



UNEP's action to meet the challenge of illegal trade in chemicals



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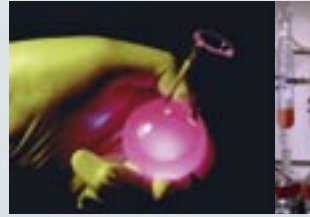
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The scope of the problem



Environmental crime is a big and increasingly lucrative business. Local and international crime syndicates earn an estimated US\$ 22-31 billion annually from illegal trade in “environmentally sensitive” commodities such as ozone-depleting substances (ODS), toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes and endangered species.

Illegal trade in these items

- ▶ directly threatens human health and the environment
- ▶ undermines the effectiveness of multilateral environmental agreements by circumventing rules and procedures agreed in international treaties
- ▶ results in revenue loss for governments
- ▶ also falls, in the current post-9/11 context, into the area of environmental security.

Illegal trade threatens the successes already achieved by countries to manage chemicals, and it undermines the evolving international framework for chemical management.

«Sustainable development depends on having the global capacity for the sound management of chemicals»

***Klaus Toepfer,
UNEP Executive Director***





The link with international chemical management

What is SAICM?

The Strategic Approach for International Chemical Management (SAICM) is a multisector and multi-stakeholder process, involving Governments, NGOs and IGOs from diverse sectors with an interest in chemical safety, including agriculture, environment, health, industry and labour. Its objective is to achieve, by 2020, that chemicals are produced and used in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.

Developing the SAICM Dimension

UNEP is a catalytic force in the UN system for global action on the environmentally sound management of hazardous chemicals. Since 1995 UNEP's Governing Council has endorsed the need for a strategic approach to managing chemicals. At its seventh Special Session in February 2002, the Council adopted Decision SS.VII/3 on a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), taking as a foundation for such an approach the Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action Beyond 2000 of the International Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS).

The Johannesburg Plan adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development set the goal that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.

UNEP provides the Secretariat for the SAICM process. To oversee planning, UNEP has brought together a broad range of partners, including members of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), UNDP and the World Bank.



SAICM and Illegal Trade

Illegal trade in chemicals was one of the issues discussed during the first and second sessions of the Preparatory Committee (SAICM PrepCom1 - Bangkok, 9-13 November 2003; and SAICM PrepCom2 - Nairobi, 4-8 October 2004). It is expected that the completed Strategy will include measures to prevent and detect illegal trafficking of chemicals and hazardous wastes.

UNEP hosts the secretariats and/or implementing arms of multilateral environmental agreements concerned with various aspects of international chemical management, including the [Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer](#), the [Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes](#), the [Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants \(POPs\)](#), and the [Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent \(PIC\) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides In International Trade](#) (jointly with the Food and Agriculture Organisation - FAO).

Illegal chemical trade is already an important implementation challenge for several of these treaties (Montreal, Basel) and it is emerging as a potential issue for the others.

UNEP'S RESPONSE

UNEP DTIE has a significant experience in bringing together partners to develop responses to the threats of illegal trade in chemicals which threatens chemical management. Through the work of several of its branches (Chemicals, Economics and Trade, OzonAction) DTIE addresses different aspects of this problem.

The Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE)

responds to UNEP's priorities by encouraging decision makers in government, local authorities and industry to develop and implement policies, strategies and practices that are cleaner and safer, make efficient use of natural resources, ensure environmentally sound management of chemicals, reduce pollution and risks for humans and the environment, enable implementation of conventions and international agreements, and incorporate environmental costs.

Combating Illegal Trade in Ozone Depleting Chemicals

Developing countries that operate under Article 5 of the Montreal Protocol began restricting the use of ozone-depleting substances (ODS) including CFCs starting in 1999.

The new restrictions can increase demand for black market ODS especially in countries that do not have the financial resources to use non-ODS substitutes. Therefore, illegal trade in ODS is a serious threat to Article 5 countries meeting phase out schedules.

DTIE's OzonAction Branch supports the phaseout of ODS in developing countries and countries with economies in transition to ensure the implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

Teams of the regionalized Compliance Assistance Programme are conducting these activities against illegal trade in ODS. With financial support from the Multilateral Fund, the Global Environment Facility and bilateral donors, OzonAction helps countries combat illegal trade in ODS through a wide range of actions:

► **Training customs officers and other enforcement officials involved in monitoring and control of ODS:**

OzonAction has trained around 2,000 customs officers in about 70 countries. This training allows monitoring and control of import/export licensing systems and other ODS regulations, collection of data and prevention of illegal trade.



This follows a train-the-trainer approach at the national level, involving national training centres. Customs training is delivered as part of a comprehensive package of assistance that includes linked regulatory measures. Effective training implies as a prerequisite the development of effective national legislation.

- ▶ Facilitating exchange of information on national experiences of customs
- ▶ Encouraging internal communication between ozone and customs organisations as well as between customs of neighbour countries
- ▶ Organising joint workshops for customs and ozone officers with participation of relevant international institutions (WCO, RILOs, Interpol, regional trade and political organisations). Projects financed by Sweden in South and Southeast Asia have pioneered this approach.
- ▶ Introducing illegal trade to regional trade and political organisations
- ▶ Promoting informal dialogues between several countries with common borders or trade zones that face problems of illegal trade in ODS. Several such dialogues have been facilitated in the Asia-Pacific region.
- ▶ Organising joint workshops with industry, customs and ozone officers
- ▶ Collecting and analyzing quantitative data on trade in ODS
- ▶ Establishing internet discussion fora for customs and ozone officers
- ▶ **Providing awareness raising and information support** through press outreach, publications for customs officers (including customs training manuals, on-the-job posters, information sheets), a web-based Inventory of Trade Names of Chemicals Controlled under the Montreal Protocol, and disseminating of information on reported cases of illegal trade

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