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**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

Eleventh session, 12-14 July 2006  
Item 2(b) of the provisional agenda

**UPDATING OF THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND  
LABELLING OF CHEMICALS (GHS)**

Health hazards

Note by the secretariat

During the process of translation of the first revised edition of the GHS, the Russian Translation Service of the secretariat raised a question concerning the meaning of the terminology used in Chapters 3.8 and 3.9 of the GHS. The problem is linked to the use, or non-use, of a slash (“/”) in the term “Specific Target Organ Systemic Toxicity” or other related expressions such as “specific target organ/system”.

The French translation of the first edition was prepared by OECD and checked by experts of the Sub-Committee. The Spanish translation of the first edition was prepared by the UN and checked by experts of the Sub-Committee, but new changes were suggested to the secretariat by the expert from Spain.

The English term “Specific target organ/systemic toxicity” may be interpreted as “Specific target organ toxicity” or “specific systemic toxicity” while the term “Specific target organ systemic toxicity” may be understood as “systemic toxicity of specific target organs” or “systemic toxicity for specific target organs”.

In the current French version, the term “Specific target organ systemic toxicity” has been translated as the English equivalent “systemic toxicity for certain target organs”. In the Spanish version, on the contrary, the same term has been translated as the English equivalent “target organ specific systemic toxicity”, meaning systemic toxicity affecting specific target organs.

The secretariat brought this question to the attention of the Sub-Committee during its 10th session in document UN/SCEGHS/10/INF.6 and invited the Sub-Committee to clarify the meaning of the English term and its related expressions. For the sake of clarity, it was suggested to replace slashes in the English version by coordinating conjunctions as relevant and appropriate.

After some discussion on this topic, no consensus on the interpretation of the above mentioned terms was reached. In addition, the Sub-Committee felt that the question needed to be considered further to ensure consistency in the use of this terminology in the different language versions (see para.18 of the report ST/SG/AC.10/C.4/20).

To illustrate the problem, the secretariat reproduces hereafter, in English, the terms used in the English version of Chapter 3.8 of the first revised edition of the GHS, the translation in English of the corresponding terms used in the French version, and the translation in English of the terminology used in the Spanish version.

***(Table: in English only)***

Title (Chapters 3.8/3.9) (3.8.1.6, 3.8.5 (decision logic 3.8.1), 3.8.4 (table 3.8.3))	E	SPECIFIC TARGET ORGAN SYSTEMIC TOXICITY
	F	SYSTEMIC TOXICITY FOR CERTAIN TARGET ORGANS
	SP	TARGET ORGAN SPECIFIC SYSTEMIC TOXICITY
3.8.1.1	E	Specific, non lethal target organ/systemic toxicity
	F	Specific, non lethal, toxic systemic effects on certain target organs
	SP	non lethal and target organ specific systemic toxicity
3.8.1.2; 3.8.3.4.1; Table 3.8.2 and related notes	E	Specific target organ/systemic toxicant
	F	systemic toxicants affecting a target organ
	SP	target organ specific systemic toxicant
3.8.1.5; 3.8.1.6; 3.8.2.1.5; 3.8.2.1.10.2; 3.8.2.1.10.3; 3.8.3.1; 3.8.3.3.1	E	Specific target organ/systemic toxicity
	F	systemic toxicity for a target organ
	SP	target organ specific systemic toxicity
Figure 3.8.1	E	specific target organ systemic toxicity
	F	systemic toxicity for certain target organs
	SP	target organ specific systemic toxicity
Figure 3.8.1, NOTE	E	specific target organ/system
	F	target organ or specific system
	SP	specific target organ or system

3.8.2.1.4 3.8.2.1.10.2	E	specific target organ/systemic toxic effect
	F	effects of systemic toxicity and effects on a target organ
	SP	effects of target organ specific systemic toxicity
3.8.2.1.6	E	Target organ/systemic toxicity
	F	Systemic toxicity for a target organ
	SP	Target organ specific systemic toxicity
3.8.2.2.1(e)	E	Organ/systemic effects
	F	Organic/systemic effects
	SP	Systemic effects on other organs or systems
3.8.5.2 decision logic 3.8.2	E	Specific target organ systemic toxicant
	F	Systemic toxicant for certain target organs
	SP	Target organ specific systemic toxicants

### Action required

The Sub-Committee is invited to clarify the interpretation of the terms listed above to correct current differences between the various linguistic versions and to avoid problems of misinterpretation and implementation in the future.

The secretariat suggest to replace the slashes in the English version by coordinating conjunctions (where relevant and appropriate) and to insert clear definitions for the relevant terms in Chapter 1.2.

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