

Senior Officials Meeting on the 3R Initiative

Questionnaire on 3Rs' strategies and activities

As announced earlier, the Senior Officials Meeting on the 3R Initiative will be held from 6 March to 8 March 2006 in Tokyo, Japan. During the meeting, two working groups will be held in parallel in the afternoon of Day 1 (6 March) and Day 2 (7 March) to discuss the promotion of the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle).

The two working groups will respectively discuss: (1) promotion of the 3Rs at the *national level*, and (2) promotion of the 3Rs at the *international level* (e.g., international flow of recyclable resources and remanufactured goods). Both working groups will cover the following policy issues related to the promotion and implementation of the 3Rs: (a) cooperation between developed and developing countries, (b) cooperation among stakeholders, and (c) promotion of science and technology.

As stated in the letter from the Task Force for the 3R Initiative, we sent you this questionnaire to reflect your input on the issue paper for the meeting. Also, the result of the survey will be publicly reported later.

Please provide information relative to as many of the items as possible and send it prior to 23 January 2006 by e-mail to 3R@env.go.jp or by fax to +81-3-3593-8262.

1. 3Rs policy and strategy update

At the Ministerial Conference on the 3Rs in April 2005, participating countries reported their 3Rs policy and strategies in the form of the 3Rs portfolio. Please provide us with updated information on the major developments of national and international strategies, policies and activities on the 3Rs of your country since the Ministerial Conference on the 3Rs (April 2005).

The French National Plan for Waste Prevention, adopted in February 2004, is the framework within which many actions are carried out, such as:

Mass awareness-raising campaign on waste reduction: this 3-year long campaign launched in October 2005 explains 10 different daily actions that can be done by everyone in order to reduce waste production (drinking tap water, buying products with less packaging, composting at home...). A first assessment of the campaign showed an exceptionally good reception of the messages by the public, and is very encouraging for the following years.

Development of experimental standards on product expected effective lifetime (PEEL): some producers already inform consumers on PEEL (lamps, batteries, building material,..). The National Council on Waste Management asked the French Standardization Association to work on the development of experimental standards on PEEL for some specific products, like those mentioned above.

Voluntary commitment of the large-scale retail sector to reduce the quantities of disposable carrier bags distributed: following the conclusions of a workshop, which gathered national authorities, large-scale retailers, carrier bags producers and NGOs, a 50% reduction target of the quantities distributed in 2006 compared to 2003 was set. The large-scale retail sector has already announced a 35% reduction in 2005. The 2006 target should be reached on time. This drastic reduction goes along with an active promotion by the supermarkets of re-usable shopping bags.

A decree on the disposal of unsolicited advertising flyers has been signed by the ministers and will be published very soon. It establishes a financial contribution for the collection and treatment of unsolicited advertising flyers by their producers. This financial contribution will be different according to the waste treatment used, in order to promote recycling. Moreover, it encourages producers to rethink their advertising methods (for instance, distribute fewer flyers and / or use less waste-producing media).

2. Domestic 3R activities

2.1 Good practices on 3Rs

We are going to develop a showcase of the successful activities on the 3Rs, including those of the national level, the municipality level, industry, and NGOs/NPOs. Please fill out the EXCEL sheet attached to this e-mail with your good practices on the 3Rs. (Note: If you have already provided us with substantial information on good practices on the 3Rs in the form of the 3Rs portfolio in the Ministerial Conference, please provide us more detailed information on a few of the most successful cases in your country.)

2.2 3Rs and governance

To promote the 3Rs, it is necessary to develop a governance system that responds to different situations and conditions of each country. Are there any specific issues relating to institutional arrangements for the implementation of the 3Rs and environmentally-sound management of waste? For example, please explain the different roles of stakeholders in the promotion of the 3Rs, such as how to position the informal sector that is engaged in recycling and recovering activities under the context of national 3Rs policies.

The voluntary commitment of the large-scale retail sector to reduce the quantities of disposable carrier bags distributed is an example of a successful large-scale consultation, as mentioned above.

Another example of a non-legislative action leading to a better waste treatment is the framework agreement, which has been signed by the Environment Ministry and the agricultural sector in 2003, in order to organize the collection and appropriate treatment of the phytopharmaceutical wastes (packaging and chemicals). The producers of phytopharmaceutical products finance these treatment operations. A similar work is also in progress concerning the end-of-life treatment of pleasure boats, and the recycling of agricultural plastics.

2.3 3Rs and environmentally-sound management of industrial waste

Since economic development tends to cause an increase in the amount of industrial waste generation, environmentally-sound management of industrial waste is essential to promote the 3Rs. To decouple economic development and industrial waste generation, what kind of role is expected for the industrial waste emitter, national and local governments, including municipalities? Also, please give us your views on how to share the responsibilities of construction and operation of landfill as final disposal sites among the stakeholders?

