

## **Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals**

**Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized  
System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals**

29 June 2021

**Fortieth session**

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Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda

**Classification criteria and related hazard communication:  
use of non-animal testing methods for classification of health hazards**

### **Use of non-animal testing methods for classification of health hazards: Status report**

**Transmitted by the experts from the United Kingdom and the  
Netherlands on behalf of the informal working group**

#### **Introduction**

1. This informal document provides an update on the work performed by the Informal Working Group on “Use of non-animal testing methods for classification of health hazards” since the last update provided to the Sub-Committee at the thirty-ninth session in December 2020.

#### **Background**

2. At the thirty-ninth session, the Sub-Committee agreed to keep the work on the use of non-animal testing methods for classification of health and environmental hazard classes on its programme of work for the 2020-2021 biennium and agreed with the proposal for the group to continue the review of Chapter 3.3 on serious eye damage and eye irritation with the aim of concluding the work early in the 2021/2022 biennium, prior to commencing their work on Chapter 3.4 in relation to skin sensitization.<sup>1</sup>

3. The Sub-Committee also agreed to revise the terms of reference for the informal working group<sup>2</sup> that had originally been approved at the thirty-first session,<sup>3</sup> to enable the group to identify certain types of corrections or improvements during the review of the GHS chapters to integrate non animal test methods.

4. The informal working group presently has approximately 60 members, reflecting the importance of, and interest in, this work. Its membership includes experts with specialised knowledge of test methods and their application to classification, and experts on national legislation that implements GHS. Discussions are often lively and detailed, but overall are propelled by a strong desire to make progress on the informal working group’s mandate and ensure that non-animal test methods are consistently incorporated in the GHS in a way that reflects their growing importance and scientific relevance, whilst recognising their limitations.

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<sup>1</sup> see ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/78

<sup>2</sup> see ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/78 and informal document INF.26 (39<sup>th</sup> session).

<sup>3</sup> see ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/62 and informal document INF.27/Rev 2 (31<sup>st</sup> session).

## Status report

5. Since the last update to the GHS Sub-Committee in December 2021, the informal working group has continued to work hard on finalising the discussions on the revision of Chapter 3.3 at three webinar meetings (14 January 2021; 18 February 2021; and 23 March 2021), the outcome of which are the formal proposals presented to the Sub-Committee at this session in:

- **ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2021/4** and **UN/SCEGHS/40/INF.3** ‘Revision of Chapter 3.3 to fully incorporate non-animal test methods’
- **ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/2021/5** and **UN/SCEGHS/40/INF.4** ‘Consequential amendments to Chapters 1.2 and 3.2 due to the revision of GHS Chapter 3.3 to fully incorporate non-animal test methods’

6. On 11 May 2021, the group held another virtual meeting where the group considered lessons learned from the review of Chapter 3.3, ways of working with other informal working groups and discussed a detailed scoping document on the proposed work for Chapter 3.4, that had been prepared by the Joint Research Centre.

7. The group noted at the meeting that although respiratory sensitizers are included in Chapter 3.4, as this hazard class is not currently on the 2021/2022 workplan it was agreed that prior to commencing any work on respiratory sensitizers agreement for this work would first need to be sought from the Sub-Committee. However, following further discussion at the May meeting the group also considered that there may be other hazard classes that could have a higher priority to review and the group undertook to further explore what these may be prior to providing a proposal for consideration to the Sub-Committee to amend the groups workplan.

## On-going work

8. The work on reviewing the skin sensitization hazard class in Chapter 3.4 for the inclusion of non-animal testing methods has commenced and will focus initially on discussing a list of issues for this hazard class before commencing any work to redraft the chapter for skin sensitizers.

9. Another virtual meeting is planned for 1 July 2021, where the group plans to further discuss the Chapter 3.4 scoping document and continue developing the list of issues to be resolved on skin sensitization hazard class.

10. The Sub-Committee is invited to note the progress of the revision of Chapter 3.4 for the skin sensitization hazard class as provided in this informal document.