Summary of North American Accomplishments and Programs in Support of SAICM

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Preface

Since 1994, Canada, Mexico and the United States have collaborated to protect the environment, including by promoting the sound management of chemicals under the auspices of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) of North America.

The Sound Management of Chemicals (SMOC) program makes the CEC a hub for information on chemicals and their management and is a forum for the three countries to undertake initiatives in support of international objectives and commitments. The table contained in this report describes efforts made by the CEC to attain the overall objective of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM): by 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment. In the table, CEC activities are sorted using the 20 SAICM indicators approved at the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM). The indicators are organized by the five SAICM goals: risk reduction; knowledge and information; governance; capacity-building and technical cooperation; and illegal international traffic.

On a continental level, the CEC's SMOC Working Group has focused its efforts on persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances such as DDT, lindane and chlordane, as well as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), flame retardants, dioxins and furans and mercury. The Group has also worked to improve the compatibility and comparability of each country's databases of commercial chemicals and has provided technical support to Mexico as it completes its own chemicals inventory. The CEC also supports environmental monitoring and assessment programs in all three countries, generating comparable data with a view to providing a North American picture of levels and trends of these chemicals in the environment. The CEC's North American Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR) project promotes public access to PRTR data and aims to improve understanding of the sources and management of pollutants of mutual concern. Through its North American Working Group on Environmental Enforcement and Compliance, the CEC has developed projects to guide the environmentally sound management and tracking of imports and exports of hazardous waste.

Progress on UN SAICM Indicators Regionally, Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America

(As applied to Canada, Mexico, and the United States)*

*The appendix of this report contains guidance for regional data collection and/or monitoring for each of the 20 indicators.

1. Risk reduction		
	Indicator	**Regional Efforts**
1.	Implementation of agreed chemicals management tools	I. Efforts continue on implementing compatible approaches for identifying and tracking chemicals in commerce in North America. Compatible chemical inventories will support more coordinated and effective risk management of substances of mutual interest. One of the results of this effort has been the development of a National Chemicals Inventory for Mexico. II. Coordinated risk reduction strategies seek to reduce exposure to chemicals of mutual concern. There has been a focus on inventory development and information sharing regarding polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), dioxins, furans and hexachlorobenzene, lindane, and mercury. III. The SMOC Working Group has supported the creation of monitoring sites for Proname, dioxins and furans, and mercury in Mexico. IV. The North American Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (NA PRTR) brings together PRTR data collected by the Canadian, Mexican, and US governments. The data are published in the CEC's Taking Stock report and an online database (*Taking Stock* Online). The NA PRTR project has contributed to the establishment of the Mexican PRTR. Collaboration between the NA PRTR and the three North American PRTR programs has resulted in enhanced comparability and quality of reported data.
2.	Mechanisms to address key categories of chemicals	The CEC has made significant efforts to reduce the risk posed to human health and the environment by chemicals of mutual interest. Through the priority area of Healthy Communities and Ecosystems, specific activities have been implemented by the Sound Management of Chemicals Working Group (SMOC WG). There have been North American Regional Action Plans (NARAPs) for environmental monitoring and assessment, PCB, DDT, mercury, lindane, chlordane, and dioxins, furans and hexachlorobenzene, as well as targeted strategies to develop and execute risk reduction and risk management actions.

		Risk reduction efforts are presently underway for the following chemicals: • polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) • dioxins/furans/hexachlorobenzene (DFHCB) • lindane and other hexachlorocyclohexane isomers • mercury
3.	Hazardous waste management arrangements	Through its North American Working Group on Environmental Enforcement and Compliance Cooperation, the CEC has developed projects to guide the environmentally sound management and tracking of imports and exports of hazardous waste. For example, an electronic tracking system is under development for transboundary movements of hazardous waste and hazardous recyclable materials. Under this system, governments will be able to exchange export notices and import consent information electronically.
4.	Engagement in activities that result in monitoring data on selected environmental and human health priority substances	The Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Standing Committee has provided funding, technical support and training to increase capacity in Mexico for environmental monitoring, biomonitoring and assessment, and to monitor substances of mutual interest. In addition, there has been a focus on integrating quality assurance into monitoring processes in Mexico to increase reliability and comparability of data produced by Mexican monitoring sites and laboratories.
5.	Mechanisms in place for setting priorities for risk reduction	The CEC works with stakeholders to select chemicals and categories of chemicals to be addressed under its initiatives, including North American Regional Action Plans (NARAPs) and targeted strategies to develop and execute risk reduction and risk management actions (for further information on activities under the SMOC WG see Indicator 15.)

