



KEY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

WGI Special Session: Seminar on Good Practices and Lessons Learned in
Implementing the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention (3-4 Feb. 2022)

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Good practices and lessons learned presented at the seminar were welcomed → Countries invited to consider their application in improving implementation of or accession to Conv.
2. Countries should continue reporting good practices and lessons learned through their implementation reports to strengthen the knowledge base
3. WGI, in cooperation with the secretariat, is encouraged to continue organizing such seminars on a needs-driven basis
4. Parties and committed countries are encouraged to request assistance from the secretariat to assist them in implementing the Convention and understanding&applying good practices
5. Establishment of an interactive network is recommended for the exchange of information and sharing experience about the implementation of the Convention
6. Development of a UNECE Guide on Good Practices in Implementing the Industrial Accidents Convention is recommended

SESSION 1: PREVENTION OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

1. Integration of technological disaster risks into national & local DRR strategies and policies under the Sendai Framework provides a strong basis for the prevention of ind. accidents and mitigation of their effects, as well as transboundary considerations
2. More extreme weather events due to climate change (e.g. extreme precipitation, heavy storms) can pose serious risks to safety at industrial facilities and cause Natech events (techn. acc. triggered by nat. hazards)
3. Countries need to take action to adapt to climate change in order to reduce the risk of the occurrence and intensity of natural hazard events, to prevent Natech accidents and to mitigate their consequences (in line with CoP decisions 2020/1 on strengthening tailings safety & 2020/2 on strengthening implementation)
4. Lack of good practices around climate change and Natech accident prevention observed → Natech seminar at CoP-12 was welcomed in this regard
5. Cybersecurity is a growing concern for the safe management of industrial facilities → all countries should review existing knowledge and improve their understanding of cyber risks
6. Prevention is strongly linked with the identification and notification of hazardous activities in the first place, without which preventive measures in a transboundary context cannot be effective

SESSION 2: IDENTIFICATION AND NOTIFICATION OF HAZARDOUS ACTIVITIES

1. Challenges in implementing Article 4 of the Convention, including the application of the Guidelines to facilitate the identification of hazardous activities (location criteria)
2. Recommended that WGI collect further good practices and lessons learned on identification and notification of HA, compile these into a guide and organize a further exchange of experiences
3. Use of existing guidelines and tools (e.g. UNECE Safety Guidelines for TMFs and TMF Methodology) recommended to identify TMFs (incl. active/inactive TMFs) and improve TMF safety
4. Consider the update of the location criteria, in relation to TMFs for the water path
5. Importance of notifying all potentially affected countries about all types of HA (incl. TMFs) recognized → Use of notification template under the Convention recommended
6. Voluntary extension of the application of the Convention (e.g. to pipelines) by some countries (e.g. Belarus or Switzerland) acknowledged → other countries invited to consider doing the same
7. Countries invited to provide further information on their HA (e.g. names, addresses and/or the location) in their implementation reports to improve “Understanding disaster risk” (Priority I of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030)

SESSION 3: DECISION-MAKING ON SITING AND LAND-USE PLANNING

1. Lack of land-use planning and siting laws and policies that take transboundary issues into account
2. Countries are encouraged to further improve the integration of transboundary aspects into their national policies and legislation
3. Countries are encouraged to review and draw on the examples in the UNECE/EIB “Information Repository of Good Practices and Lessons Learned in Land-Use Planning and Industrial Safety” when developing their own procedures
4. Importance of adequate siting and land-use planning decisions and with participation of the public was stressed to mitigate the effects of industrial accidents for the population and the environment, including in a transboundary context
5. Increasingly important role of land-use planning for preventing industrial accidents
6. Countries are encouraged to review existing guidelines on land-use planning and industrial accident prevention and develop new and update existing ones

SESSION 4: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

1. Usefulness of sharing further good practices and lessons learned in planning joint actions was acknowledged to prevent the occurrence, containment and liquidation of the negative consequences of industrial accidents with transboundary effects
2. Importance of having early warning systems in case of an emergency
3. Parties and other reporting countries are encouraged to conduct joint exercises on preparedness and response, including through practicing their procedures for the notification of industrial accidents to affected countries, mutual assistance and command and control structures
4. Countries are encouraged to consider the identified needs in developing contingency plans for their own countries and joint contingency plans with neighbouring and riparian countries.
5. Development of joint agreements is encouraged between countries sharing the same river basin or border

SESSION 4: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

6. Parties and beneficiary countries of the Assistance and Cooperation Programme with hazardous activities should further strengthen the development and implementation of external contingency plans – harmonized or joint – in cooperation with neighbouring countries
7. Existing contingency plans should be finalized and related agreements drafted (e.g. along the Danube Delta), updated and regularly reviewed. Cooperation and support under existing mechanisms such as the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention, the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism, and river basin organizations such as ICPDR can support and strengthen countries' efforts.
8. Countries are encouraged to apply the UNECE Checklist for Contingency Planning for Accidents Affecting Transboundary Waters
9. Countries need to further explore and strengthen the interlinkages between industrial safety and water laws and policies and how national authorities and agencies can better cooperate and coordinate
10. Complexity and versatility of the mutual assistance process was noted → Mutual assistance procedures to be regularly reviewed and tested despite the pandemic is encouraged

SESSION 5: SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

1. Seminar itself provided scientific and technical cooperation and exchange of information across countries
2. Importance of countries and international organizations in facilitating activities and exchanges across countries was recognized to ensure scientific and technical cooperation and the exchange of information
3. Bi- and multilateral working groups and exercises provide a means to exchange information, cooperate, enhance the knowledge base and build a common safety culture
4. Given good practices should be maintained to ensure cooperation and information exchange and that further initiatives should be developed, particularly to bring relevant countries together in regions and subregions, at shared river basins and at borders

SESSION 6: INFORMATION TO AND PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

1. Parties and other reporting countries are encouraged to share further good practices (including tools and guidance) on access to information about hazardous activities, equal public participation in a transboundary context and equal access to administrative and judicial procedures in a transboundary context through their implementation reports
2. Parties should consider whether they need to take additional steps to guarantee the same level of access to information to the public at the other side of the border that may be affected by a hazardous activity within its jurisdiction, e.g. by using electronic tools, harmonizing techniques, models and data, and making available financing for translations, and actively disseminating information to neighbouring countries.
3. Parties and beneficiary countries under the Convention's Assistance and Cooperation Programme that do not yet have equal participation rights for persons, likely to be affected by hazardous activities in neighbouring countries, are encouraged to study these good practices, derive inspiration from them and develop adequate procedures and treatment for public participation. Institutionalizing the involvement of the public and NGOs creates a partnership.

SESSION 6: INFORMATION TO AND PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

4. Countries did not report on any laws or policies that ensure transboundary access to administrative and judicial proceedings within their national implementation reports under the Convention. In addition, no guidance on this aspect exists under the Convention.
5. Countries are encouraged to review their laws and policies for this obligation under the Convention and report on it to the secretariat - in doing so, competent authorities should liaise with other relevant authorities and pursue a regular dialogue
6. UNECE secretariat is recommended to liaise with other MEA secretariats that work in the field of the promotion of equal rights of access to information, participation and access to administrative or judicial procedures in a transboundary context