

**Chemical Dialogue**  
*Report for the*  
**CTI ANNUAL REPORT TO MINISTERS**

**For AMM’s information**

(a) Key outcomes and achievements in 2023

- The CD endorsed the **Strategic Framework for Chemical in the Asia Pacific Region 2024 – 2027**
- The CD published the CD Risk Assessment Compendium as an APEC resource and tool for best practices
- The CD conducted a survey and endorsed a set of recommendations to help promote GHS implementation
- The CD organized a dialogue focused on advanced chemical recycling and its contribution to a more circular economy
- The CD collaborated with the Ocean and Fisheries Working Group through the Virtual Working Group on Marine Debris to coordinate activities across APEC related to marine debris and circular economy issues
- The CD renewed and endorsed the Government’s Co-Chairmanship from 2023-2025
- The CD industry associations drafted and shared a [letter](#) with the CTI during SOM2 focused on supporting supply chain resiliency and provided several recommendations
- The CD endorsed 2 new concept notes that were subsequently approved in principle by the BMC for funding including one proposal focused on training regulators on risk assessment of chemicals, and one proposal focused on partnering with the OECD to share the benefits of the Mutual Acceptance of Data (MAD) System.

(b) Work undertaken by fora in pursuit of the [Putrajaya Vision 2040](#), including through the [Aotearoa Plan of Action \(APA\)](#)

*Kindly refer to the “Collective Actions” (in the APA) for the relevant fora  
Please also outline any individual actions that your fora has showcased during the year.*

- The CD’s work supports collective actions under the [Aotearoa Plan of Action \(APA\) to implement the](#) APEC Roadmap on Marine Debris and advance APEC’s circular economy work.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CD’s work also supports efforts under the <a href="#">Aotearoa Plan of Action (APA) to reduce unnecessary barriers to trade and foster regulatory reform.</a></li> </ul>
<p>(c) Work Undertaken by the fora in response to Ministerial, SOM and CTI direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CD continues to discuss and take action on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Preventing barriers to trade in chemicals through promoting regulatory cooperation and implementation of good regulatory practices;</li> <li>○ Aligning government and industry implementation of the UN Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS);</li> <li>○ Building capacity on risk assessment for chemical substances;</li> <li>○ Supporting knowledge sharing of advanced chemical recycling to contribute to a circular economy; and</li> <li>○ Promoting sound science and risk-based principles for chemicals management to support resilient supply chains.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>(d) Key Issues Under Discussion by the Fora (if any); &amp;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CD is continuing its work to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Prevent barriers to trade in chemicals through regulatory cooperation;</li> <li>○ Align implementation of the UN Globally Harmonized System of Chemical Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) and take action to set up a sub-group to discuss international work to revise GHS and draft consolidated comments</li> <li>○ Address emerging issues such as marine debris and waste management of plastic;</li> <li>○ Build capacity on risk assessment for chemical substances and advanced chemical recycling for a circular economy; and</li> <li>○ Explore how to support resilient supply chains.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>(e) Items to submit to Senior Officials or Ministers (if applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CD requests that the Report to APEC Ministerial Meeting (AMM) on Implementation Convergence of the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) in APEC Economies - Executive Summary be submitted with the CTI report to Ministers</li> </ul>

## **Chemical Dialogue: 2023 Report to CTI on Implementation Convergence of the GHS in APEC Economies**

### **Executive Summary**

The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (or the GHS) is widely adopted since 2002 by industries and regulatory bodies for safety communication. The GHS has been applied as one of the main tools to facilitate chemical trade activities and practice sound management of chemicals to achieve sustainable development agenda. Created by the United Nations, the GHS was designed and maintained to replace the various classification and labelling standards used in different economies, by using consistent criteria for classification and labelling on a global level.

Taking the UN's recommendations and members' regulatory policies into consideration, consistent implementation of the GHS will prevent cost redundancy in international business. Alignment of UN GHS implementation will also promote health and environmental safety throughout the value chains and enable APEC member economies to boost economic growth while addressing the region's sustainability challenges.

In 2023, the Chemical Dialogue (CD) continues to conduct an annual survey to identify information that may assist in convergent implementation of GHS across the region. Based on the collective responses to the Survey, the APEC Economies are clearly working towards certain aspects of convergence, primarily the basic elements of classifications, Safety Data Sheet (SDS) formats, and labelling. Certain types of assessment for supporting policy decision-making and its implementation are also commonly exercised. Many economies indicated their growing attention and unique efforts on improving the accuracy and quality of GHS by resources of public and private sectors.

Regardless of some discrepancies, such as different version adoptions, the benefits of broad GHS implementation are generally recognized within the markets of all APEC members and international practices. Developing or adopting certain principles or guidelines would be a transitional remedy for trade facilitation, including the promotion of encouraging more economies to accept earlier or newer revision of GHS and beyond. Therefore, advanced collaboration across the APEC region is required to achieve better alignment, given certain obstacles existed to prevent economies from mutual acceptance and trade facilitation to a maximum extent permitted. The CD community progressively responded to these challenges by collaborative efforts of developing and executing capacity building projects to share best practices and common resolutions.

CD Efforts in 2022/2023: The CD continued a comparative study, impact analysis of various elements of GHS to support a broader acceptance. The ongoing projects capacity building webinars and practical checklists are in development to provide examples, building trust by raising awareness on GHS differences in implementations. Member economies are promoted to invest efforts on GHS regulatory alignment, information quality improvement, as well as the GHS version upgrade.

Next Steps and Requested Actions: The CD seeks a request from APEC Ministers that officials promote consistency of GHS implementation by encouraging economies to:

Drawing from the observations and summaries of the 2023 Survey, in conjunction with previous 2022 and 2021 results, member economies are recommended to:

1. Engaging in the GHS capacity-building project activities and topic development to address the prior challenges identified in the Survey for sharing consensus and best practices for alignment;
2. Recognizing the possible obstacles identified by member economies drawn from the Survey replies;
3. Continuing to participate in the annual Survey to extend mutual understanding and mutual acceptance.