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Ensuring the sound management of chemicals and waste



CHEMICALS AND WASTE

Chemicals and waste are integral to our everyday life, but they also have major impacts on the environment and human health. As the world's population approaches 8 billion, the sound management of chemicals and waste is becoming ever more important.

Working with governments, civil society and the private sector, UNEP's Chemicals and Waste Subprogramme catalyses international action on sound chemicals and waste management; helps countries prioritize the topics; and serves as a clearinghouse for relevant scientific and technical knowledge. Our work directly supports the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, particularly SDGs 3 (Good Health), 6 (Clean Water & Sanitation), 11 (Sustainable Cities & Communities) and 12 (Responsible Consumption & Production).

Advancing international policy

We play a leading role in developing and supporting international chemicals and waste-related agreements, including agreements covering mercury, toxic waste, ozone-depleting chemicals and persistent organic pollutants.

Implementing global agreements

We lead global alliances that bring together business, governments and civil society to minimize the toxic effects of substances such as lead in paint, mercury, DDT, persistent organic pollutants and ozone-depleting substances.

Generating policy-relevant knowledge

We develop guidelines, quality standards, tools and methods to help governments and other stakeholders put the latest science to good use. We also produce global outlook reports that identify trends and policy options that can have a significant impact.

58
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ON LEAD
IN PAINT



**17 COUNTRIES
ADOPTED
POLICIES
PROMOTING
SOUND
MANAGEMENT
OF CHEMICALS
AND WASTE**

**STRATEGIC
APPROACH
TO INTERNATIONAL
CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT:
184 PROJECTS
APPROVED IN 108 COUNTRIES
UNDER QUICK START
PROGRAMME**

Healing the ozone layer

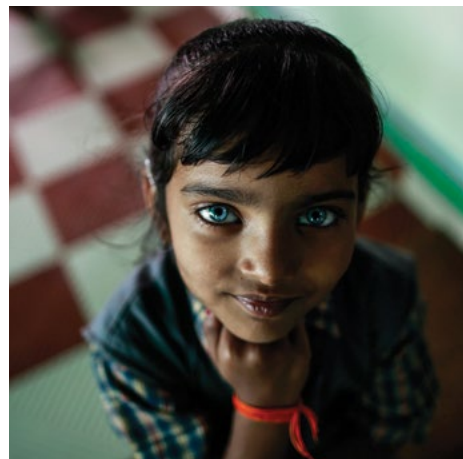
The ozone layer is on track to recover completely in the next few decades thanks to concerted action under the Montreal Protocol, whose Secretariat UNEP hosts. By 2030, the agreement will have prevented 2 million cases of skin cancer every year, averted damage to human eyes and immune systems, and protected wildlife and agriculture across the planet. As one of the Protocol's Implementing Agencies, UNEP is helping 148 countries comply with the agreement and implementing HCFC phase-out projects in over 100 countries. The Protocol's 197 parties are now working to phase-down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which are used as a replacement for HCFCs, a step that could prevent 0.4°C of global warming by 2100.

Getting the lead out of paint

Learning disabilities, anaemia, severe visual and spatial disorders: Lead poisoning in childhood can have lifelong health impacts, and the WHO estimates that more than 600,000 children are affected each year. That's why UNEP, the WHO and other key partners are working across the globe to stop manufacturers from putting lead in paint. Thanks to this support, 23 governments took action in the last two years alone; a total of 58 countries now have legal and regulatory frameworks on lead in paint.



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Addressing waste from a holistic perspective

The environmentally unsound management of waste is a major threat to the environment and health. Working with partners, UNEP supports Member States and stakeholders to develop and implement environmentally sound waste management systems and adopt environmentally sound technologies. The goals of this work are to conserve resources, reduce waste-related pollution, and support economic growth in the waste sector. With UNEP's support, dozens of countries are developing national and city-level waste management strategies.

Our Plan

UNEP will work with governments, businesses and civil society to help them reduce levels of harmful chemicals and hazardous waste released into the environment; increase the reuse, reduction, recycling and recovery of waste; and expand the use of non-harmful, non-polluting chemicals. UNEP will strongly advocate the design of safe products and processes that minimize the generation, use, and exposure to hazardous substances and wastes.

UNEP aims to achieve this objective by enabling countries to integrate the environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste into laws, regulations, policies, budgets, strategies and fiscal reforms; by increasing their knowledge of the risks posed by harmful chemicals and waste; and by promoting green chemical and product design and sustainable chemistry. UNEP will also encourage stakeholders, including those in the private sector, to adopt environmentally sound technologies, especially best-available techniques and environmental practices for the sound management of chemicals and waste.

Contact:

Maarten Kappelle
Coordinator, Chemicals and Waste
Subprogramme
maarten.kappelle@unep.org
+254.207.624.150
www.unep.org/chemicalsandwaste

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