https://www.globalchemicaltransparency.org/

Global minimum transparency standard for chemicals of concern in materials and products

- a keystone tool for achieving sustainable natural resource management and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

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Chemicals in the value chains of materials/products – systemic challenges

- Chemicals play a key role for production/extraction of natural resources and in turning them into higher value products.
- Most process chemicals are still petrochemicals.
- Value chains are often multi-national and covered by multiple national legislations/jurisdictions.
- Global consumption of materials, is expected to double over the next four decades, with annual waste generation projected to increase 70% by 2050.

Toxic chemicals in products – impact on biodiversity

- Pollution is among the five key pressures on biodiversity
- Over 90% of biodiversity loss and water stress come from resource extraction and processing.
- Chemicals harm the wildlife's reproduction, immune, hormonal and neurological systems making ecosystems more vulnerable and less adaptable to additional pressures

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Chemical and manufacturing industry carbon footprint

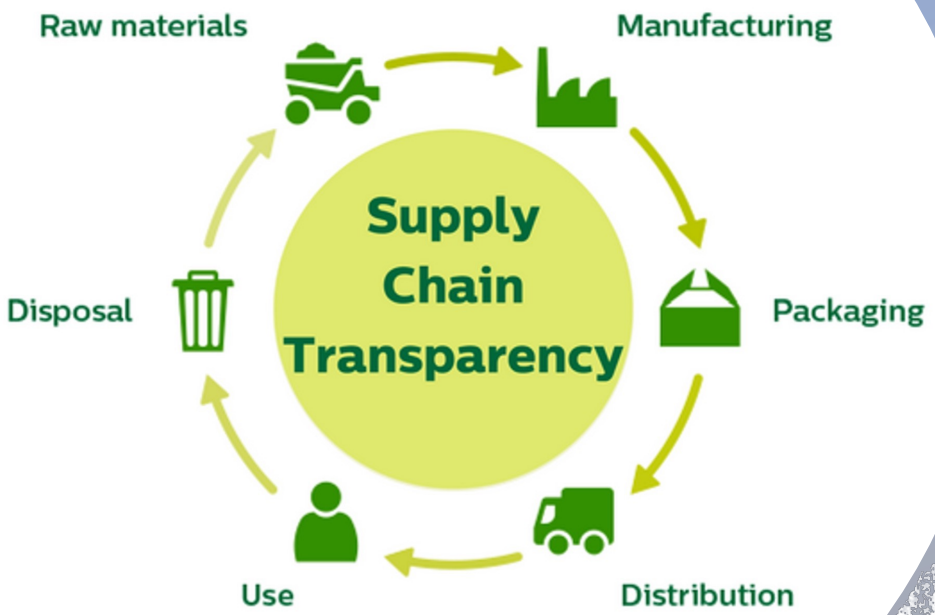
- Approximately half of total greenhouse gas emissions come from resource extraction and processing.
- The chemical industry is the world's largest industrial energy consumer:

➢ accounts for 10% global energy demand or 30% of total industrial energy demand.

- The product manufacturing industry is the third largest industrial emitter of CO_2 and contributor to climate change
- Limit carbon storage potential of ecosystems by causing biodiversity loss

Chemicals in the value chains of materials/products – solutions to the systemic challenges

- Chemicals that are safe by design
- Substitutions to harmless or less harmful chemicals for all stages of the life cycles of materials/products
- Improve material resource efficiency + reduce consumption
- Global harmonization of standards



Chemicals in the value chains of materials/products – supply chain transparency

- Identify products with hazardous chemicals.
- Pinpoint product components with hazardous chemicals.
- Support safe substitution work.
- Support decisions for non-toxic sustainable design.
- Support informed decisions for reuse and recycling of waste into toxic-free secondary raw materials.

