Making GHS Work Worldwide

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Agenda

- GHS – A Global Policy Perspective

- Case Study - “Make GHS work Worldwide on a Flavours & Fragrances Industry”

GHS – A Global Policy Perspective

Background

GHS – Its Origins

1989 ILO's Resolution concerning the harmonization of systems of classification and labelling for the use of hazardous chemicals at work

1992 Rio Earth Summit's – challenge from the Agenda 21, chapter 19: Develop an "internationally comprehensible and harmonized classification and labeling system for chemicals".

1994 – MoU between WHO, ILO, UNEP, FAO, UNIDO and the OECD to create the "Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals" (IOMC)

Background

GHS – More than 20 years of history

December 2002 – the first UN GHS edition (Purple Book, 2003) was adopted by the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

Since then, the UN GHS has been consolidated as the global reference for countries to establish their chemical safety regulations and the key instrument for setting the base for the sound management of chemicals

It is a successful model of a continuous multilateral and multi-stakeholder collaborative work along the last 20 years

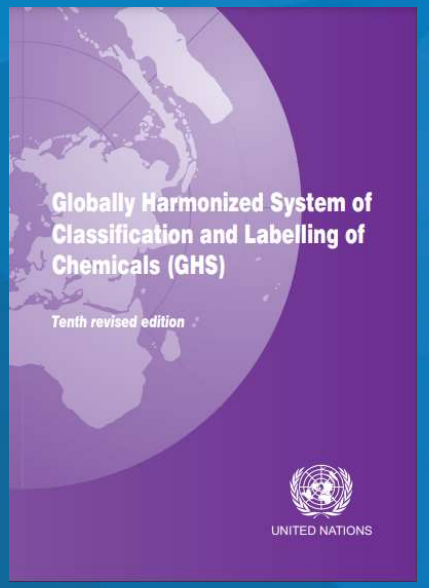
GHS – Its Process

The Sub-Committee of Experts on the GHS (UN SCEGHS) is a policy body which acts as custodian of the GHS, developing new technical elements of the GHS and making proposals for work and policy decisions to the UN Committee of Experts on TDG & GHS.

UN SCEGHS meetings are held in Geneva twice a year (July and December)

A new UN GHS version is published every two years.

The last one was the 10th Edition, published in July 2023.



GHS – Its Process

Although GHS is a non-biding instrument, more than 60 countries have already implemented GHS regulations, especially the most industrialized ones.

The experience gained along these 20 years of national implementation is critical for the UN GHS evolution and brought additional elements and a more detailed implementation guidance.

However, most of the countries, especially the developing ones, which are mostly net importers of chemicals, have not implemented GHS regulations. One of the main challenges for implementation is the lack of harmonization between different regulatory frameworks.

GHS – UN GHS – its evolution and challenges

- Although GHS achieves a great step towards harmonization of chemical regulations, there are still significant differences between GHS frameworks such as:

1) GHS building blocks (e.g. missing environmental hazards)
2) UN GHS Purple Book Edition
3) Concentration limits for classification of mixtures
4) Use of official classification lists
5) Requirements on workplace hazard communication
6) Labeling requirements on small packaging and on listing of hazardous substances
7) Requirements on “not otherwise classified” hazards
8) New Hazard Classes (e.g. EU CLP – ED HH, ED ENV, PBT, vPvB, PMT, vPvM)

GHS – UN GHS – its evolution and challenges

GHS Regulatory Frameworks must:

- Continuously evolve and follow scientific developments
- Ensure test capacity and access to data required for C&L
- Develop New Approach Methodologies (NAMs) to close data gaps
- Perform continuous updates to follow new UN GHS editions

Additional challenges for developing countries:

- Ensure global and balanced participation in the UN GHS development
- Build its GHS regulations with the best set-up for the country
- Lack of resources to perform hazard assessments
- Build technical capacity for local industry (e.g. importers)

UN GHS and its future

The UN GHS will continue to evolve towards promoting a higher protection of human health and the environment.

GHS is the base of any chemicals management system, especially considering the new **Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC).**

All stakeholders must invest in continuously develop sound science and strive to avoid regulatory divergences between countries chemical policies.

The industry as the main data owner and the key agent for promoting the GHS implementation across the supply chain will continue to be a fundamental player in its success.

The Industry Role to make GHS work worldwide

- ICCA (International Council of Chemical Associations) established a delegation to represent the global chemical industry in the Sub-Committee of Experts on the GHS, which is currently discussing the introduction of new hazard classes to the UN GHS, under the PHI-WG and the OECD WGs (ED and P&M).

- In the last session (July 2024) it has presented a paper "*Proposed workshops for industry and implementing authoritative bodies to highlight the implementation barriers and provide clear, actionable items to improve effectiveness of the GHS*".

- Workshops would be held bilaterally between authorities of targeted countries and the relevant national chemical association with main goal to identify key barriers countries face in implementing or updating the GHS and propose an action plan to foster convergence between regulatory frameworks and increase participation in the Sub-Committee of Experts on the GHS.

Main Barriers for GHS implementation and Harmonization

- Insufficient test capacity and difficult access to chemical safety data;
- Countries adopting different GHS revisions
- Countries adoption of non-GHS provisions in country-specific requirements;
- Remaining deviations of classification (due to differences in: building blocks, concentration limits, official classification lists etc.);
- Insufficient technical guidance for countries implementing GHS, resulting in divergent approaches and leading to further disharmonization
- Publication of a GHS revision every two years, when the average time for a country to update its GHS-based regulations is from eight to ten years;
- Stagnant country representation in the Sub-Committee of Experts on the GHS.