As soon as the early 90's, national authorities established the obligation for industries to carry out Waste Management Studies, in order to characterize the quantities and toxicity of industrial waste they generate, and optimize its environmentally-sound treatment.

Rising waste treatment costs, because of ever-stricter legislations on

emissions in particular, is a powerful tool to decouple economic development and industrial waste generation.

3. International 3R policy and strategy

At the Ministerial Conference on the 3R Initiative, it was observed that the international flow of (i) goods and materials for recycling and manufacturing, and (ii) recycled and remanufactured products (hereinafter “recyclable resources and remanufactured goods”) may contribute to the efficient use of resources and the prevention of environmental pollution if proper mechanisms are in place. It may promote sustainable consumption and production affecting not only the environment but also economic development and job creation. At the same time, it was noted that for many countries the first priority should be placed on minimising the wastes within the country in which the wastes are generated. Participants at the Ministerial Conference expressed the view that transboundary movement of wastes should take place only when safe and appropriate use and environmentally-sound management are possible in the receiving country.

3.1 Situation of transboundary movement of recyclable resources and remanufactured goods

Regarding the transboundary movement of recyclable resources and remanufactured goods, what are the major recyclable resources observed in exports from and imports to your country? Are there any specific problems in relation to exports and imports of these recyclable resources and remanufactured goods? What are the major reasons for the problems?

France exports, for instance, a small part of its packaging waste (for instance, approximately 10% of the paper / cardboard collected is exported to be recycled).

Transboundary movements of non-hazardous recyclable waste improve the efficiency of the global economy, and promote rational behaviors among economic actors. But the limit between hazardous and non-hazardous waste is often controversial. International guidelines on the subject could be necessary.

3.2 Environmentally-sound management in transboundary movement of recyclable resources and remanufactured goods

, what kind of policies and measures (e.g., cooperation among national governments and other stakeholders) are expected? If your country has already launched such activities, please provide us with detailed information.

To prevent environmental pollution caused by transboundary movement of recyclable resources, France enforces the European council regulation n°259/93 of 1 February 1993 on the supervision and control of shipments of waste within, into and out of the European Community.

France supports the principles of the Basel Convention: hazardous and

household waste is to be treated in the country of origin. France also supports the Ban Amendment, forbidding exportation of hazardous waste to non-OCDE countries.

3.3 Harmonisation of economic and environmental benefits through the transboundary movements of recyclable resources and remanufactured goods

Please provide information on the positive and negative socio-economic impacts of the increase in import and export of recyclable resources and remanufactured goods in your country. What kinds of policies and measures have been implemented to support the positive effects and mitigate negative effects of trade of recyclable resources and remanufactured goods?

For instance, the increase in export of packaging waste goes along generally with a higher revenue for local authorities, but national authorities are very careful on the conditions of treatment of this waste abroad, which must guarantee a similar level of environment and workers protection.

4. Others

If there are any other issues related to promotion of the 3Rs which should be discussed in the Senior Officials Meeting, please provide us with your input below.

5. Information of respondent

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The Showcase of 3Rs Good Practices

Date: 02/22/2006

Country/Organisation: French Environment Ministry

No.	Name of the practice	Summary of the practice -level of implementation(national, local, industry, NGOs/NPOs) -duration -stakeholders involved	Impact: -Improvements after the introduction of the practice	Key For Success What are the major reasons for the success of the activity?
1	Reduction of the quantities of disposable carrier bags distributed in supermarkets	National target : -50% from 2003 to 2006, voluntary commitment of the large-scale retail sector	Results: 2004: - 15 % ; 2005: -35%	A preliminary workshop was held and gathered all the different stakeholders (large-scale retailers, carrier bags producers, NGOs and the national authorities)
2	Development of experimental standards on product expected effective lifetime (PEEL)	Development by the French Standardization Association of experimental standards on the expected effective lifetime for some specific products, such as lamps, batteries, ...	Better information of consumers. PEEL is an interesting complement to the "price" information. A cheap product with a short expected effective lifetime can be less interesting than a little more expensive one, but that will have a longer useful life.	A key for the success of this action is to develop experimental standards for <i>specific</i> products, in close cooperation with producers, before maybe trying to define more general standards for a larger range of products.
3	Financing of the collection and treatment of unsolicited advertising flyers by their producers	A decree stating that producers of unsolicited advertising flyers must pay for their collection and treatment has been signed by the different ministers and will be published very soon.	The decree gives a financial responsibility to the producers of unsolicited advertising flyers for their collection and treatment by local authorities. On average, one household receives 40 kg per year of unsolicited advertisement in its letter box. Producers will pay more attention to the quantities of advertising flyers distributed, and possibly will use other less waste-producing media to advertise. This financial contribution will also promote recycling of waste.	A consultation is necessary with local authorities and producers in order to set the appropriate level of financing.