



a toxics-free future

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International SAICM Implementation Project (ISIP)

In 2010, in an effort to demonstrate SAICM implementation via IPEN Participating Organizations, IPEN launched an International SAICM Implementation Project, also known as ISIP. ISIP aims to mobilize resources for initial enabling activities pertaining to national priorities, in keeping with the work areas set out in the strategic objectives of section IV of the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy.

In particular, the ISIP supports the Governance objective of SAICM's Overarching Policy Strategy paragraph 26, which calls for enhanced "cooperation on the sound management of chemicals between Governments, the private sector and civil society at the national, regional and global levels."

In addition, ISIP builds on the 2008-2009 Global SAICM Outreach Campaign to raise awareness about SAICM and strengthen collaboration among the public interest, health and labor sectors.

ISIP Objectives

ISIP's four objectives include:

- Promoting the need for sound chemicals management
- Advancing National SAICM Implementation
- Promoting global SAICM implementation by global civil society
- Building capacity among NGOs developing countries and countries with economies in transition

Title of activity: Civil society and public interest NGO participation

NGO: "Greenwomen" Analytical Environmental Agency

Country: Kazakhstan

Date: November, 2010

Elements of SAICM Covered:

Include civil society representatives in Government committees formulating, carrying out and monitoring SAICM implementation plans, or useful inputs into the process where NGOs encounter barriers to their substantive direct participation, broad and meaningful participation of stakeholders, including women, at all levels in devising responses to chemicals management challenges and in regulatory and decision-making processes that relate to chemical safety (164, 206)

Description of Stockholm Convention or SAICM implementation-related policy processes that you have participated in or contributed to:

Kazakhstan participates in the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). The Ministry of Health (State Sanitary and Epidemiological Service, in particular) is responsible for implementation. The National Profile to Assess the

National Infrastructure for Management of Chemicals was prepared in 2006 with financial support of Switzerland and the European Union and with technical assistance of UNITAR.

The project of SAICM Quick Start Program for updating the National Profile to assess the potential for strategic approach and priorities was implemented in Kazakhstan in 2008 with the assistance of UNITAR. "Greenwomen" and other NGOs and representatives of civil society also participated in the assessment. The seminar, with discussions on outcomes and priorities for implementation of SAICM key provisions, was held in Astana on October 7, 2009.

Chemicals management issues are embodied in local laws covering sustainable development issues (Concept of Transition of Kazakhstan to Sustainable Development in 2007-2024; the Concept of Ecological Security of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2004-2015; "Environment Protection Program in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2008-2010," etc.). The program "Ecology in Kazakhstan for 2010-2020" was prepared in 2009. However, these documents don't reflect the complexity of chemical management issues which also require proper funding from budget and other financial sources.

The current legislation regulates the management of chemicals on almost all of their life cycle. However, there are still a lot of examples of unsafe production and use of chemicals. Many enterprises don't have a unified system of chemicals and industrial waste management (for example, classification, marking, storage and transportation) even though the regulatory framework and requirements exist. Of even greater concern is the lack of awareness on the harmful effects of many chemicals on human health and the environment; not only is the general public not aware, but neither are workers. The long-term contamination by existing industrial and household waste landfills (which don't meet any national or international requirements) and illegal waste dumping are other serious problems.

Kazakhstan has not yet developed a national plan for the SAICM implementation to address these issues. The development of a national plan requires involvement of the public and more effective action from the government. "Greenwomen" is a member of the Public Council attached to the Ministry of Environmental Protection. Unfortunately, this institute cannot influence significantly the promotion and implementation of SAICM in Kazakhstan.

Description of NGO positions, priorities and concerns with the process:

"Greenwomen" is an active member of the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN). Since 2002 "Greenwomen" has been involved in strengthening the environmental health movement in Kazakhstan and other countries of the Central Asia region by improving public participation and involvement in decision making on chemical safety. It regards its role in protecting future generations from POPs and other chemicals of equivalent concern by promoting the 2020 goal of a Toxics-Free Future.

In 2004 and 2005 "Greenwomen" participated in IPEN Global Day of Actions against POPs dedicated to the ratification of the Stockholm Convention. NGOs signed an appeal to the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan to ratify the Stockholm Convention. The Republic of Kazakhstan ratified the Stockholm Convention on June 9, 2007.

