Source: Gemini

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Transparency, stakeholder engagement, and public awareness campaigns in the GHS

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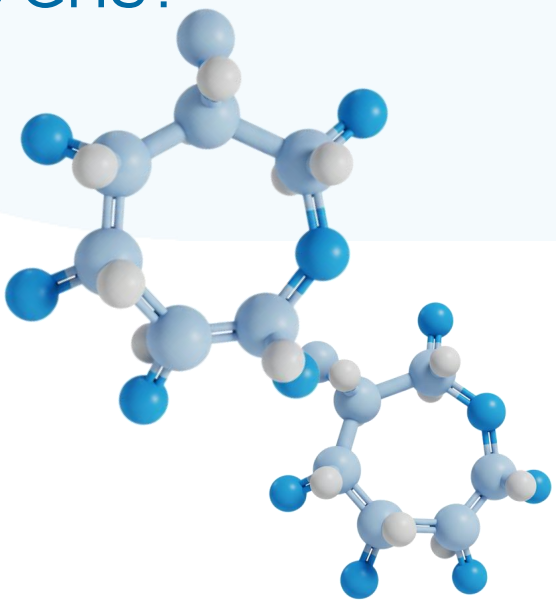
Agenda

- Why is transparency, participation and awareness important in the GHS?
- Case studies
- Information sharing



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Why is transparency, participation and awareness important in the GHS?

Transparency in the GHS

is about ensuring that all stakeholders have access to clear, accurate, and up-to-date information about chemical hazards.

Transparency, participation and awareness in GHS

Key benefits

TRANSPARENCY IN GHS IMPLEMENTATION

- Protect workers and public: chemical hazard communication is fundamental for workers' and general public right-to-know and allows them to take necessary precautions to protect themselves from harmful exposure.
- Facilitate informed decision-making: enables all parties to make informed decisions about chemical safety. It allows for better product design, safer handling, and more effective emergency response.
- Building trust and accountability: improves employees and public trust on companies.
- Enabling regulatory efficiency: provides a coherent and consistent basis for chemical hazards classification and communication, helping regulatory bodies in enforcement and reducing administrative burden.

Transparency, participation and awareness in GHS

Potential tools to foster transparency in GHS

- **Public chemical inventories:** online platforms where stakeholders can access information about registered or regulated chemicals.
  - Example: a national portal could list chemicals produced or imported, their hazard classification, and any restrictions under national law.
- **Publication of guidance and enforcement updates:** making regulations, compliance guidelines, and inspection outcomes publicly available.
  - Example: authorities could publish and update a roadmap towards GHS implementation.
- **National chemical profile reports:** reports that summarize chemical production, import, use, and management systems in the country.
  - Example: Publishing a National Chemicals Profile that identifies key sectors using chemicals and outlines existing laws, institutions, and gaps for public reference.

Participation in the GHS

ensures that the system is practical, effective, and addresses the needs of all stakeholders. It involves the active engagement of various groups.

Transparency, participation and awareness in GHS

Key benefits

PARTICIPATION IN GHS IMPLEMENTATION

- Implementing the GHS requires the effective participation of various stakeholders, each with specific roles and responsibilities.
- Key stakeholders include: government authorities, industry and businesses, workers and trade unions, and civil society.
- Involving key non-governmental stakeholders should be given special emphasis in GHS planning and implementation since their actions and commitment will be essential to the implementation and success of the implementation strategy.

Transparency, participation and awareness in GHS

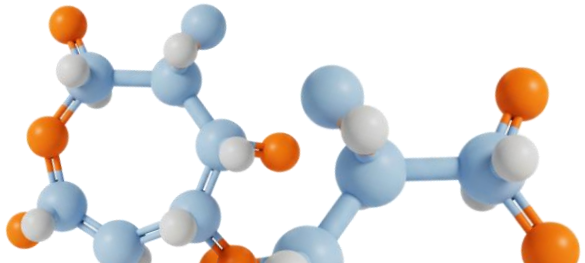
Potential tools to foster participation in GHS

- **Public consultations on draft regulations:** mechanisms that allow citizens, workers, and industry representatives to comment on draft regulations.
  - Example: The government could publish a draft GHS regulation online and collect feedback from trade unions, industry associations, and environmental NGOs before adoption.

- **National multi-stakeholder committees:** groups including government, industry, labour, academia, and civil society to coordinate GHS implementation.
  - Example: A national GHS coordination committee could meet regularly to review implementation progress and update training materials.

Awareness in the GHS

is a bridge between technical information and everyday action, builds understanding, empowers action and enables feedback mechanisms to improve implementation.



Transparency, participation and awareness in GHS

Key benefits

AWARENESS IN GHS IMPLEMENTATION

- Build understanding: helps stakeholders grasp concepts, recognise hazard labels, and apply safe handling practices in daily life and workplaces.
- Empower action: provides people with the knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions, adopt protective measures, and demand safer products and practices (fosters participation).
- Enable feedback mechanisms: creates opportunities to voice concerns, report incidents, and influence improvements both in regulation development and implementation.

