of chemical management)
- lock of recourses (including financial);
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According to the ICCM decision each country should develop SAICM implementation plan. But we consider that it should be short "preparation" stage before the Plan development for many reasons:

- there is a necessity of awareness raising company (let to know what new approach means and what kind of profits we can reach);
- there is no high level (prime-minister) decision for the Plan development;
- Council of Minister position is to limit the numbers of action plans;

To overtake these obstacles the SAICM National Focal Point plan to develop the activity what include:

- to form small working group
- to provide initial (first stage) tools for SAICM implementation such as
 - 1) legal base;
 - 2) information and knowledge;
 - 3) institutional framework (coordination mechanism, channel for communication among organizations);

Determination of main actors.

The main actors (according to Resolution 4 of ICCM) for SAICM implementation are government, industry, public interest groups, the science community and its institution, workers and their organizations. In our country 22 ministries and agencies, around 100 plants, many NGO are involved more or less in chemical management. So at very first stage it was decided to form small working group including representative of key ministries (health, environment, agriculture, emergency, custom, industry), industry association, NGO in order to determine role of players for SAICM implementation at national level, to develop recommendations for legislation and information exchange, ground coordination mechanism, to define the gaps especially for SAICM implementation using as a base the gaps in chemical management (revealed at priorities setting workshop)

To provide tools.

- 1) legal base (legislation) in order to
 - put in force SAICM principles and approaches including precaution, proportionality, substitution, prevention, polluter pays, right to know, life cycle approach, partnership approach, liability and accountability;

- to define the role of actors in chemical safety taking into account additional functions because of SAICM implementation,
 - to give legal base for public interest group participation in process;
- 2) information and knowledge
- to raise awareness (mass media companies to inform of SAICM goals, principles and approaches, to publish the Dubai Declaration)
 - to develop short course for decision making persons in health, environment sectors, custom, industry
 - to provide initial information (data base for chemicals at state language)
- 3) institutional framework
- to develop recommendations for coordination mechanism (to form special commission? To put additional authorities and field of activities for one of acting commission? To put form the secretariat or not? To put authorities to one of leading ministries?)
 - to form the information channel (if we can use one of existing web-sites; what recourses are necessary to provide its work; what kind of information is necessary at first stage of SAICM implementation?)

We consider that all these actions being taken at very first stage will make the SAICM implementation process successful.