With the financial support from IPEP (the International POPs Elimination Project) "Greenwomen" has analyzed the POPs situation in Kazakhstan. A few on-line conferences took place where the public worked out proposals to be incorporated into Kazakhstan's National Implementation Plan to the Stockholm Convention on POPs. "Greenwomen" also has implemented one more IPEP project entitled "PCB contamination of Eastern-Kazakhstan region: monitoring and inventories of PCB sources; ways to address the problem."

In 2009 "Greenwomen" launched the project "Strengthening public participation through promotion of the PRTR Protocol and creation of a pilot Pollutant Release and Transfer Register in Ust-Kamenogorsk." The project started in August 2009 with financial support from OSCE Centre in Astana and assistance from the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of

Kazakhstan. The project partners included European ECO Forum, industrial enterprises, a number of state institutions of the Eastern Kazakhstan region, experts and non-governmental organizations.

Project Outcomes:

Description of the activity conducted or type of participation that was organized:

“Greenwomen” staff representatives attended the Sixth Asia and the Pacific Ministerial Conference held in Astana on September 27-October 2, 2010. The printed version of the “National NGOs Action Plan on SAICM Implementation” was distributed at the conference, which was a unique opportunity for widespread distribution of this publication. NGOs and government representatives, including Vice-Ministers of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mrs. Eldana Sadvakasova and Mr. Mazhit Turmagambetov, received copies of the Plan.

Impact on target groups:

The conference also provided the possibility to meet representatives of different target groups. The NGOs, officials and entrepreneurs admitted the importance of SAICM promotion. They also called for wider distribution of information on dangers of toxic substances. Workers often are not aware of substances they deal with and their harmful effects on human health and environment. Officials asked to provide more simplified and structured information on the SAICM process and recognized an important role of NGOs in the preparation and dissemination of such information.

Impact on target policies:

Representatives of different target groups are aware of the SAICM process; NGOs understand the need to seek assurances of effective public participation in activities related to the implementation of SAICM. They realized that the impact on the national government's policies will allow incorporating the chemical safety issues in national development plans and strategies. The SAICM promotion requests strengthening of civil society's role at all levels of the decision-making process on chemical safety.

Outreach to stakeholders:

The “National NGOs Action Plan on SAICM Implementation” was created as a result of the project. Priorities for further action were selected earlier. The action plan contains information on priority areas for SAICM promotion. These areas include interaction with stakeholders in order to create applicable approaches and public opinion regarding awareness, policy and environmental aspects of SAICM promotion and its implementation in Kazakhstan. Here is also a need to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge concerning risks and consequences of unsafe chemical management. All the above lead to a suggestion to include these issues in the process of policy planning, access to information and expertise, capacity building and regulatory framework.

Deliverables, outputs and/or products:

“Greenwomen” developed “National NGOs Action Plan on SAICM Implementation” and distributed a press release on the SAICM process for NGOs and media. The main priorities of NGOs activity for promotion and implementation of SAICM among Kazakh NGOs as well as Central Asian NGOs network were discussed. The comments were taken into consideration for the final version of the “National NGOs Action Plan on SAICM Implementation”. A printed version of the document includes information on the SAICM process for the business sector and government. Three hundred copies of the Plan were printed and distributed.

Communication efforts:

The “NGO's Action Plan on SAICM Implementation in the Republic of Kazakhstan” is available to the public on the “Greenwomen” site <http://greenwomen.kz.iatp.net/>; it was distributed among NGOs of Kazakhstan, Central Asia and EECCA countries, business and government representatives.

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NGO Recommendations to achieve desired NGO participation:

The “NGOs Action Plan on SAICM Implementation in the Republic of Kazakhstan” calls on strengthening the role of civil society. The suggestions for the government include cooperation and promotion of NGOs and other civil society representatives’ activities in the following areas:

- implement informational and educational activities and campaigns for business and government representatives, NGOs and media to learn more about Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (PRTR);
- create flyers, posters, brochures, stories for TV and radio on chemical safety for educational purposes for target groups including employers and workers; promote broader access to information on chemical safety through electronic newsletters, websites etc.;
- suggest to national government to implement Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals; involve media for promotion of NGOs activities on chemical safety; and
- organize educational seminars, prepare and disseminate information among the various groups on the following important topics:
 - chemicals in products (i.e. childrens' toys, electronic goods, textiles, construction materials);
 - inventory of mercury emissions sources;
 - presence of mercury in consumer goods;
 - e-waste;
 - lead in paint;
 - human biomonitoring (blood test for evaluation of toxic elements);
 - child health monitoring;
 - chemical contaminants’ impact on environment (soil, water, air) and public health; and
 - incineration of waste, which has been increasing in recent years despite the bans.