Initiatives for providing supply chain transparency and safer products

- Inter-governmental systems, e.g. the voluntary UNEP Chemicals in Products Programme (https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/at-whwe-do/emerging-issues/chemicals-products
- Legislative systems, e.g. the EU SCIP database for Substances of Very High Concern (https://echa.europa.eu/sv/scip).
- Industry internal transparency schemes, e.g. in the automotive International Materials Data System (IMDS) (https://www.mdsystem.com/)
- Design for Environment - governmental certification system https://www.epa.gov/saferchoic...
- BASTA certification system http://www.bastaonline.se/sear...
- GOTS – totally independent

  GOTS the leading organic textile standard - GOTS (global-standard.org)
- The auto sector has the Global Automotive Declarable Substances List with threshold limits of 0.1% (or lower in certain cases) (see www.mdsystem.com/index.jsp ; GADSL-Guidance- Document.pdf);
- The Cradle-to-Cradle Product Innovation Institute sets the reporting threshold at 0.1% for chemicals banned for use in Cradle-to-Cradle certified products (see www.c2ccertified.org);

Challenges with with non-harmonized standards

- No clear impetus for companies to join the voluntary UNEP Chemicals in Products Programme.
- The SCIP database is only regional to the EU.
- Industry transparency systems are usually only within supply chain.
- Certifications are based on multiple parallel standards and the information on the chemical composition of materials/products stays with the certifier.
- SMCs weak in resources are at disadvantage.
- For chemicals, the requirements may vary whether they are in new articles, in articles already in use or in waste. Also, requirements in different sectors, countries and regions may vary.

Challenges from non-harmonized standards
Examples from the regional and national levels

- Within the EU, the production, import and use of HBCD and articles containing HBCD above 100 ppm (0.01%) is prohibited.
- In the U.S., companies must notify the U.S. EPA ninety days prior to manufacture, import, or processing of HBCD in consumer textiles (except for use in motor vehicles) or in textile articles.
- Certain U.S. states have regulations for HBCD. For instance, in Minnesota and Washington, there is a limit of 1000 ppm (0.1%) for HBCD contained in residential upholstered furniture and children's products. In California, flame retardants including HBCD contained in certain upholstered furniture must be labelled.

Trade can be hampered, and the playing field becomes unlevelled, SMCs weak in resources are at disadvantage.

Challenges from non-harmonized standards

• Multi-national supply chains crossing multiple jurisdictions with non-harmonized rules of information exchange on chemicals in products.

- ❑ costly systems for compliance checks at the borders;
- ❑ costly control systems imposed on the supply chains in other countries;
- ❑ trade between countries is complicated;
- ❑ risk of double standards;
- ❑ Safety for consumers and the environment compromised.
- ❑ Confidential business information
- ❑ The reputational risk for companies

Challenges from Internet trade

- Majority of countries have no control over products sold on-line.
- No third-party liability for the Internet platforms, which means little incentive for the platforms to make sure that companies selling from the platforms provide products compliant with the law in the countries of customers.
- Internet platforms have little understanding what information on chemical contents they should ask for, as there are so many national standards and legislations to ensure fulfilment with.

Advantages of a globally harmonized minimum transparency standard

- It will help countries and companies request clear information from suppliers;
- It will ensure equality before the law and eliminate double standards;
- It will facilitate safe recycling as waste managers will know the chemical composition of waste and thus what will be in secondary raw materials;
- It will inspire innovation and safe product design;
- It will level the playing field for companies and simplify trade.
- It is a tool for improving access to information;
- a step towards progressive ban of hazardous chemicals in products;
- An essential contribution to address biodiversity loss and reduce carbon footprint

What chemicals should be included in the standard?

Begin with already regulated/recognized chemicals of concern – no CBI claims should be justified

a) Chemicals regulated in global treaties.

b) Regulated in progressive regional legislation.

c) Internationally recognized lists of chemicals.