2. Knowledge and information

	Indicator	Regional Efforts
6.	Information according to internationally harmonized standards	***N/A***
7.	Specific strategies in place for communicating	The CEC supports efforts to improve the environmental health of vulnerable communities in North America.

	information on the risks associated with chemicals to vulnerable groups	Building on existing tools and information focused on particularly vulnerable populations, such as children and indigenous communities, a project is underway to develop a framework document identifying potential health risks and the mitigation actions that can be taken by individuals and decision makers. Another component of the project will inform the public about air quality conditions that can impact human health. The project, focused particularly on Alaskan native populations and other indigenous communities in North America, promotes increased awareness of environmental health risks among all stakeholders, including the most vulnerable communities, in the pursuit of community-based initiatives to reduce risks from and exposure to environmental pollution.
8.	Research programs	***N/A***
9.	Websites that provide information to stakeholders	Commission for Environmental Cooperation CEC-Public Engagement and Transparency CEC-Healthy Communities and Ecosystems Priority CEC-Pollutants and Health: A North American Agenda for Chemicals Management

3. Governance

	Indicator	Regional Efforts
10.	Commitment to implementation of the Strategic Approach	Through the CEC, the three countries in North America have been committed to the sound management of chemicals since 1995, supporting regional implementation of domestic and international priorities, including SAICM. For example, at public meetings, the SAICM secretariat has been invited to participate and provide information on SAICM implementation. This commitment continues today. The CEC Strategic Plan for 2010–2015 includes a priority on Healthy Communities and Ecosystems with a strategic objective of "Enhanced regional approach to the sound managements of chemicals" which focuses on compatible approaches for identifying and tracking chemicals, risk reduction and regional monitoring. The CEC's SMOC WG has a strategic plan. Every three years, the SMOC WG reports back to the CEC Council on progress made and to garner feedback on the three interrelated core work areas set forth in the strategic plan. These three core areas are: 1. Establishing compatible approaches for identifying and tracking chemicals in commerce in North America; 2. Implementing risk reduction strategies to reduce the exposure of North Americans and their environments to

		chemicals of mutual concern; and 3. Using a regional monitoring approach for health and environment to support risk reduction strategies, including identification of priorities, assurance of comparable data and monitoring for results.
11.	Multi-stakeholder coordinating mechanism	Public engagement and transparency are key features of the CEC mandate. There are guidelines for distributing information and for carrying out public education and consultation activities via the three entities comprising the CEC: the Secretariat, the Council, and Joint Public Advisory Committee. The SMOC Working Group has convened public meetings such as the CEC Chemicals Management Forum (2012) and technical workshops where stakeholders have been able to participate and provide input and feedback on the chemicals management agenda.
12.	Mechanisms to implement key international chemicals priorities	The CEC implements actions as specified in the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation, Relevant outcomes have been shared in other international fora, including UNEP's chemicals management programs and chemical-related multilateral agreements and conventions (e.g., Minamata Convention on Mercury, Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions) and the OECD Chemicals Committee and its working group on pesticides.

4. Capacity-building and technical cooperation

	Indicator	Regional Efforts
13.	Providing resources (financial and in-kind) to assist capacity-building and technical cooperation with other countries	While the CEC does not provide resources for capacity-building and technical cooperation outside of North America, over the years, many non-North American countries have benefitted from technical workshops and training opportunities facilitated or sponsored by the CEC. Central and South American countries have participated in SMOC workshops regarding dioxins, furans and hexachlorobenzene, DDT and mercury, and the CEC has provided experts and sponsored Mexico in transferring information on DDT-free pest management to African countries.
14.	Identification and prioritization of capacity-building needs for the sound management of chemicals	N/A
15.	Engagement in regional	The SMOC initiative was launched by a CEC Council resolution adopted in 1995 with a view to addressing the risks to human health

