

UPDATE ON UNECE CONVENTION ON THE TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

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10th Seveso Expert Group Meeting, 13 June 2023

OVERVIEW

1. UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention
2. CoP-12
3. Activities under 2023-24 workplan
 - (a) Facilitation of implementation
 - (b) Assistance and Cooperation Programme
 - (c) Servicing intergovernmental bodies and expert groups
 - (d) Other workplan activities
4. Publications



UNECE INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS CONVENTION

- Negotiated following the Sandoz chemical accident at Schweizerhalle in 1986
- Adopted in 1992, in force since 2000
- 42 Parties in the UNECE region, incl. EU and 25 of its Member States; 2 signatories (Canada and USA)
- Designed to protect people and the environment against industrial accidents by preventing, preparing for and responding to accidents
- Covers Natech (natural-hazard triggered technological events)
- Focus on transboundary cooperation



Sandoz spill,
Schweizerhalle,
Switzerland (1986)





12TH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE
PARTIES (COP-12), GENEVA, 29 NOVEMBER - 01
DECEMBER 2022

KEY OUTCOMES

- Welcomed **Ukraine** as the newest (42nd) Party to the Convention
- Marked **30th year anniversary of the Convention's** signing
- Elected officers and other members of the **Bureau**
- Adopted decision 2022/1 on **strengthening Natech risk management** in the ECE region and beyond
- Endorsed the progress report on the implementation of **assistance activities in 2021-2022**
- Endorsed the **Road map for action to strengthen mine tailings safety** within and beyond the ECE region
- Took note with appreciation of the *Report on risk assessment for industrial accident prevention: Overview of risk assessment methods* and the *Report on risk assessment for industrial accident prevention: Selected case studies and available software tools* and requested the secretariat to publish the **two risk assessment reports** as a single publication in the biennium 2023-2024
- Adopted the **workplan and resource requirements for the Convention for 2023-2024**

Presentations and conclusions available at [UNECE webpage](#)

DECISION 2022/1 ON
STRENGTHENING
NATECH RISK
MANAGEMENT IN THE
ECE REGION AND
BEYOND

- Adopted following the jointly organized **UNECE-OECD Seminar on effective management of technological risks of accidents triggered by natural hazards**
- Urges Parties to **strengthen cooperation** in understanding, preventing and mitigating the effects of Natech events, including those with transboundary causes or consequences, including in the light of increasing Natech risk as a result of climate change
- Requests to **integrate Natech in the climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction policies**, including through better inter-institutional cooperation and by including Natech in their risk assessments, land-use planning and decision-making on siting and emergency plans
- Encourages countries to **share relevant data on Natech events** in the eNatech database, operated and serviced by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, alongside inclusion of Natech events in the reporting on identification and notification of hazardous activities under the implementation of the Convention
- Contains **measures** for Parties **to**, among others, **integrate Natech risk** into industrial safety, disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation policies

An aerial photograph showing a large-scale environmental incident. A massive spill of orange-brown, turbid water has inundated a lush green field. In the background, a large, dark, conical structure, likely a mine tailings dam, is visible. The water's reflection is clearly seen on the surface of the dam. The overall scene depicts a significant breach in industrial safety and environmental protection.

ROAD MAP FOR ACTION TO STRENGTHEN MINE TAILINGS SAFETY WITHIN AND BEYOND THE ECE REGION

- ✓ Roadmap of actions that countries should take to step up mine tailings safety, including to address tailings management facility risks through policy and governance and to prevent accidental water pollution
- ✓ Builds on guidelines, hazard and risk methodologies, tools and projects previously developed under the Convention to support countries in preventing failures at tailings management facilities
- ✓ Calls upon Parties to use the roadmap to ensure industrial safety and reduce the risks of technological disasters at existing and new tailings facilities



ACTIVITIES UNDER 2023-24 WORKPLAN

**(A) FACILITATION OF
IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE
CONVENTION**

- **Overview of risk assessment methodologies**
- **Policy/governance linkages with Sendai Framework and SDGs**
- **Guidance on Natech risk management**
- **Interactive network on implementation**
- **Guide of good practices in implementation**
- **Land-use planning information repository**
- **TMF safety – online toolkit and training**
- **Preventing and mitigating accidental water pollution**
- **Risk management of hazardous substances, such as ammonium nitrate, and related accident prevention, preparedness and response**

(B) ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION PROGRAMME

- **Needs of beneficiary countries raised at COP-12:**
 - ✓ **Country missions** to support implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Approach;
 - ✓ **Alignment of national legislation** with the Convention;
 - ✓ Strengthening governance and policies on industrial safety, e.g. through **National Policy Dialogues for Industrial Safety** and **Inter-Institutional Working Groups on Tailings Safety and Prevention of Accidental Water Pollution**;
 - ✓ Ensuring the **prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial/tailings accidents, including** to prevent accidental water pollution and natural hazards triggering technological disasters (**Natech events**), to which the risks are being exacerbated by climate change;
 - ✓ **Transboundary cooperation**, joint exercises and contingency planning, including in transboundary river basins;
 - ✓ **Support to accession processes** and in follow-up to accession;
 - ✓ Strengthening preparedness for attacks and accidents at industrial sites in **Ukraine**; and
 - ✓ Further **integration of industrial accidents risk management in overall DRR strategies, policies and plans**

