

Terms of Reference of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Industrial and Chemical Accidents

General Purpose of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group

The Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Industrial and Chemical Accidents is an informal forum that brings together international organizations and institutions (the agencies) involved in the prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial and chemical accidents. The Group aims to:

- Strengthen international cooperation for improving the prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial and chemical accidents;
- Improve the use of resources and avoid potential duplication of work across the agencies;
- Facilitate understanding of and coordination with the programmes of each agency;
- Carry a common message to the international community on the importance of the prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial and chemical accidents as being among the key elements associated with the sound management of chemicals.

Through this Group, cooperation and joint efforts should help to increase the impact of the agencies' work for enhancing national capacities in the prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial and chemical accidents.

Objectives of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group

The objectives of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group are to:

- Assure coherence between the programmes of the agencies;
- Exchange information about priorities, ongoing and planned activities and projects, as well as about other relevant developments, during and between the Group's meetings;
- Identify synergies and opportunities for cooperation among the agencies, resulting possibly in the design and implementation of joint projects and activities;
- Whenever possible, undertake jointly projects and activities in the field of industrial and chemical accidents prevention, preparedness and response, in particular when the regional and substantive coverage of activities match. This could be done, for example, by organizing relevant events jointly, in a coordinated manner or back-to-back with those of other organizations;
- Carry common messages at the global level in order to contribute effectively to advancing the field of industrial and chemical accidents prevention, preparedness and response, in particular by providing inputs and making presentations to global forums and events, including those organized by UNEP/SAICM, UNISDR and others;
- Promote and raise awareness of each other's reference products, including guidance materials and tools, to enhance the visibility of the work of the agencies.

Functioning of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group

The work and meetings of the Group are needs-driven. The Group usually meets annually, in spring (April or May). Meetings of the Group are organized, chaired and followed-up to by one of the agencies within the network. The chairing agency is also responsible for maintaining and updating the network mailing list and for facilitating communication in between meetings, including possibly through the organization of teleconferences, if needed, to address specific cooperation areas. Participation in the Group is open to international organizations having a programme on industrial/chemical accidents. Other agencies may be invited on an ad-hoc basis, if there is a need for discussing specific topics.