

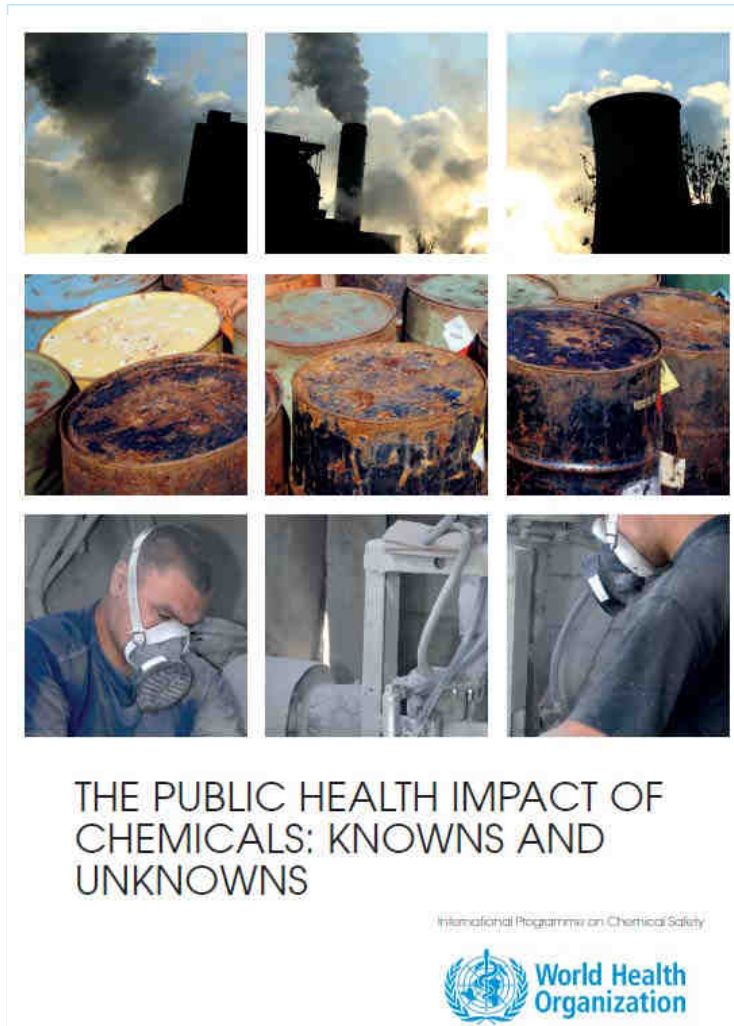


# WHO Global Chemicals and Health Network



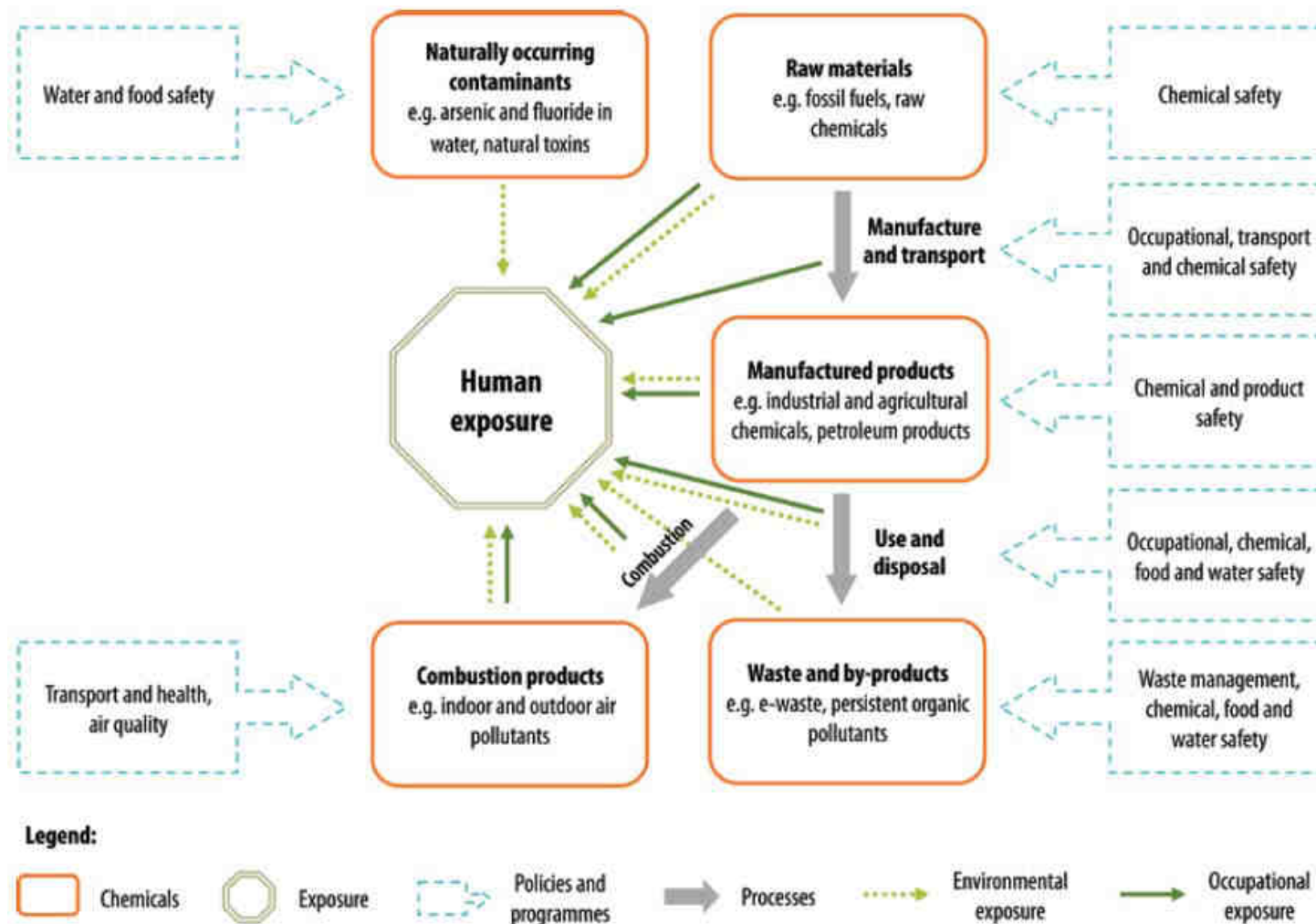
## WHO Chemicals Road Map and the Global Chemicals and Health Network

# Chemicals and Health



- Due to the complex nature of the issue, disease burden information is very limited.
- In 2012, at least 1.3 m deaths were attributable to a small number of chemicals where there are data.
- In 2016, that number had risen to 1.6 m, again only for a small number of chemicals.
- People are exposed to many more chemicals in their daily lives.

# Human exposure to chemicals throughout their life cycle and selected programmes relevant to their prevention



WHO 2016: The Public Health Impact of Chemicals: Knowns and Unknowns. Available at: [http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/206553/1/WHO\\_FWC\\_PHE\\_EPE\\_16.01\\_eng.pdf?ua=1](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/206553/1/WHO_FWC_PHE_EPE_16.01_eng.pdf?ua=1)