	cooperation on issues relating to the sound management of chemicals	and the environment in North America posed by chemicals of mutual interest. The SMOC WG was established to oversee development and implementation of the initiative. In 2011, the CEC published its Strategic Plan for 2010–2015, outlining three priority areas. The Sound Management of Chemicals is an objective under the Healthy Communities and Ecosystems priority. The following are core areas of work: • Approaches for Identifying and Tracking Chemicals in Commerce in North America • Risk Reduction Strategies to Reduce the Exposure to Chemicals of Mutual Concern • Environmental Monitoring and Assessment of Chemicals of Mutual Concern Prior to 2006, efforts of the SMOC WG focused on actions for eliminating use of the pesticides chlordane and DDT in North America. The PCB NARAP focused on restricting PCBs to use in existing electrical transformers and capacitors and promoting proper storage for end-of-life PCBs. Information gathered during the development of the CEC's *NARAP for Lindane and Other Hexachlorocyclohexane Isomers* assisted Mexico in preparing a profile on lindane to support its nomination to the Stockholm Convention. Efforts of the SMOC WG have contributed to a reduction of mercury emissions to air and a decrease or phase-out of the use of mercury in products and processes in the North American region. The SMOC WG has supported the development of inventories for substances, including dioxins/furans/hexachlorobenzene (DFHCBs) and mercury, to assist in implementing regional risk reduction strategies. Further outcomes obtained through regional efforts under the SMOC WG include the following: • Better understanding of dioxin and furan emission sources and routes of exposure in North America; • Training workshops in Mexico on ecological and human health risk assessment for DFHCBs; • Reduction of mercury in hospitals in Mexico City; • Finalization of a report on mercury in the marketplace in Mexico; • Completion of a report on mercury in Lake Zapotlán, Mexico; • Studies in Mexico evaluating lindane levels in commercial cow's milk and in human blood; • A trilateral biomonitoring workshop; • A preliminary inventory of PBDEs in Mexico; • Completion of reports on the status of PCBs and DDT in North America; • Development of processes to enhance the comparability of

		monitoring and emissions data; • Identification of index and satellite monitoring sites for Mexico's National Monitoring Program; • Enhanced outreach and dissemination of SMOC-related information to stakeholders; and • SMOC-related technical meetings and capacity building workshops, with participation from representatives of the public and private sectors, academia, and NGOs.
16.	Development assistance programs, including the sound management of chemicals	N/A
17.	Projects supported by the Strategic Approach's Quick Start Programme Trust Fund	N/A
18.	Sound management of chemicals projects supported by other sources of funding (not Quick Start Programme funding)	N/A
5. Illegal international traffic		
	Indicator	**Regional Efforts**
19.	Mechanisms [instituted] to prevent illegal traffic in toxic, hazardous and severely restricted chemicals	***N/A***
20.	Mechanisms [instituted] to prevent illegal traffic in hazardous waste	The CEC provides a forum for Canada, Mexico and the United States to share information and expertise in cooperative efforts to curb illegal international trade in environmentally regulated materials. Under this umbrella, areas of mutual interest include trade in electronic wastes, hazardous wastes and hazardous recyclables, ozone-depleting substances, and engines that do not meet required emission standards. As part of the North American Working Group on Environmental Enforcement and Compliance Cooperation, the national enforcement

		agencies have adopted proactive approaches aimed at anticipating, disrupting, dismantling and deterring illegal trade in an effective and targeted manner.

Appendix – UN SAICM Indicator Guidelines

The following table of 20 indicators includes guidance for regional data collection and/or monitoring.

	Indicator	**Preliminary Guidance** ***[The guidance for each indicator needs to be complemented according to the comments provided below and in the overall guidance contained in Annex III, chapter I, of the report on the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management.]*** [1]
Risk reduction		
1.	Number of countries (and organizations) implementing agreed chemicals management tools	*Information collected should take into account implementation of recognized tools prepared by participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals* (IOMC), *e.g., the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, guidance for establishing pollutant release and transfer registries and product stewardship programs in industry. Tools would include those for pollution prevention.* *This indicator should include tools to determine the chemicals used in the country, such as inventories, pesticide registration systems, Customs information systems, etc.* *For nongovernmental organizations, the indicator should also allow reporting on organization specific inventories.* *The guidance should include a specific list of tools that will be used for reporting, with the ability to provide additional information on other specific tools.*
2.	Number of countries (and organizations) with mechanisms to address key categories of chemicals	*Countries and organizations could report on the mechanisms that they have in place to address categories of chemicals that have been designated as priorities based on a national/organizational prioritization process.* *Mechanisms to be considered include:* • *Legislation* • *Regulations* • *Programs* • *Agreements*
3.	Number of countries (and	*Information collected should take into account*