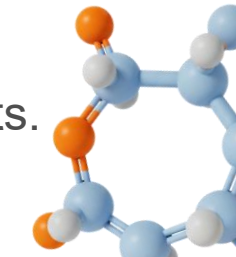
Transparency, participation and awareness in GHS

Potential tools to foster awareness in GHS

- **Communication campaigns:** public outreach initiatives using media or events to explain key GHS messages.
  - Example: A campaign could inform the general population about GHS pictograms appearing on product labels and explain how to read them correctly.

- **Training programmes:** structured for general public or tailored for workers, regulators, or educators to build specific capacity.
  - Example: training sessions could target customs officers, workplace inspectors, and educators to ensure consistent understanding of GHS requirements.

- **Educational materials:** Simple posters, brochures, or templates designed to make hazard communication more accessible for specialists and non-specialists.
  - Distributing illustrated leaflets showing the information present in SDS in workplace environments.



ACTIVITY

Source: Gemini

ACTIVITY

CHOOSE THE CORRECT STATEMENT

- Transparency in GHS implementation is about ensuring that all stakeholders have free access to the latest GHS revision.
- For participation to be guaranteed in GHS implementation, the correct authorities must lead the process and decide whether other stakeholders should be involved.
- Awareness transforms information into safer behaviours, stronger participation, and more responsive governance.

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Source: Gemini

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Case studies

Argentina

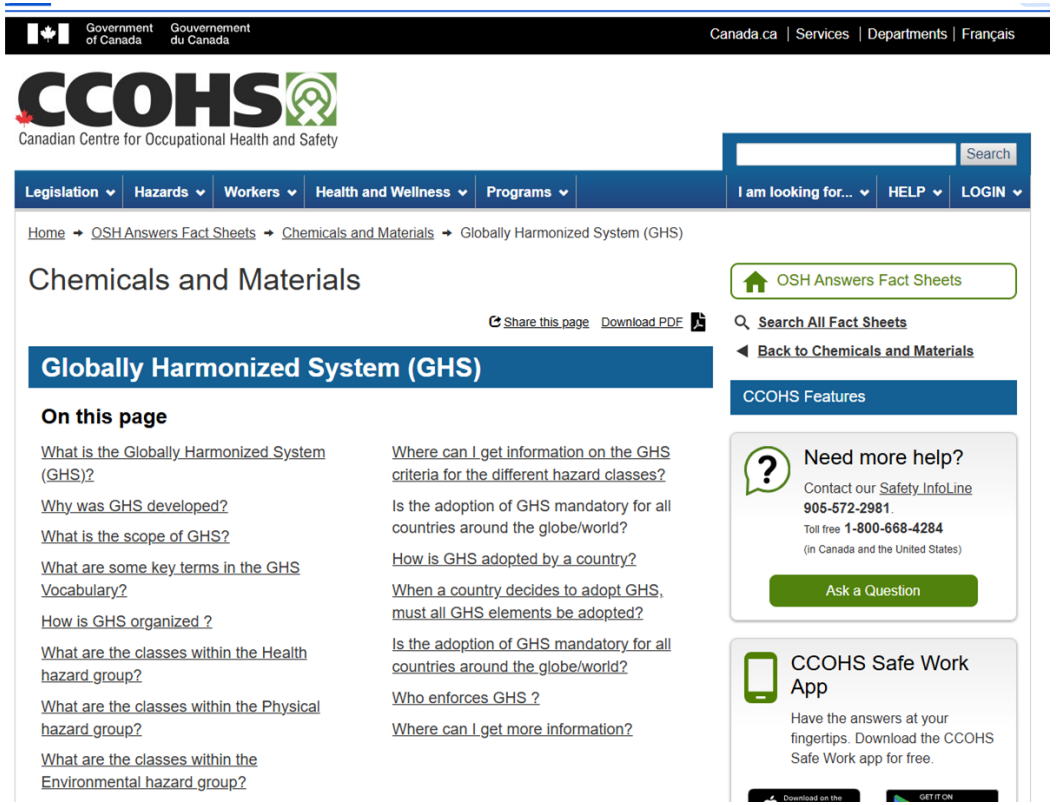
Superintendence of Occupational Risks

- The argentine **Superintendencia de Riesgos del Trabajo** provides free training for workers, employers, unions, public and private entities, and schools.

- It promotes GHS implementation in the workplace through awareness campaigns and an open virtual classroom.

Canada

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS)



Source: Canada.ca

- The **Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety** provides Provides easy-to-read fact sheets on workplace health and safety.
- It covers a wide range of topics: hazards, diseases, ergonomics, health, and wellness.

Source: Gemini

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Information sharing

Information sharing

Disclosure mechanisms

Safety Data Sheet

- The main tool the GHS offers for information disclosure of a chemical is the SDS.
- Its provision along the value chain and life cycle of a product provides the identity of the hazardous chemicals in a mixture, their concentrations in which they are present in the mixture, and the identification of its hazards.

Information sharing

Disclosure mechanisms

Chemical databases

Governmental / Public databases

- Provide free access to data on hazardous properties and classification.
- Support transparency, compliance, and regulatory action.
- Help avoid duplicate testing, reducing animal testing and costs.