PLANNED ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

- Support to the National Policy Dialogue (NPD) for Industrial Safety in **Serbia** in 2023, incl. by:
 - Supporting the holding of NPD Steering Committee meetings
 - Holding a Stakeholder Consultation
 - Developing the National Programme on Industrial Safety
- Support to **Georgia** (the only non-Party in Eastern Europe & Caucasus) following its interest in accession to & enhanced implementation of the Convention
- Support to **Ukraine** (the newest Party to the Convention) in partnership with EIB
- Continued activities to strengthen tailings safety in **Central Asia** until end-2023



First NPD meeting, March 2022, Belgrade

ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THE 2023-2024 WORKPLAN WHICH ARE LACKING FUNDING FOR THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

- **Country missions** to Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Ukraine to support implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Approach

- **Projects in the different sub-regions:**

South-Eastern Europe:

- **NPDs** (continuity in Serbia and study visits from other countries and/or launch in other regions)
- Improving understanding and **governance of technological risks** in South-Eastern Europe

Central Asia:

- **Syr Darya Project (Phase II)**, notably development of the joint measures to prevent and respond to pollution in the Syr Darya River basin / Supporting **Central Asian countries'** efforts to **strengthen policies and governance for the safety of TMFs**, including to integrate climate change impacts into Natech risk management
- **Subregional workshop on land-use planning and industrial safety** for Central Asia

Eastern Europe & Caucasus:

- **Strengthening industrial safety, disaster risk governance and management in Ukraine** to support implementation of the Industrial Accidents Convention
- **Danube Delta-II Project**
- Supporting countries of **Eastern Europe and the Caucasus** in their efforts **to prevent and mitigate accidental water pollution** from industrial hazardous activities

Projects across different regions:

- Integrating **technological disaster risk management into national DRR strategies** (following such initial support to Kyrgyzstan & Tajikistan): capacity development and development of a guide
- **NPDs for industrial safety in and across sub-regions**

**(C) SERVICING
INTERGOVERNMENTAL
BODIES/EXPERT
GROUPS**

- **CoP-13**
- **Bureau**
- **Working Group on Implementation**
- **Working Group on Development [currently not activated]**
- **Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents**

JOINT EXPERT GROUP: WATER & INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

- Focuses on Preventing Accidental Water Pollution and its Consequences
- Combining Integrated Water Resources Management with Industrial Safety
- Develops methodologies and checklists



Past

- Seminar on Emerging Risks in Accidental Water Pollution: Focus on Natural Hazard-Triggered Accidents, organized by Hungary, Budapest and online, 5 October 2022, with the support of Secretariat and financed by Germany
- JEG meeting, organized by Hungary, Budapest and online, 6 October 2022
- JEG Teleconference, online, 2 June 2023

Planned

- Organization of a workshop on preventing accidental water pollution and early warning and alert systems (2024)
- Organization of a JEG meeting (2024, back-to-back to the JEG seminar)
- Strengthening of cooperation with river basin commissions
- Development of a catalogue/web page for accidental water pollution events and good practices
- Organization of a global seminar on early warning and alert systems, in cooperation with WMO and UNDRR (tbc, 2025)

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND EXPERT MEETINGS

Working Group on Implementation

- Update of reporting template and guidance
- Review of implementation reports
- Oversight of and advice on assistance activities
- Monitoring of Strategic Approach: Self-Assessments and Action Plans
- Preparation of the Tenth report on the implementation of the Convention (2019–2022)

Bureau

- Oversight of Convention's implementation
- Preparation of CoP-13
- Encouraging Parties to provide resources for workplan

Conference of the Parties (end-Nov 2024, tbc)

(D) OTHER WORKPLAN ACTIVITIES

- **Outreach, communications, awareness-raising and strategic partnerships**
- **Industrial Accidents Notification System**
 - **Online connectivity test and consultation (envisaged in 2024)**
 - **Sub-regional tests by Parties**
 - **Upgrade of IAN system**
 - Lead and financing Parties tbd
- **General programme management**



PUBLICATIONS

ENVISAGED PUBLICATIONS

- **Risk assessment publication**
 - To provide an overview of risk assessment methodologies for industrial accident prevention
 - To share case studies of risk assessment methods and software available used within different countries
 - To be published by the end of 2023
- **Joint OECD/UN/JRC Guidance on Managing Natech Accident Risk**
 - To provide guidance on addressing Natech risks
 - To feature components of COP Decision 2022/I and the outcomes of the seminar
 - To be issued in 2024
- **Brochure on the Assistance and Cooperation Programme (no resources are currently pledged or available)**
 - To promote the Programme & explain the evolution of the Assistance Programme to the Assistance and Cooperation Programme
 - To take account of substantive developments over time (tailings activities, national policy dialogues, inter-institutional working groups, inclusion of Natech/tailings risks into the Programme's Strategic Approach, etc.)
 - To demonstrate the impact of assistance activities, including to incentivize accession by non-Parties
 - Timely:
 - ❖ The old brochure dates back to 2010
 - ❖ In time to celebrate the Programme's 20 years since its launch (in 2024 e.g. at COP-13)

The background image shows a coastal scene. In the foreground, there is a beach with some debris and rocks. The middle ground features a body of water with waves. In the background, there are hills with power lines and a large industrial facility with two prominent smokestacks. The sky is clear and blue.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?

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