

Chemicals Management in Tanzania: Challenges and Opportunities

Geographical focus: Tanzania

Funders: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

Duration: 2013–2014

Background

At the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, a global goal was set to use and produce chemicals in a way that, by 2020, minimizes their adverse effects on health and the environment. In response to this goal, in 2006 an international chemicals strategy was agreed on at the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) in Dubai, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

SAICM addresses a critical environmental and developmental problem, and has been lauded by both industry and other commentators as a unique opportunity to streamline international chemicals initiatives at the national level. However, the strategy presents a significant challenge for developing countries because of its broad scope, voluntary status, and limited financial resources.

SAICM is also one of the newest international regimes in the field of chemicals management, and consists of a high-level declaration, an overarching policy strategy and a global plan of action that countries aim to translate into national implementation plans. It is important to note that SAICM is not a legally binding agreement, and, in order to change chemicals policy and management, it relies instead on the political will of signatory states and peer pressure. Furthermore, its scope is large and the demanding global plan of action specifies more than 270 activities, ranging from the strategic (e.g. applying the concept of pollution prevention in policy) to the operational (e.g. promoting the use of personal protective equipment), and from the broad (e.g. improving risk analysis procedures) to the specific (e.g. eliminating lead in gasoline). The SAICM also has long-term aspirations, such as to increase scientific knowledge, as well as medium- and short-term decisions, such as ensuring ratification of chemicals conventions.

Aim of this project

This research project aims to evaluate how far the SAICM – in its *early* implementation as a voluntary international regime – has travelled on the road to meeting its goal of minimizing, by 2020, adverse effects associated with the production and use of chemicals. It also aims to assess how much potential a legally non-binding regime has to improve chemicals management in developing countries. The overall research question is: *How does SAICM contribute to improved chemicals management at the national level towards the 2020 goal of minimizing impacts by the production and use of chemicals?*



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The project will carry out a case study of SAICM implementation in Tanzania. The specific research question is:

- Has SAICM contributed to on-the-ground improvements in chemical safety in Tanzania in line with the 2020 goal, and, if so, how? This will be assessed in terms of:
 - The reduction of specific, significant chemical risks in Tanzania
 - The strengthening of overall chemicals management at the national level.

The project will also explore appropriate ways to measure progress towards the 2020 goal in the Tanzanian context, such as a set of national indicators.

The aim is to contribute to the discussion about continued efforts to strengthen chemicals management and risk reduction in Tanzania, and also potentially feed into the future development of SAICM and other international agreements in the chemical and waste field.

The project continues earlier research on national-level SAICM implementation in Cambodia, and draws on SEI's experience in supporting national implementation of the Montreal Protocol in several countries and regions.

Project set-up

The case study will take a bottom-up approach, and map the outcomes of SAICM implementation on the ground by interviewing Tanzanian stakeholders (from government, the private sector, academia, NGOs and development

partners). Implementation outcomes will be mapped according to three categories: *concrete outputs*, *process effects* and *cognitive effects*.

The interviews will also collect views on appropriate indicators of progress towards the 2020 goal in Tanzania. In addition, we will review government documents and other reports, as well as relevant scientific literature, to verify the descriptions of implementation progress given by interviewees.

SAICM in Tanzania

Tanzania was a particularly active participant in the negotiations during the development of SAICM, and the country later underscored its commitment to the process by implementing a series of SAICM-related projects at the national level. The first was a SAICM pilot project implemented by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), with financial support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The project, titled Strengthening Governance, Civil Society Participation and Partnerships within an Integrated National Chemicals and Waste Management Programme, ran from 2006 to 2009 and aimed to prepare the ground for continued SAICM implementation through a range of activities. For example, it:

- conducted a national-level self-assessment of Tanzania's SAICM capacity
- developed mechanisms for inter-ministerial coordination on chemicals and waste management
- drafted a policy on stakeholder involvement
- formulated a mechanism for information exchange
- developed a website to disseminate information on chemicals management



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- held a National Forum on Governance and Priority setting for SAICM implementation.

Since 2009 the SAICM Quick Start Fund (QSP) has supported a number of other projects, namely:

- Capacity Enhancement for the Implementation of the Stockholm Convention in the United Republic of Tanzania
- Chemical Accident Prevention and Preparedness Programme for Tanzania (CAPP-Programme –TZ)(Implemented by UNEP)
- SAICM Implementation in East Africa: Law Reform and Capacity Building for Sound Chemicals Management in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (Implemented by the NGOs: AGENDA, iLima-Kenya and NAPE).

The Swedish Chemicals Agency (with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida) also supported a project that aimed to build capacity for control and management of chemicals.

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