

**COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE TRANSPORT OF  
DANGEROUS GOODS AND ON THE GLOBALLY  
HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION  
AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS**

**Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally  
Harmonized System of Classification  
and Labelling of Chemicals**

Ninth session, 11-13 July 2005  
Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GHS

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat reproduces hereafter the document on hazard characteristics that will be discussed by the OEWG4 during the fourth session of the meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, which will be held in Geneva from 4 to 8 July 2005.



**BC**

**UNEP/CHW/OEWG/4/14**



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**Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention  
on the Control of Transboundary Movements of  
Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal**

Fourth session

Geneva, 4–8 July 2005

Item 5 (m) of the provisional agenda\*

**Implementation of the decisions adopted by the Conference  
of the Parties at its seventh meeting: work on hazard  
characteristics: section II (decision VII/17)**

## **Work on hazard characteristics (section II of decision VII/17)**

### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. At its seventh meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted decision VII/17 on the work on hazard characteristics, in which, among other things, it requested the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention to establish a working relationship with the United Nations Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals with a view to exploring possible links between the work undertaken in the context of the Basel Convention on hazard characteristics and the elements of the globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals, including considerations of their respective work programmes to identify inconsistencies, discrepancies or shortcomings with a view to proposing appropriate actions. It also requested the Secretariat to present to the Open-ended Working Group, at its fourth session, possible options for establishing a working relationship with the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.

#### **II. Implementation**

2. The Secretariat attended the eighth session of the Subcommittee in December 2004 and reported to it on progress in the work on hazard characteristics under the Basel Convention and informed it of the mandate given by the Conference of the Parties to the Open-ended Working Group to establish a working relationship with the Subcommittee with a view to exploring possible links between the work undertaken in the context of the Basel Convention on hazard characteristics and the elements of the globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals, including consideration of their respective work programmes to identify inconsistencies, discrepancies or shortcomings with a view to proposing appropriate action. The chair of the Subcommittee indicated that this issue would be included in the work programme of the Subcommittee for the following biennium and that a correspondence group would be set up for cooperation with the Basel Convention.

3. The Open-ended Working Group may wish to form a correspondence group consisting of a small number of interested Parties and signatories to work intersessionally with the correspondence group to

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\* UNEP/CHW/OEWG/4/1.

be established by the Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals on hazard characteristics. The proposed terms of reference of the correspondence group is contained in the annex to the proposed draft decision below.

### **III. Proposed action**

4. The Open-ended Working Group may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

*The Open-ended Working Group*

1. *Welcomes* the establishment of a working relationship between itself and the United Nations Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, on hazard characteristics and the elements of the globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals;

2. *Agrees* to establish a correspondence group and adopts the terms of reference of the correspondence group as contained in the annex to the present decision;

3. *Invites* Parties and others to inform the Secretariat by 31 August 2005 of their interest in joining the correspondence group;

4. *Requests* the Secretariat to report regularly on the outcome of the work of the correspondence group to the Conference of the Parties through the Open-ended Working Group.

#### **Annex**

#### **Proposed terms of reference of the correspondence group on hazard characteristics set up under the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention**

The correspondence group on hazard characteristics set up under the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention shall have the following tasks:

(a) To work intersessionally, preferably through electronic means, with a view to undertaking consultations, principally with the United Nations Subcommittee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System on Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, on the preparation of guidelines on hazard characteristic and on the revision of such guidelines adopted by the Conference of the Parties;

(b) To identify inconsistencies, discrepancies or shortcomings of hazard classification used or developed internationally with a view to recommending appropriate action to the Conference of the Parties;

(c) To work towards harmonization of hazard classification systems internationally to assist Parties in the implementation of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and to improve consistency at the international level on the use of classification systems for wastes and chemicals;

(d) To make regular reports on progress in its work to the Open-Ended Working Group on a regular basis.

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