[1] Conveniently reproduced and updated in the International Council of Chemical Associations. 2012. ICCA 2nd Update Report for the UN SAICM Implementation Indicators, August. See <http://www.icca-chem.org/ICCADocs/120805_FINAL%20APPROVED_2nd_Update_SAICM_Indicators.pdf >

	organizations) with hazardous waste management arrangements	*systems for the environmentally sound management of waste:* • *Waste Inventories* • *Legislation* • *Policies* • *Permit systems*
4.	Number of countries (and organizations) engaged in activities that result in monitoring data on selected environmental and human health priority substances	*Information collected should take into account environmental and biomonitoring efforts:* • *Environmental monitoring* • *Human biomonitoring* • *Monitoring of human poisonings* • *Chemical accidents* *Countries and organizations are encouraged to report data for these selected pollutants*
5.	Number of countries (and organizations) having mechanisms in place for setting priorities for risk reduction	*Information collected should take into account:* • *Science-based risk assessment activities* • *Risk management activities, including pollution prevention activities*

Knowledge and information		
6.	Number of countries (and organizations) providing information according to internationally harmonized standards	*Information collected should take into account:* • *Implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS)* • *Labeling according to national guidelines and availability of harmonized hazard information* *Regional initiatives (should be reported on by regional organizations)*
7.	Number of countries (and organizations) that have specific strategies in place for communicating information on the risks associated with chemicals to vulnerable groups	*Information collected should include consultative processes and training directed at vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly and migrant workers, and take into consideration social and economic conditions, when possible*
8.	Number of countries (and organizations) with research programs	*Information collected should include the type of research being funded:* • *Human health assessment* • *Environmental assessment* • *Research on safer alternatives* • *Research on cleaner production*
9.	Number of countries (and organizations) with websites that provide information to stakeholders	*Information collected should include websites providing relevant information*

Governance		
10.	Number of countries (and organizations) that have committed themselves to implementation of the Strategic Approach	*A list of possible mechanisms to show such commitment should be included. Examples to consider are: implementation plans for the Strategic Approach, national policies, programs, resolutions of boards of directors or other governing bodies, etc.*
11.	Number of countries (and organizations) with multi-stakeholder coordinating mechanism	*Information collected should include the types of stakeholders involved:* *Labor, health, public sector, private sector, scientific community, etc.*
12.	Number of countries (and organizations) with mechanisms to implement key international chemicals priorities	*Information collected should include the list of multilateral environment agreements, alongside other regional agreements or international instruments*
Capacity-building and technical cooperation		
13.	Number of countries (and organizations) providing resources (financial and in-kind) to assist capacity-building and technical cooperation with other countries	*Information collected should include assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition*
14.	Number of countries (and organizations) that have identified and prioritized their capacity-building needs for the sound management of chemicals	*Information collected should focus on plans that are publicly available*
15.	Number of countries (and organizations) engaged in regional cooperation on issues relating to the sound management of chemicals	*Information collected should include regional cooperation on risk reduction, knowledge and information, governance, capacity-building and illegal international traffic*
16.	Number of countries where development assistance programs include the sound management of chemicals	*This should feature yes/no responses from donor and recipient countries*
17.	Number of countries (and organizations) with projects supported by the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund	*Report number of projects and total amount of funds on the Quick Start Programme projects. Recommend using the data from the Quick Start Programme Executive Board reports rather than collecting the information from the countries*
18.	Number of countries (and organizations) with sound management of chemicals projects	*Information collected should include a list of institutions providing the support for existing projects; this should include the private and not-*

	supported by other sources of funding (not Quick Start Programme funding)	*for-profit sectors*
Illegal international traffic		
19.	Number of countries having instituted mechanisms to prevent illegal traffic in toxic, hazardous and severely restricted chemicals	*Information collected should include a list of mechanisms, such as legislation, regulations, programs, permits, etc.* *Governments are encouraged to report the number of incidents of illegal traffic and to provide information on challenges encountered in efforts to prevent illegal international traffic*
20.	Number of countries having instituted mechanisms to prevent illegal traffic in hazardous waste	*Information collected should include a list of mechanisms, such as legislation, regulations, programs, permits*