# Resolution WHA 69.4 (2016) requests WHO Secretariat to:



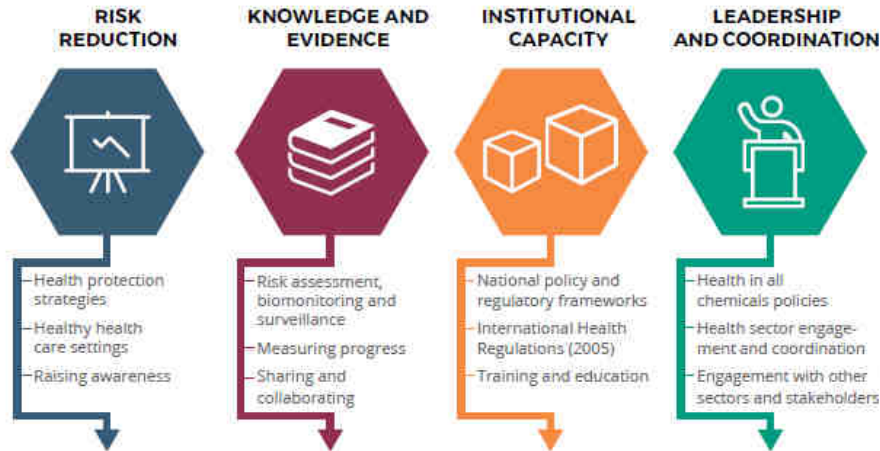
Develop, in consultation with Member States and other relevant stakeholders, a road map outlining concrete actions to enhance health sector engagement towards meeting the 2020 goal and contributing to relevant targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.





## Road map to enhance health sector engagement in the strategic approach to international chemicals management towards the 2020 goal and beyond

### ACTION AREAS



### Overall objective of the Strategic Approach

To achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.

### 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Achieving the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle is a cross-cutting issue that will contribute to achieving many, if not all, 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The targets below are only those that specifically mention chemicals.



#### Goal 3 Target 3.9

By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.



#### Goal 6 Target 6.3

By 2030, improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials, halving the proportion of untreated wastewater and substantially increasing recycling and safe reuse globally.



#### Goal 12 Target 12.4

By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

## WHO Chemicals Road Map

- Approved by the 70<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly in May 2017.
- Designed to be applicable to and used by Member States at all stages of development, as well as a broad range of stakeholders.
- Concrete actions where the health sector has a lead or important supporting role, recognizing the need for multi-sectoral cooperation.
- Organized into four areas: risk reduction; knowledge and evidence; institutional capacity; and leadership and coordination.



## RISK REDUCTION

Actions focused on risk management by and within the health sector, including health protection strategies, regulating chemicals, public education, and sharing information and best practices.

### HEALTH PROTECTION STRATEGIES

**MS** Develop and implement health promotion and protection strategies and programmes for the life cycle of high-priority chemicals, particularly for vulnerable populations.

**MS** Actively engage in and support the implementation of the chemicals- and waste-related multilateral environmental agreements, particularly health protective aspects. Support ratification and implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury and build capacity to assess and address health impacts of mercury exposure in line with resolution WHA67.11 (2014).

**All** Collaborate to identify and promote reduced-risk alternatives, taking into account the life cycle of substances and products, including waste, and promoting the use of these alternatives.

**WHO Sec** Provide guidance on the prevention of negative health impacts from specific chemicals of concern.

**WHO Sec** Finalize guidelines on the prevention and management of lead poisoning; **MS** Implement forthcoming guidelines, and phase out paints containing lead by 2020 as per the objectives of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint.

### HEALTHY HEALTH CARE SETTINGS

**MS** Provide guidance for health care settings to promote and facilitate the use of safer alternatives and sound management of health care waste, drawing on relevant guidance from WHO and others, such as that adopted under multilateral environmental agreements.

**MS** Develop and implement awareness campaigns for health care workers about chemicals of concern and established best practices for safe chemicals management within the health sector, including occupational, patient/community and environmental impacts in health care settings.

**MS** Use WHO guidance to reduce the use of mercury in health care and manage mercury-contaminated wastes (in line with Articles 4, 10 and 11 of the Minamata Convention and resolution WHA67.11).

### RAISING AWARENESS

**All** Develop and launch public awareness campaigns for priority health issues related to chemicals throughout their life cycle (e.g. e-waste, highly hazardous pesticides, lead, mercury and other chemicals of major public health concern), occupational hazards, chemicals subject to international actions, and maternal and child health.

**All** Promote communication of relevant information, including training, on chemicals used in products and processes, to enable informed decision-making by all actors throughout the product life cycle, and to promote safer alternatives.

**All** Publish and use articles on chemicals-related health sector issues in peer-reviewed health care, medical, toxicology and other related journals, including those of professional bodies.

