The Swedish Chemicals Agency
International Cooperation
The Swedish Chemicals Agency – KemI

The Swedish Chemicals Agency (KemI) is a central agency under the Swedish Government.

KemI works for preventive chemicals control, making sure that companies producing or importing chemicals take responsibility for the safety of the products placed on the market.

KemI works to promote legislation, information, enforcement and other measures that will contribute to the achievement of sound chemicals management, nationally, in the EU and internationally. In the EU this includes REACH, the system for classification and labelling (CLP) and the control of biocidal products and plant protection products.
International Cooperation

International measures are vital to enhance sound chemicals management worldwide aiming at a non-toxic environment.

Main tasks for KemI in international cooperation are to develop and accomplish activities for the sound management of chemicals and to participate in the development and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in the field of chemicals.

KemI cooperates with authorities and organisations in several countries and regions based on agreements with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The aim is to strengthen the capacity of chemicals control and to achieve sound management of chemicals in accordance with the UN Millennium Development Goals.

SAICM – Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

In February 2006, in the presence of representatives of more than 140 countries, the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) adopted SAICM “Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management”.

SAICM aims to fulfil the objective of the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development stating that “by 2020 chemicals should be produced and used in ways that lead to the minimisation of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment”.

KemI participates in the development of SAICM and supports activities for its implementation.
Chemical conventions and agreements

KemI is the designated national authority for the Rotterdam Convention and the national focal point for the Stockholm Convention.

The Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) makes it possible for countries to obtain information on hazardous chemicals prior to import and to decide on either acceptance or rejection of import. According to the EU regulation implementing the Convention, products exported from the European Union will also be accompanied by information on hazards and risks.

The objective of the Stockholm Convention is to protect human beings and the environment from persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

KemI assists the Swedish Government, participates in the Conferences of the Parties for the two conventions, and participates in implementation of the conventions in Sweden and in the European Union.

KemI reports to the Stockholm Convention in cooperation with the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.

It also assists the Swedish Government in negotiations for a global convention with the aim to eliminate risks on humans and the environment from the use and spread of mercury.

KemI coordinates Swedish contributions to the work done in the OECD regarding chemicals risks and the development of the Globally Harmonised System for classification and labelling of chemicals (GHS).
Development Cooperation

Chemicals are a part of everyone’s daily life, essential to virtually every sector of modern economy. World production, distribution and use of chemicals have increased heavily over the last few decades.

KemI supports the development of national structures for chemicals management, with a focus on chemicals placed on the market. This is done at the national, regional and global levels in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition.

KemI is engaged in cooperation and development in many fields, covering health and environmental aspects of industrial and consumer chemicals, as well as pesticides. Examples of areas covered are development of legislation, institutional capacity building, and specific areas like risk assessment, risk management, systems for distribution of risk information (classification and labelling, safety data sheets) and enforcement.

KemI offers support to authorities and other institutions at the national and regional level.

Examples of activities are:

- Support in establishing domestic chemicals legislation
- Strengthening of institutional development and training of core staff
- Support in the implementation of SAICM and Multilateral Environmental Agreements on chemicals.

KemI is at present (September 2012) engaged in regional cooperation in South East Asia and in Southern Africa, the SADC region. Currently KemI has or has had bilateral cooperation with China, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Serbia, the Republic of South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia and Vietnam.
KemI collaborates with organisations such as UNDP, UNEP and FAO in providing funding and expertise for workshops, development of guidance documents etc.

Cooperation with intergovernmental organisations focuses on the implementation of the chemical conventions and SAICM.

KemI also supports awareness raising and capacity building in the civil society, through cooperation with non-governmental organisations.
ITP – International Training Programme

The agreement between KemI and Sida includes a programme, “Strategies for Chemicals Management”, for training of governmental officials from developing countries and from countries with economies in transition. The objective of this programme is that the participants should acquire knowledge and skills to develop the administration and the legislation for chemicals control in their home countries.

The first part of the training programme is held in Sweden and the second part in the region where the participants come from. During the interim period, the participants work on a development project (“project of change”) in their home countries, with guidance from KemI.

So far, more than 150 persons from more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe have completed the programme. Nine programmes are planned for the period 2012–2017.

For information about the programme, see www.kemi.se and www.sida.se
Disclaimer:
This brochure has been produced with the financial assistance of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida. The views herein shall not be taken to reflect the official opinion of Sida.

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