

Remarks by Alain Perroy
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Good evening, my name is Alain Perroy, and I serve as the Council Secretary for the International Council of Chemical Associations, as well as Director General of the European Chemical Industry Council, Cefic.

It is our belief that the global chemical industry should only market those products that can be handled and used safely.

As part of this commitment to improving environmental, health and safety concerns, I am proud to announce the launch of the Global Product Strategy.

Just like the Responsible Care[®] Global Charter, the Global Product Strategy started with a group of CEOs who wanted to bring our industry up to the challenges of the 21st century and make it ready to meet public expectations.

Time has changed since discussion on chemicals was limited to specialists; time has changed since industries believed that once a product is safely delivered to a customer, the supplier has nothing to care about any longer. And time has changed since people would trust authorities – or industry - of doing the right things to protect the users and the citizens.

The Internet society brings huge amounts of information everywhere in the world; the legitimate call for a healthy life and a well protected environment is spreading across the planet with continuously rising expectations; and simultaneously, new facts and new science can give rise to new fears.

We as a chemical industry have a unique responsibility to address these needs and concerns, meet expectations, and reassure people that we are protecting them.

These new challenges thus gave rise to the Global Product Strategy, which includes these goals:

- Do more and better for chemical safety throughout the supply chain;
- Learn from scientific progress as well as from public perceptions to update our knowledge and adapt our practice.
- Manage information flows to enable users of chemicals to act safely, and organise public access to data so that people get the answers they need and can build confidence in chemicals.

ICCA developed the Global Product Strategy to improve all aspects of product stewardship within the industry of chemistry and with customers throughout the chain of commerce.

Specifically, the key components of this strategy include:

- Guidelines for product stewardship: we want to develop the best set of management tools to ensure strong implementation.
- A tiered process for completing risk characterization and risk management actions for chemicals in commerce: we want to establish a practice of regular re-assessment of data and improvement of product stewardship actions.
- A strong partnership with all actors in the supply chain to build a product stewardship culture at all levels and continuously improve performance, with a special focus on working directly with downstream customers of the chemistry industry.
- A possible new partnership with an inter-governmental organization to enhance global product stewardship.
- Greater transparency including ways to make relevant product stewardship information available to the public, and to communicate on our product strategy and its results.

Today, with the launch of the Global Product Strategy we are proceeding in this direction. Deployment starts now with the dissemination of the strategic elements to chemical companies through our association members, and with the development of the corresponding tools and programmes to help our industry fulfil its commitment.

We are confident we will make this strategy a success, as we are starting with the Responsible Care[®] Global Charter, the national Responsible Care programs, and building on several related initiatives - the Long-Range Research Initiative, and the High Production Volume chemical testing program. Many of the unique and effective programs used by chemical companies throughout the world are brought together to greater effect under the Global Product Strategy.

The recommended measures in the Global Product Strategy provide implementation flexibility and recognize distinctive national, legal, historical, and cultural requirements – thereby allowing effective worldwide implementation to tackle the complex issues we face. We recognize that chemistry is not a “one size fits all” industry, and that we serve many markets in many countries.

Together with the Responsible Care Global Charter, the Global Product Strategy is an important contribution of the industry to meeting the objectives of SAICM, and we will remain engaged in the follow-up processes of this conference.

We welcome the challenge and look forward to working with ICCA member associations - and their member companies - to advance this program in the years ahead.

Thank you.