

Chemicals

National Programme on Dangerous Chemicals (Summary report)

The 2003 Government's Programme stated that a Finnish national programme on dangerous chemicals must be prepared, with an emphasis on the precautionary principle to minimise unpredicted adverse effects when new products are placed on the market. In its preparations for the programme, the Ministry of the Environment established a steering group to form a common understanding of priorities for controlling chemicals from the Finnish perspective, taking into account the European Union legislation and specifically the forthcoming regulatory system on the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH regulation).

The overall goal of the Finnish national chemicals programme is to follow through on the Johannesburg's World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation in such a way that chemicals do not cause significant adverse effects on human health or the environment in Finland by 2020. The programme takes into account the effects on consumers, public health, workers' health and safety, and the effects on the environment during the entire lifecycle of chemicals.

The preparations for the programme included extensive inputs from experts and stakeholders in chemicals control and several detailed studies. On the basis of these, the steering group proposed altogether 35 measures to achieve objectives in the following areas:

- The aim is that a high level of protection of health and the environment under the REACH regulation is achieved, that the provisions of the regulation are effectively implemented and that the new data gathered in the implementation of the regulation are utilised.
- Adequate data on exposure and emissions of chemicals dangerous to human health and the environment must be provided for risk assessment and risk management activities and the evaluation of the effectiveness of measures.
- Companies must have sufficient know-how of and tools for chemical risk management and must apply these to ensure a high level of protection in small, medium-sized and large enterprises.
- Sufficient data on chemicals in products and manufactured goods must be provided and the risks from these chemicals must be controlled during the entire lifecycle of the products and goods.
- Finland has actively participated in the work to minimise by 2020 significant adverse effects of chemicals globally in accordance with the Johannesburg objectives. Finland is an active player in international co-operation and communication to promote chemical safety.

The follow-up of the measures proposed in the chemicals programme and the evaluation of the effectiveness of these measures are to be laid out in connection with the interim assessment in 2011.

Full Report (in Finnish): <http://www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=60105&lan=fi>