**MS WHO Sec** Support development of the health-related components of the Strategic Approach information clearing house.<sup>1</sup>

**All** Document experiences with and effectiveness of various awareness-raising, risk-reduction actions and prevention strategies and share this information with others.



### Outcome:

Improved health, in both the short and the long term and for future generations through the reduction of risk to health from exposure to chemicals throughout their life cycle, including as waste, resulting from increased health protection activities by the health sector at the national, regional and international level, as well as from greater interest and awareness within the health sector and in the general community.

All: all stakeholders; MS: Member States; WHO Sec: WHO Secretariat.

<sup>1</sup> Actions that are within the mandate of the WHO Secretariat and also contribute to increasing the capacity of the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to support activities related to the health sector in line with resolution WHA69.4. For actions with more than one lead actor, this note applies only to the WHO Secretariat's role.



## Key structure of the road map

- One page per action area
- Each action has a suggested lead health sector actor:



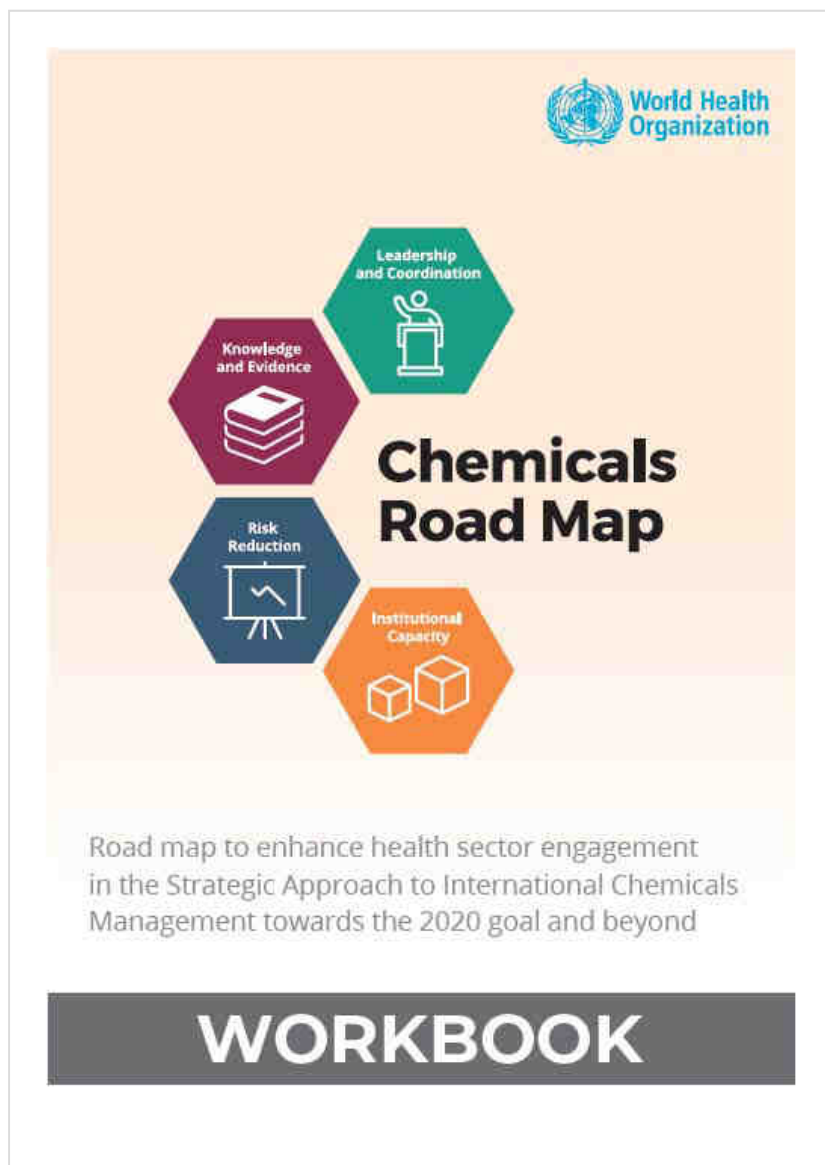
# How can we use the road map



## **Some key uses identified so far by countries include**

- Undertaking gap analyses, developing action plans and feeding into national chemicals planning processes
- Identifying areas for health sector leadership and collaboration with other sectors
- Advocating action from decision-makers, including gaining political support for chemicals management and obtaining funding for activities
- Communicating the health sector role in chemicals management with other sectors, as well within the health sector