Private databases

- Developed by industry or commercial providers.
- May require subscription or membership.
- Offer detailed technical data, safety sheets, and proprietary testing results.

Information sharing

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Examples (non-exhaustive list, many others):

- ECHA's Classification & Labelling Inventory
- US EPA CompTox Chemicals Dashboard
- OECD eChemPortal

Private databases

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- May require subscription or membership.
- Offer detailed technical data, safety sheets, and proprietary testing results.

Examples (non-exhaustive list, many others):

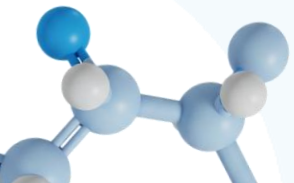
- Sigma-Aldrich SDSs
- ToxPlanet
- ChemSpider (free but privately managed)
- CAS registry

Confidential business information (CBI)

Data about the chemical to which access may be refused under access to information requests.

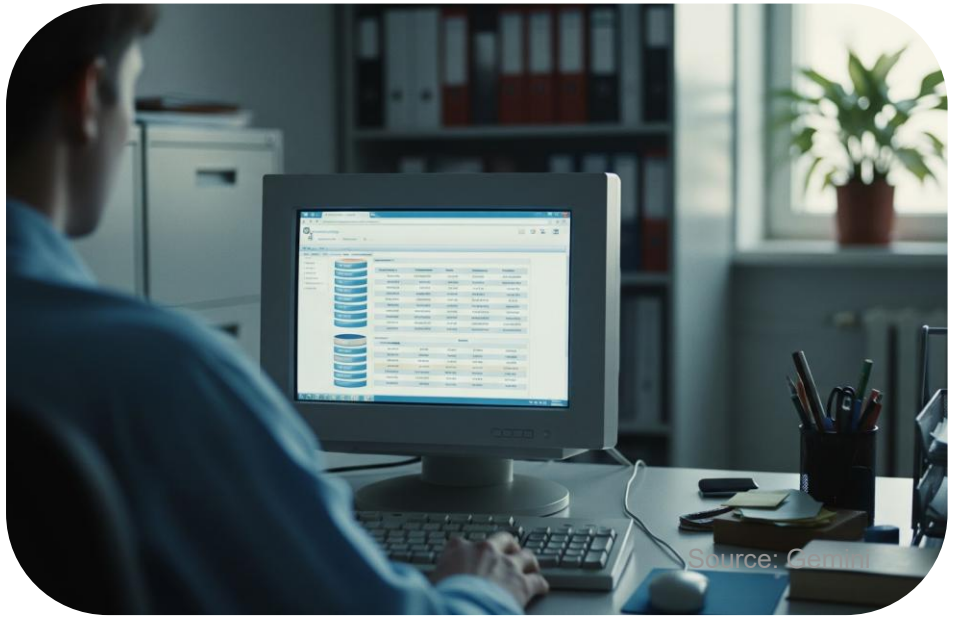
It varies through countries and may include manufacturing or quality control processes, methods for determining composition, monetary value of sales, and the identity and concentration of certain substances

Source: Own adaptation from Canada Pest Control Products Act



Information sharing

Transparency and confidentiality



- Governments **promote public access to chemical hazard information**. This transparency supports informed decision-making, protects public safety and strengthens consumer confidence.
- Industry needs to protect certain **intellectual property as assets.**
- Countries have **regulations that safeguard confidential business information** while aiming to **maintain openness for compliance, safety, and public trust.**

Information sharing

Confidential Business Information

CBI in the GHS

“In relation to chemical hazard communication, the safety and health of workers, consumers and the public in general, as well as the protection of the environment, should be ensured while protecting confidential business information, as prescribed by the competent authorities.”

Information sharing

Confidential Business Information

CBI in the GHS

- When CBI protection is applied within the GHS, authorities should clarify:
  - Which chemicals are eligible for confidentiality.
  - The definition of CBI.
  - Procedures for disclosure when necessary for health or environmental protection.
- CBI claims should be limited to substance names and concentrations in mixtures.
- Labels and SDSs must indicate when information is withheld.
- Emergency disclosure must always be possible while maintaining confidentiality.
- CBI may be shared with specific persons when justified for health protection.

Information sharing

Balance between CBI and safety in the GHS

Source: Gemini

- **Competent authorities set CBI disclosure rules under the GHS**, ensuring protection measures do not compromise safety.
- There ar**e different possible regulatory approaches** such as prior approval to withhold data or use alternative trade names while still mandating disclosure of key ingredients.

ACTIVITY

Source: Gemini

ACTIVITY

CHOOSE THE RIGHT OPTION TO COMPLETE THE STATEMENT

- The SDS is a key tool of information disclosure because:
  - …the GHS doesn't protect confidential business information.
  - …National regulations on CBI are not a priority when implementing the GHS.
  - …it provides the identification of hazardous chemicals.
  - …information regarding hazardous properties of chemicals is only provided by private chemical databases which are not freely accessible.

ACTIVITY

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- The SDS is a key tool of information disclosure because:
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Thank You!

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