Case Study - “Make GHS work Worldwide on a Flavours & Fragrances Industry”

Make GHS work Worldwide on a Flavours & Fragrances Industry

- Flavours and Fragrance Industry – Integrated to the Consumer Products Value Chain

- Characterized by customization - Large number of products (> 1 million active products)

- Complex Supply Chain:

Large number of raw materials, many of natural origin (NCS) or UVCB

- IFRA* Transparency List – Aprox. 3600 substances (including NCS)
- IOFI** Reference list – Aprox. 3100 CDS and aprox. 1000 NCS

* IFRA - The International Fragrance Association - https://ifrafragrance.org/

** IOFI – The International Organization of the Flavor Industry - https://iofi.org/

https://iofi.org/

IFRA – IOFI Labeling Manual

- **IFRA – IOFI Labeling Manual** – A Collaborative Initiative of the Global F&F Industry

Manual with UN GHS Classifications of Substances used in the Fragrances and Flavors sector

Support the F&F industrial sector through a consistent application of the UN GHS criteria using and evaluating all available and relevant data (e.g. REACH, RIFM database etc)

- > Fundamental support for SMEs in the sector!

Seeks consensus and efficiency in the shared use of technical resources through the joint collaborative work of experts from the industry sector

Generates transparency and efficiency in the communication process throughout the value chain with suppliers and customers

IFRA – IOFI Labeling Manual

The IFRA – IOFI Labeling Manual:

- Scope:
  - Only aromatic ingredients used by the Flavours and Fragrances Industry Sector
  - Based on Volume of use surveys from the industry: IFRA VoU and IOFI GPS
  - Includes CDS used over 1 ton/year and NCS used over 100 kg/year

- Update Timeline:
  - IFRA-IOFI GHS Labeling Manual (LM) is updated annually
  - Draft Manual is sent to members consultation in October and final publication is done in January
  - Industry Members have up to 6 months to implement its new classifications

Industry Strategies to Make GHS Work Worldwide

- Global team of experts – Regulatory and Toxicology / Advocacy / IT
- Global Regulatory Monitoring and Risk Management
- Ensure reliable Supplier Data Management Process
- Efficient process to access, generate and update data for C&L
- Adaptation of global Hazard Communicatios to local regulation / languages
- Ability to handle the complexity of legal requirements for customers
- Higher degree of Automation and Digitalization
- Solid Legal Advice Process

Compliance must be **consistent** all over the Product Life cycle and cover all jurisdictions where the business operates or place products on the market

Builds reputation and Generates Value to Customers and Shareholders

GHS and interconnections with the global regulatory context

- Impactful new legal requirements (e.g. EU CSS and EU CLP Revision)
- Many Emerging issues (e.g. New Hazard Classes on UN GHS, new CMR ingredients, PFAS, ILBI on plastic pollution, GFC etc.)

- Shorter deadlines for compliance, Stricter record keeping requirements (e.g. EU Environmental Criminal law)
- Placing products on the market will require higher operational costs (e.g. new registration schemes, EU PCN)

- New technologies available to ensure compliance and enforcement (e.g. QR codes, AI tools)
- Automation of compliance checks and electronic data transfer through the value chain (e.g. EU DPP)

- Integration of Chemical Regulations and Sustainability (e.g. EU CSRD, EU ESPR)
- Increased scrutiny on company data and statements (EU Product Liability Directive, EU CSDDD)

More on GHS linkages to other instruments

Recently Adopted: Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC):

Target B6 – By 2030, all Governments have implemented the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) in all relevant sectors as appropriate for their national circumstances.

Target D6 – By 2030, sustainable chemical and waste management strategies have been developed and implemented for major economic and industry sectors that identify priority chemicals of concern and standards and measures, such as the chemical footprint approach, to reduce their impact and, where feasible, their input along the value chain.

Ongoing Development: ILBI on Plastic Pollution:

GHS classification might be one of the criteria to trigger identification of "Chemicals of Concern (CoC)" in Plastics and Plastic Products

More on GHS linkage Sustainability

EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD): Requires to report according to European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) which on E2-5 requires disclosure of **Substance of Concern (SoC) and SVHC**.

-> In other words, it establishes a ESG metric based on GHS.

-> It brings transparency and comparability on volumes of hazardous substances used by companies under CSRD.

EU Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) – It introduces the EU Digital Product Passport (DPP) and also requires disclosure of **Substances of Concern (SoC)** contained in some products, affecting the chemical value chain.

Examples of Industry Challenges to Make GHS Work Worldwide

EU:

- EU CLP new Hazard Classes and new Labeling requirements –> Brings additional data requirements for classification and labeling;
- Increasing number of CLHs / ARNs Grouping Approach - Ensure timely classification update and efficient communication across the value chain about significant new data -> Might require reformulation of products due to CMR restrictions

China:

- Third Party verification of GHS classification of Import / Export products
- QR Code on Labels (NRCC) – Under progressive implementation in different provinces

Korea:

- Frequent publication of official classification lists (NICS) -> Short timeline for implementation
- MoEL SDS submission process (K-OSHA)

Conclusion

GHS has been a collaborative initiative since its origin and its evolution will depend on continuous collaboration between private and public sectors to achieve even higher level regulatory convergence and implementation.

Businesses will need to adapt to the upcoming regulatory changes and create strategies to continue to innovate and grow considering the increasing interconnections between chemical regulations and sustainability metrics.

GHS has evolved from a hazard communication element to ESG metrics which will drive future business strategies.

Making GHS work worldwide has become critical to generate business value.

Contact information

Thank you!

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