What chemicals are we talking about first of all? Substances already included in global/regional agreements and internationally recognised documents

Stockholm Convention
- All flame retardants
- Additives to paints, plastic, paper, cardboard etc
- Heat exchange fluids
- Dioxins and furans
- All solvents

Basel Convention
- Inorganic and organic toxic and ecotoxic chemicals (Annex I and VIII)
- Proposed list of hazardous plastic additives.

Minamata Convention
- Native mercury
- Mercury compounds

Montreal Protocol
- 114 chlorinated and brominated compounds that have phase out plans

EU Substances of Very High Concern (SVHC)
- PBT
- vPvB
- CMR
- Chemicals of other concern, e.g. EDCs, neurotoxicants and immunotoxicants

EU RoHS Directive
- 6 hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment

IARC Chemicals
- Carcinogenic chemicals

Use of the standard - binding actions

Management of Chemicals of Global Concern should have mandatory obligations

a) ”Soft” approach: mandatory information disclosure globally on their presence in materials/products.

b) ”Hard” approach: global restrictions or bans.

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Development and management

Ideally the standard should be binding from the beginning

- Following a UNEA or UNGA decision, it could be investigated if any of the existing conventions would allow for the inclusion of the standard, e.g. as a protocol.
- If necessary, a dedicated multilateral instrument could be developed for the standard.
- Another option would be to create a global standard like the GHS, which is voluntary, but becomes binding once adopted into national legislation.

Milestones in a CiP work plan

a) Milestone 1: Development of a global minimum transparency standard for chemicals of global concern.

b) Milestone 2: Countries that include work with the global minimum transparency standard in national action plans on CiP, report materials/products for which the chemical content is disclosed in line with the standard to the Secretariat.

c) Milestone 3: The Secretariat, or another suitable host, construct a global transparency database.

A decision from ICCM5 necessary.

Use of the standard – voluntary actions

For both the binding and the voluntary approach, we need

A multi-stakeholder committee:

- free from the influence of commercial interests;
- coordinated by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC);
- tasked with the development of a transparency standard

Development and management

Format of the standard

- The most stringent disclosure thresholds should be considered.
- Cross-sectoral approach.
- The standard has a living nature, updated when the underlying conventions, regional legislations and lists are updated.
- With the option to develop complementary criteria for chemicals of global concern, using a chemical group approach to respect the precautionary principle and speed up the listing of hazardous chemicals.

Data administration and distribution

- Centralized data administration in a secretariat for the multi-lateral instrument hosting the standard, similar to the arrangement for the SCIP database with the EU Chemicals Agency EHCA.

- Decentralized/distributed data administration with the owners of the data responsible for keeping it in the decided format.

- With both data administration formats, we suggest that the information is distributed to the stakeholders that need it in the form of an electronic system, e.g. similar to the idea for an electronic “product passport” now under development in the EU. Should be a simple electronic system that, e.g., can be accessed by a cell phone so that it also works in many low and middle income countries.

How to support GMTS idea?

Parties to the global MEAs should:

- **recognise the link between the lifecycle management of materials and products with the sound management of chemicals inherent to materials. This requires transparency of hazardous chemicals in materials and products.**
- **send clear and strong signals to UNEP or the UNGA of the importance of the GMTS idea as a keystone tool for the transformation of the economy, necessary to meet the systemic challenges causing pollution, loss of biodiversity, and contributing to climate change ;**
- **propose resolutions to the UNEA with a call for the development of a binding GMTS, either as part of an existing conventions, if possible, to enhance synergies and take advantage of existing administrative or budgetary arrangements, or if necessary, as a new stand-alone multilateral instrument;**
- **The scientific bodies of the MEAs, progressive and responsible companies and industry associations should repeatedly highlight the benefits of the GMTS idea for addressing the systemic challenges behind pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate change so that the idea is mainstreamed at the intergovernmental and national levels;**

Contact and additional information

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Webpage for the GMTS idea: https://www.globalchemicaltransparency.org/