

## FOREWORD

Since 1988, the Member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have been working with one another and with their chemical industry to systematically investigate High Production Volume (HPV) existing chemicals. These HPV chemicals include all chemicals reported to be produced or imported at levels greater than 1,000 tonnes per year in at least one Member country or in the European Union region. The overall objective of the HPV Chemicals Programme is to use a minimum set of data on these chemicals in order to determine the need for further work.

In 1998, the HPV Chemicals Programme was re-focused to increase its output and efficiency. By concentrating on characterising the hazardous properties of HPV chemicals, rather than conducting more detailed initial risk assessments of these substances as had been the case in the past, the need for further work can still be identified and many more chemicals could be assessed. The refocused HPV Chemicals Programme uses only minimum general exposure information to put the hazard information into context (e.g. use in the Sponsor country).

The set of data elements, which must be available, is known as the 'Screening Information Data Set' or 'SIDS'. Based on the data on the SIDS elements and any additional information when it is available and relevant, OECD Member countries co-operatively undertake an initial hazard assessment and draw recommendations regarding the need for further work on the chemical.

The SIDS Initial Assessment Reports (SIARs) for HPV chemicals sponsored by OECD Member countries, and in many cases, with input from the global chemical industry are discussed and agreed in a forum comprising experts from governments and industry nominated by OECD Member countries, as well as experts from non-Member countries nominated by the International Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) and the United Nations Environment Programme Chemicals Unit (UNEP Chemicals).

The OECD Council Decision Recommendation on the Co-operative Investigation and Risk Reduction of Existing Chemicals [C(90)163/Final of 31 January 1991] requested UNEP to make the information obtained from the co-operative investigation of existing chemicals in OECD available world-wide. Therefore, UNEP Chemicals has produced this publication of a number of agreed SIDS initial assessment reports and their background documents, as the product of a collaborative venture between OECD and UNEP Chemicals.

The information is provided as an indication of the state of knowledge on these chemicals based on the SIDS at the time the reports were agreed in OECD, but does not presume to be comprehensive or exhaustive.

Additional copies of this publication can be obtained from UNEP Chemicals in Geneva:

The Director  
UNEP Chemicals  
11-13, Chemin des Anémones  
CH-1219 Châtelaine  
Geneva, Switzerland

Telefax: +41-22-797 34 60

An electronic version of this publication is accessible from UNEP Chemicals (<http://www.chem.unep.ch>) web pages, or directly at the following address: <http://www.chem.unep.ch/irptc/sids/sidspub.html>. Up to date information on the status of all the HPV chemicals in the SIDS programme, including those reports which have not yet been published or which have been published by the European Commission, can be found at the following OECD internet site: <http://www1.oecd.org/ehs/sidstable/index.htm>.