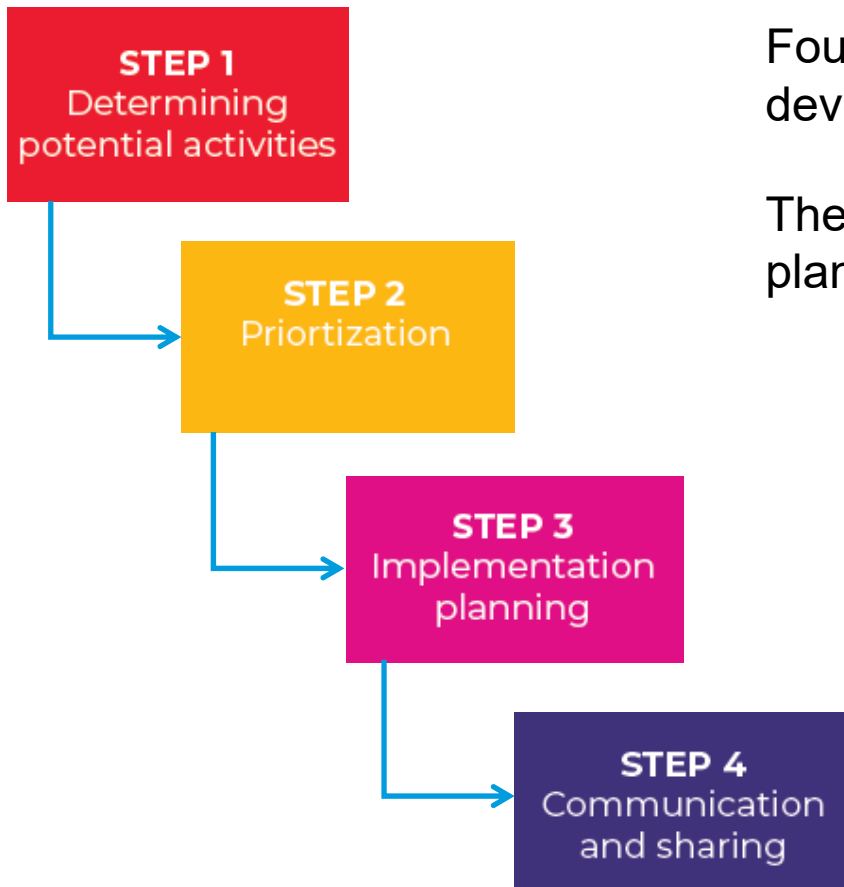
# Introducing the road map workbook



- Designed to assist use of the road map to identify priorities and to plan activities around these priorities
- Tested at a WHO meeting in October 2017 to capture input from countries
- Electronic version of the workbook is available at: [www.who.int/ipcs](http://www.who.int/ipcs) in 6 UN languages



# The Workbook – an overview



Four steps lead you through a sequence for developing implementation plans

The output is a high level implementation plan that can be used to:

- communicate with decision-makers and colleagues, both internally and externally
- feed into broader organization-wide, national, regional, international and/or intersectoral planning processes

# The Road Map calls for the establishment of a Global Chemicals and Health Network



## LEADERSHIP AND COORDINATION

Actions to promote the inclusion of health considerations in all chemicals policies, engagement of the health sector in chemicals management activities at the national, regional and international levels, and engagement of the health sector with other sectors.

## HEALTH SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

**MS** Nominate a health ministry contact point for issues related to chemicals and health including implementation of this road map, and establish a national chemicals and health network.

