

Press release - 5th CLEEN conference, The Hague 6-8 October 2004

Internet Trade of Chemicals under Surveillance

Enforcement of chemical legislation needs to take into account new technologies - that is the main outcome of the 5th CLEEN (Chemicals Legislation European Enforcement Network) Conference that took place in The Hague 6-8 October, 2004. Thus the selection of new projects listed below was determined of it. Other subjects that were discussed are the progress of **REACH** and the alarming results of the ECLIPS-project.

E-commerce

The conference accepted the German project proposal on e-commerce. For several years the internet appears to have been used as a platform for trade of all kinds of goods, including chemicals that are restricted or banned under European law. Official Austrian investigations (2002) have pointed out that only 1 of 25 internet suppliers offered chemicals in accordance with legislation. For instance potential dangerous chemicals and preparations were offered to any buyer from a supplier who claimed a total absence of danger. The project will investigate the virtual and often anonymous world of e-commerce with chemicals, the national legislation of - and information exchange between Member States.

EUVIECHEM

Following a Spanish proposal a system for the voluntary exchange of information on chemicals between CLEEN members will be developed and tested. The scope of this system aims to deal with dangerous chemicals in the supply chain that goes beyond the territory of a single Member State, but it could also be a tool for information exchange on problems arisen within a CLEEN member that could be a useful input for the rest of the countries.

EuroAzo

According a recommendation of the European Commission to monitor the compliance with risk reducing measures concerning the use of Azodyes in textiles the Austrian proposal was accepted to enforce the Azodyes related restrictions in the frame of a European project.

EuroPCB

The Netherlands have committed to deliver a thorough inventory about the state of implementation measures in the member states on decontamination and disposal or labelling of PCB containing equipment by September 2005.

ECLIPS

The conference also considered the alarming results of ECLIPS (European Classification and Labelling Inspections of Preparations, including Safety Data Sheets) released in June. The final report concluded: "Considerable deficiencies have been found in the indication of dangerous chemicals. The

labelling of about only 40% of the preparations currently on the market, as well as not more than 30% of the safety data sheets comply with the legal provisions. This does not correspond to the statements delivered by the chemical industry on the quality of compliance with chemical legislation.“

Background

The goal of the **CLEEN network** is to co-ordinate and improve the enforcement of EU chemical legislation. Under the auspices of CLEEN, chemical inspectorates of the EU Member States set priorities for joined enforcement projects aiming at facilitating the information exchange and the preparation of recommendations to the EU Commission. The current EU Member States and Norway are participating in the Network.

The Hague conference was attended by representatives of inspectorates and policy departments concerning environmental and health subjects of 17 EU Member States, Norway and the European Commission.

More information:

www.cleen-eu.net

Mr Helmut Witzani
Umweltbundesamt Austria
Phone: + 43 (1) 31304 / 5620
Helmut.witzani@umweltbundesamt.at

Mr Gerhard Zucht
Bundesanstalt für Arbeitsschutz und Arbeitsmedizin
Phone: + 49 (231) 9071517
Zucht.Gerhard@buaa.bund.de

Mr Jan Reinders
Netherlands Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment
Inspectorate General
Phone: + 31 (0) 70 3394564
Jan.reinders@minvrom.nl