



# Recommendation of the Council on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control

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## Background Information

The Recommendation on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control was adopted on 31 January 1991 on the proposal of the Environment Committee (now called Environment Policy Committee). The Recommendation calls upon Adherents to implement more systematic environmental management based on integrated pollution prevention and control (IIPC) . IIPC strengthens governments' ability to prevent or minimise pollution, hazards and wastes by taking account of the "cradle to grave" life cycle of activities and substances.

## Implementation

The 1996 [report](#) has been approved by the Pollution Prevention and Control Group and presented to the Environment Policy Committee, which has oversight responsibility for implementation of the Recommendation.

**THE COUNCIL,**

**HAVING REGARD** to Articles 2 a), 2 b) and 5 b) of the Convention on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 14 December 1960;

**HAVING REGARD** to the Recommendation of the Council of 28 September 1976 on a Comprehensive Waste Management Policy [C(76)155(Final)];

**HAVING REGARD** to point 5 of the Declaration of Anticipatory Environment Policies of 8 May 1979 adopted by the governments of OECD Member countries and of Yugoslavia that, in proposing laws and making regulations, they will seek to avoid unduly complex or conflicting requirements and unnecessary delays in decisions affecting the environment;

**HAVING REGARD** to Part I of the Declaration on 'Environment: Resource for the Future', of 20 June 1985, adopted by the governments of OECD Member countries and of Yugoslavia, that they will promote effective integration of policies, notably by identifying complementary objectives, improving co-ordination between relevant authorities, and improving aids for decision-making;

**HAVING REGARD** to the conclusions of the Third High-Level Meeting of the Chemicals Group of 18 March 1987 concerning comprehensive risk management;

**HAVING REGARD** to the Bergen Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Development in the ECE Region of 16 May 1990, in particular points IV, 15 a), b) and c);

**CONSIDERING** that substances can move among environmental media (air, water, soil and biota) as they travel along a pathway from a source to a receptor and can accumulate in the environment;

**CONSIDERING** that controls over releases of a substance to one environmental medium can result in shifting the substance to another environmental medium;

**CONSIDERING** that in many Member countries, pollution control efforts focus on each environmental medium separately, and that controls over marketing and use of substances are carried out as separate activities;

**AGREEING** that such separate efforts undertaken alone are not necessarily the most efficient and effective way to protect the environment;

**On the proposal of the Environment Committee;****I. RECOMMENDS:**

1. That Member countries practice integrated pollution prevention and control, taking into account the effects of activities and substances on the environment as a whole and the whole commercial and environmental life cycles of substances when assessing the risks they pose and when developing and implementing controls to limit their release;

2. That Member countries ensure that their laws and regulations support integrated pollution prevention and control by:

- i) Evaluating the extent to which they present impediments to the implementation of an integrated approach;
- ii) Amending, as appropriate, existing laws and regulations to remove such impediments; and
- iii) Adopting, if necessary, new laws and regulations which aim to promote integrated pollution prevention and control.

3. That Member countries adopt administrative procedures and institutional measures to ensure that an integrated approach to pollution prevention and control can be achieved efficiently.

**II. RECOMMENDS** that, in moving towards a more integrated approach, Member countries take into account the Guidance on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control set out in the Appendix which is an integral part of this Recommendation.

**III. INSTRUCTS** the Environment Committee to review the actions taken by Member countries pursuant to this Recommendation within three years of the adoption of this Recommendation.

## ANNEX

### GUIDANCE ON INTEGRATED POLLUTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

#### Basic Principles of Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control

1. The purpose of integrated pollution prevention and control is to prevent or minimise the risk of harm to the environment taken as a whole. This approach recognises the integrated nature of the environment by taking account of the effects of substances or activities on all the environmental media (air, water, soil), the living organisms (including people), that these media support and the stock of cultural and aesthetic assets. Important aspects of the integrated approach include:

- a) Consideration of the whole life cycle of substances and products (the "cradle to grave" concept);
- b) Anticipation of the effects in all environmental media of substances and activities (both new and existing) including consideration of multiple pathways to exposure and movement through the environment;
- c) Minimisation of the quantity and harmfulness of waste;
- d) The use of one common means, such as risk assessment, for estimating and comparing environmental problems; and
- e) The complementary use of effects-oriented measures, such as environmental quality objectives, and source-oriented measures, such as emission limits.

#### Essential Policy Aspects

2. Certain policies, common to all aspects of environmental protection, are essential to an effective integrated approach. These include that:

- a) Sustainable development, including energy conservation and the rational use of renewable resources, should be taken into account;
- b) The development and application of no or low waste technology and of recycling strategies should be promoted;
- c) Cleaner technologies should be applied and safer alternatives should be substituted for harmful substances;
- d) The absence of complete information should not preclude precautionary action to mitigate the risk of significant harm to the environment;
- e) The public should be informed and consulted in the evaluation of the health and environmental effects of substances and activities;
- f) Environmental considerations should be integrated into private and public decision-making; and
- g) Explicit compliance and enforcement policies should be adopted which are consistent and effective as between the different media.

### **Focuses for Decision-Making**

3. The adoption of an integrated approach to pollution prevention and control entails a shift from traditional focuses for decision-making. The new focuses for an integrated approach include:

- a) The substance;
- b) The source (which can include industrial processes, products and economic sectors); and
- c) The geographical region.

These new focuses are not mutually exclusive and may be used in combination with each other and with existing systems such as those based on a single medium approach.

### **Legislation**

4. While forms of legislation can vary widely, an approach which supports integration of pollution prevention and control should be a common feature of all legislation which affects the environment. Consideration should be given not only to specific environmental legislation, but also to legislation in other areas such as energy, transport, agriculture, forestry, mineral rights, development aid and taxes.

### **Institutional Measures**

5. The institutional measures and administrative procedures necessary to implement an integrated approach include:

- a) Changes in organisational structures and internal operational and decision-making procedures;
- b) Establishment of co-ordinating mechanisms within and among government bodies; and
- c) Arrangements for co-operating internationally and among different levels of government within countries.

### **Management Instruments**

6. Integrated pollution prevention and control can be achieved through a variety of management instruments. In considering the selection of such instruments, specific attention should be given to:

- a) Issuing single permits, covering all releases and processes;
- b) Linking environmental instruments with land-use planning and natural resource management systems and the regulation of services such as transport and other communications;
- c) Undertaking environmental impact assessments for policy proposals and projects;
- d) Policy planning to develop strategies to achieve overall improvement of environmental quality;
- e) Establishing integrated inspection and enforcement authorities;
- f) Using economic instruments;
- g) Encouraging and/or subsidizing development of cleaner technologies; and
- h) Covering whole life cycle issues in the development of industry management plans.

### **Technical Methods**

7. Technical methods used to support the development of integrated pollution prevention and control should themselves have an integrated character. Such technical methods include:

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- a) The analysis of each stage of the commercial life cycle of a substance or a product (from design through manufacture to disposal) and the environmental life cycle (including transformation and movement of chemical substances through the environmental media);
  - b) The analysis of multiple pathways of exposure;
  - c) The use of inventories of releases to all environmental media from installations coupled with inventories of inputs to enable a "mass balance account" to be drawn up; and
  - d) Monitoring of the condition of the environmental media, and the biota that they support, and the condition of cultural and aesthetic assets, in order to establish levels of degradation or the trends.

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