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Is the information on hazardous preparations of chemicals for users reliable ?

This was the most important discussion during the 4th meeting of the CLEEN (Chemicals Legislation European Enforcement Network) in Brussels. The emerging results of the enforcement project ECLIPS show, that only 38% of the labelling and 25% of the safety data sheets (SDS) are fully correct. This information is very important for professional users handling preparations. It describes the hazardous properties of a preparation and protection measures.

Up to now the in the ECLIPS (European Classification and Labelling Inspections of Preparations) project participating countries evaluated the data of about 900 inspected preparations in about 200 companies. The operational goal of the project was to inspect companies and their handling and labelling of preparations containing dangerous substances.

Continuing 2004 further data will be collected and evaluated. A final report will be published in June 2004.

The goal of the CLEEN network is to co-ordinate and improve the enforcement of EU chemicals legislation. Representatives of inspectorates and policy departments of the EU Member States, Norway, the Accession Countries and the European Commission were present in Belgium. The projects demonstrate that CLEEN is an important and successful instrument to improve EU-wide enforcement activities in the area of chemicals legislation, information exchange and enforceability of regulations.

The current CLEEN-secretariat is provided by Greece and The Netherlands. From 2004 Austria and Germany will take this function, supported by Spain, Sweden and The Netherlands.

Possible projects to be carried out in 2004 / 2005:

- Norway presented their inspection activities on wood preservatives. The outcomes showed illegal trading and deficiencies in labelling and documentation.
- The Netherlands proposed to identify in a EU-wide project PCB containing equipment. PCB is a substance which presents a great risk to human health and the environment.

- Spain presented the national activities exchanging information between authorities and proposes to check in a project the possibilities to establish a EU-wide information exchange system on chemicals.
- Germany will prepare a project proposal „e-commerce“. In this project the trade with dangerous chemicals via internet should be investigated.

The work of the CLEEN network will be influenced by the new chemicals policy (REACH) currently prepared by the European Commission. The participants worked out comments and recommendations to the draft of the Commission reflecting the practical experience from the enforcement of chemicals legislation.

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