

Explanation of terms

This document is part of the *International Chemicals Management Toolkit for the Toy Supply Chain* developed by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in collaboration with the Baltic Environmental Forum (BEF) within the framework of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) project ID: 9771 on Global Best Practices on Emerging Chemical Policy Issues of Concern under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

Use of terms in the toolkit

The following explanation of terms aims to support the understanding and use of the toolkit by practitioners. The descriptions and explanations are not intended to serve as definitions but were developed only for the context of the use of this toolkit.

Additives: substances with specific functions that are added to a material, such as plastics or rubber, to provide them with a certain technical quality. Examples are softeners, which are added to e.g. PVC to make it flexible or cross-linking agents, which are added to polymers so they form a stable structure with links between polymer chains.

Carcinogen (from GHS): means a substance or a mixture which induce cancer or increase its incidence;

CAS-Number: the **chemical abstract service** number is assigned to substances by the chemicals abstract service. Each number unambiguously identifies one substance. CAS numbers are used world-wide.

Chemical of Concern (CoC): Chemical compounds or substances, which have hazardous properties and cause concern to human health or the environment. Among CoCs, three categories can be distinguished:

- 1) Chemicals for which risk reduction action has been agreed on at an international level (e.g. a chemical being listed under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants)
- 2) Chemicals for which scientific evidence exists to advance risk reduction action. These include chemicals that have been regulated at national or at regional level (e.g. chemicals that have been restricted for certain uses in China or the EU).
- 3) Chemicals for which evidence for risk to human health or the environment is currently emerging from scientific research, but which are not yet regulated.

CoC of categories 1 and 2 are subject to mandatory regulations (e.g. bans or strict limit values). Addressing the third category of CoCs can be part of a high-ambition and proactive approach to chemicals management and can go beyond regulatory compliance.

Chemical product: a chemical substance or a chemical mixture that is sold for industrial and/or for consumer uses. Examples include glues, lacquers or polymer compounds.

Chemicals inventory: tool enabling a systematic approach to managing information on chemicals purchased and used in a company. The tools may range from simple excel-sheets to sophisticated material management systems provided by large IT firms.

The chemicals inventory typically lists all raw materials of a company and specifies the content of chemicals with hazardous properties, by indicating at least the name, CAS number, type of hazard (e.g. via GHS hazard statements) and the concentration in the raw material.

Compound: a chemical compound is a substance, which consists of molecules made of at least two different elements and that are chemically bound.

Declaration of conformity/compliance (DOC): a signed document by which a manufacturer (or his authorised representative) claims responsibility for the accuracy of the provided information about a particular product and its compliance with relevant legal requirements or standards. Optionally, a proof for the claim can be included.

Ecolabel: a voluntary method of environmental performance certification and with a label that identifies products that are proven to be environmentally preferable. A certified ecolabel is the most reliable way to inform consumers about the environmental and chemical safety aspects of a product.

Element: a substance which consists of only one type of molecules. Elements are listed in the periodic table of the elements

Endocrine disruptors: Chemicals that can change the function of the hormone system, such as, for example, the reproductive system, or the immune system and cause harmful effects on human health or the environment. Such chemicals may be effective at very low doses and may cause long-term damage to humans or animals.

GHS: The globally harmonised system of classification and labelling of chemicals is a voluntary international agreement on a standardised approach to identify chemical hazards and communicate on them. The GHS defines what type of hazards there are and gives guidance on the process of analysing if a chemical has a hazardous property. In addition, it suggests standard phrases to inform chemical users of these hazards. The [GHS is implemented](#) in many, but not all countries at global level.

Hazard class (from GHS) describes the nature of the physical, health or environmental hazard, e.g. flammable solid, carcinogen, oral acute toxicity;

Hazard category (from GHS) describes the division of criteria within each hazard class, e.g. oral acute toxicity includes five hazard categories [Category 1, 2, 3, 4, 5] and flammable liquids includes four hazard categories. These categories compare hazard severity within a hazard class and should not be taken as a comparison of hazard categories more generally;

Hazard statement (from GHS): “means a statement assigned to a hazard class and category that describes the nature of the hazards of a hazardous product, including, where appropriate, the degree of hazard.”

For example: a chemical substance with an assigned **hazard class** “Carcinogenicity” and a **hazard category** “Category 1A” will have a **hazard statement** “May cause cancer”.

Label (from GHS): means an appropriate group of written, printed or graphic information elements concerning a hazardous product, selected as relevant to the target sector(s), that is affixed to, printed on, or attached to the immediate container of a hazardous product, or to the outside packaging of a hazardous product.

Migration: describes a phenomenon that substances can move within matrices. For example, softeners which are diluted in polymers migrate through the material and eventually reach the surface from which they can evaporate or leach. The “migration rate” is the speed with which the migration takes place.

Mixture: the term addresses any intentionally produced mixture of more than two substances or compounds. Other words for mixture are preparation or formulation. Examples are lacquers or “additive packages”, e.g. mixtures of additives ready made for formulating them into polymers.

Non-chemical product: a part or a product that is not a chemical substance, mixture, polymer.

Pictogram (from GHS): means a graphical composition that may include a symbol plus other graphic elements, such as a border, background pattern or colour that is intended to convey specific information.

Product: this term is used for any object, which is not considered a chemical. In general, a product has got a physical form and shape that is relevant for its function, while the function of chemicals is mainly determined by their composition.

Substance (from GHS): Means chemical elements and their compounds in the natural state or obtained by any production process, including any additive necessary to preserve the stability of the product and any impurities deriving from the process used, but excluding any solvent which may be separated without affecting the stability of the substance or changing its composition.

Safety data sheet (SDS): A safety data sheet is a compilation of information needed to safely handle a hazardous substance or mixture. In countries and regions where safety data sheets are legally required, such as the European Union or China, they usually have a clear structure with different subsections. Safety data sheets are sometimes also called material safety data sheets (MSDS)

Toys: In the guides and tools of this toolkit, objects that are produced with the intention of being actively used by children are considered a toy. Examples are dolls and plush toys, building bricks, roundabouts or JoJo’s. The boundary between toys and “other objects” may not always be fully clear and exact definitions may depend on local *regulations* or target market conditions. *E.g. in the EU Toy Safety Directive 2009/48/EC toys are “products designed or intended, whether or not exclusively, for use in play by children under 14 years of age”.*