



Synthesis Report for Decision-Makers



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# Glossary

ACC	American Chemistry Council
BRIICS	Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia, China, South Africa
CEFIC	European Chemicals Industry Council
DALY	Disability Adjusted Life Year
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
IOMC	Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals
ICCA	International Council of Chemical Associations
ILO	International Labour Office
IPEN	International POPs Elimination Network
MEA	Multilateral Environment Agreement
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCBs	Polychlorinated Biphenyls
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
PRTR	Pollutant Release and Transfer Register
REACH	Registration, Evaluation and Authorization of Chemicals
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Programme
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development





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## Foreword

The way the world manages chemicals will play a key role in the transition towards an inclusive Green Economy and the realization of a sustainable 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Governments across the globe recognize that chemicals are essential in areas from medicine and agriculture to consumer goods, clean technologies and overcoming poverty yet chemicals and the pollution linked with their manufacture, use, and disposal come at a cost.

There is increasing recognition among governments, non-governmental organizations and the public that human health and the environment are being compromised by the current arrangements for managing chemicals and hazardous wastes.

These concerns take on a new level of urgency as the quantity and range of new and existing chemicals grow rapidly in developing countries and economies in transition.

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, governments agreed on "using and producing of chemicals in ways that do not lead to significant adverse effects on human health and the environment" and set a deadline of 2020 to achieve this goal. This commitment was reaffirmed at the Rio+20 Summit in Brazil in 2012.

This report, *Global Chemicals Outlook*, which was compiled by UNEP working with international experts, is designed to inform governments and industry on trends in chemicals production, use and disposal while offering policy advice aimed at meeting the 2020 goal. It focuses particularly on the challenges and opportunities facing developing nations.

The report, which also supports the work and actions of the three chemical and hazardous waste conventions—Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm—and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, demonstrates the dramatic growth in the industry, which has seen global output climb from \$171 billion in 1970 to over \$4.1 trillion today.

The shift in production from developed to developing countries is underscored by China, which today is the largest consumer of textile chemicals with 42% of global consumption, and South Africa, where spending on pesticides has grown by close to 60 per cent since the late 1990s.

The Global Chemicals Outlook states that of the 5.7 million metric tonnes of pollutants released in North America (United States, Canada and Mexico), close to two million were chemicals that are persistent, able to accumulate in humans and animals and are toxic. The report also deemed toxic a further million tonnes of substances that are linked with or have suspected links with cancer.

An important aspect of this new report is the economic analysis that compares the benefits of action to the costs of inaction in terms

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