

ANNEX 4

Guidelines for National Focal Points

GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

The following criteria are intended as guidelines to be adopted, as appropriate, according to organizational structures and coordinating mechanisms in each government.

1. Each government should have a single National Focal Point identified/communicated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to act as conduit for communication on IFCS activities and information dissemination.
2. The Focal Point should be a designated government position, not a person, and be at a sufficiently high policy level so that all national departments sharing responsibilities in chemical safety (health, environment, agriculture, industry, etc.) and their respective concerns can be fully addressed. If possible, it should be located in the Department or Agency that has the responsibility of coordinating national chemical safety activities. Some countries, however, may find it more appropriate for their country's needs to nominate a particular individual as Focal Point.
3. The Focal Point should establish intersectoral coordinating efforts and a mechanism for disseminating information within the country on IFCS activities to appropriate governmental and non-governmental organizations and for providing national inputs into policy directions and recommendations of the IFCS.
4. The Focal Point should be prepared to provide the IFCS with the information and progress reports on national priorities with respect to the environmentally sound management of chemicals.
5. The Focal Point for the IFCS should liaise with focal points of the participating organizations in the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) and other relevant international organizations in the country to promote the sound management of chemicals. Their efforts can be assisted by expanded IOMC efforts to inform Focal Points of sponsored meetings.
6. Governments should seek to ensure continuity of National Focal Points. The Forum Secretariat should be advised of any changes. However before each session of the Forum, national governments should reconfirm the designated National Focal Points.
7. Where a government has not yet identified a National Focal Point, the Forum Secretariat should communicate through the Minister of Foreign Affairs until a Focal Point has been nominated.