



NAFTA Technical Working Group on Pesticides  
Grupo de Trabajo Técnico del TLCAN sobre Plaguicidas  
Le groupe de travail technique de l'ALENA sur les pesticides

## PROJECT SHEET

**SUBCOMMITTEE:** Joint Review of Chemical Pesticides

**PROJECT TITLE:** **Implementation of the Globally Harmonized System for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS)**

**PROJECT TEAM:** PMRA: Pierre Petelle  
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### INITIATION:

**UPDATE:** n/a

**GOAL:** To exchange information among countries regarding GHS implementation issues, mechanisms, and timing, in order to achieve a harmonized process among NAFTA countries and implement the GHS as it relates to pesticides in a coordinated manner.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

To develop a system for information sharing and exchange regarding GHS outreach and implementation activities undertaken by the PMRA, the EPA and CICOPLAFEST. These exchanges will promote harmonized approaches to the GHS.

Issues and challenges relating to GHS implementation that are identified/addressed in one country will be shared with the other NAFTA countries with a view toward developing common approaches.

Implementation timelines within each country will be discussed, with the goal of achieving harmonized implementation schedules.

### MILESTONES:

- Regular updates by EPA, PMRA, and CICOPLAFEST officials responsible for GHS harmonization (quarterly at a minimum).
- Teleconference and face-to-face meetings to share information and coordinate implementation.
- GHS implementation by 2008

### BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The GHS was adopted by consensus by the UN Economic and Social Council in July 2003, and is the product of more than a decade of tripartite international negotiations. NAFTA countries have been involved in the development of the GHS since the beginning of the negotiating process and joined in the

consensus. The World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety have set a goal for GHS implementation by 2008

It is anticipated that, when implemented on a global basis, the GHS will:

- a) enhance protection of human health and the environment worldwide,
- b) reduce the need for duplicative testing and evaluation of chemicals, and
- c) facilitate international trade

by promoting greater consistency in regulatory requirements and providing a common and coherent approach to classifying hazards and communicating hazard information on labels and safety data sheets.

The GHS includes the following elements:

- a) harmonized criteria for classifying substances and mixtures according to their health, environmental (aquatic) and physical hazards;
- b) certain standardized label elements (pictograms, signal words and hazard statements for each hazard class and category) and guidance with respect to other information that should be provided on labels (e.g., product and supplier identifiers, precautionary statements); and
- (c) standardized format and contents for safety data sheets

Due to the level of trade among NAFTA countries, a harmonized approach toward implementation of the GHS in North America is of particular importance in order for NAFTA countries to reap the benefits of harmonization, including enhanced protection of health and the environment. Greater consistency in pesticide label requirements should also reduce potential for consumer and worker confusion resulting from different hazard information on labels of similar products in different countries.

## WORK PLAN

**SUBCOMMITTEE:**

**PROJECT TITLE:**    **Implementation of the Globally Harmonized System for Classification and Labelling (GHS)**

**UPDATE:**               November 2003

| GOAL  | ACTIVITIES  | TIME FRAME                             |
|---|---|--|
| To harmonize the implementation mechanism and timing of the GHS among NAFTA countries | PMRA and EPA to exchange information on status of GHS in respective sector/country  | November, 2003<br>done and ongoing     |
|   | PMRA to provide background information to EPA on GHS workshop held in Toronto Oct. 15/03  | October-November , 2003                |
|   | PMRA to provide update to EPA internal working group on issue, including key outcomes of the workshop   | November 20, 2003                      |
|   | EPA and PMRA to exchange information on issues identified and preliminary implementation strategies/considerations, with a view toward developing common approaches | December, 2003- March 2004 and ongoing |
|   | [Additional activities/milestones to be developed based on initial planning consultations]  | Early 2004 and ongoing                 |
| GHS implemented in harmony within NAFTA   |   | 2008                                   |