**WHO Sec** Establish a global chemicals and health network, with links to existing subregional, regional and international networks, to facilitate health sector implementation of this road map (including participation in the Strategic Approach<sup>†</sup>).

# Establishment of the Network

## Main steps

August 2017, Member States invited to nominate a contact, commencement of communications about issues and events in international chemicals management



February to May 2018, consultation on draft paper on functioning of the Network



October 2018 meeting involving a number of Network member countries, to test the draft Chemicals Road Map Workbook



Inaugural Meeting of Global Chemicals and Health Network, 6-8 November 2018

# Network Overview

## Goal

is to facilitate implementation of the road map by promoting collaboration on common policy challenges, perspectives and priorities of health ministries in managing chemicals, especially in light of the intersessional process on SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (the intersessional process), and to facilitate continuity of contact among health ministries and with WHO.

# Objectives

- Provide a **forum to discuss implementation of the road map**, including what different countries are doing and how, as well as challenges and success stories;
- Improve **awareness of the health impacts of chemicals and the health sector role** in chemicals management at national, regional and global levels;
- **Identify common issues** for discussion and collaboration;
- **Foster greater inclusion of health sector perspectives** in international chemicals discussions; and
- **Provide a platform/venue for mutual support** among Member States, for example, through sharing information and best-practices as well as funding opportunities.



## Health Canada

### Road Map Activities

- **Developing a new social marketing campaign** to: 1. raise awareness of health risks from chemicals and pollutants in and around the home; 2. provide plain language, science-based information on chemicals in day to day lives; 3. encourage easy measures to make homes and families safer and healthier.
- **Exploring possibility of engaging health professionals more proactively**, including developing tools and materials for health care workers on chemicals and health for patient care.
- **Tailoring health promotion materials** to other sectors of the population, including youth.
- **Expanding national biomonitoring program** to include additional vulnerable populations (e.g., children as young as 1 year old), emerging chemicals of interest (e.g., neonicotinoids, EPA replacements, etc.), and indoor environmental exposures.
- **Developing and using New Approach Methodologies** to fill data gaps for hazard and exposure information, e.g., high-content, high throughput and computational approaches are being explored.
- **Better identifying and measuring economic impacts**: contributing to development of multi-country OECD research studies of human health problems caused by chemical exposure.
- **Considering new directions for domestic chemicals management beyond 2020**: issues being explored include: endocrine disrupting chemicals, vulnerable populations, cumulative risk assessments, occupational exposure, priority-setting, informed substitution, and performance measurement.
- **Developing an International Health Regulations (IHR)-Joint External Evaluation (JEE) National Action Plan** including addressing WHO recommendations for strengthening core capacities for chemical events.
- **Developing the Canadian Surveillance System for Poison Information** to detect safety signals in near-real time and provide trend information leveraging pan-Canadian Poison Centre data.
- **Developing a new series of risk assessment fact sheets** to explain how we do chemical risk assessments (e.g., assessing exposure of Canadians and the environment to substances in products; Use of analogues and read across in risk assessment).
- **Championed resolution WHA69.4** on health sector engagement in chemicals management which led to the WHO Chemicals road map, and supported development of the road map.
- **Actively engaged in SAICM's intersessional process** to prepare recommendations regarding SAICM and the Sound Management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. Canada is the Health co-chair and the WEOG regional focal point.
- **Exploring how to better identify, assess and incorporate gender and equality impacts** into chemicals management policies, strategies and plans.

### Areas for Collaboration

- **Exploring how to use a public health approach to address chemical risk**: Focus of November Chemicals Management Plan Science Committee
- **Performance Measurement**: Developing meaningful ways to measure how our domestic chemicals management programme protects health and the environment.

Countries developed posters to share information about their activities to implement the road map, and areas where they would like to collaborate with others.

An online platform is being developed for further sharing of plans and other materials.



Suzanne Leppinen  
Director of Chemicals &  
Environmental Health  
Management Bureau  
suzanne.leppinen@canada.ca

Institution URL:  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/topics/chemicals-your-health.html>

# Poster session: country activities to implement the road map

