



What is the National Strategy for Integrated Chemicals Management?

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has been preparing a strategy to better manage chemicals since 2017. Known as the 'National Strategy for Integrated Chemicals Management', it will cover the circulation of chemicals in the country, along with imports, trafficking, capacities and disposal.

First meeting for the strategy

Two years on from the initial launch of the plans, the strategy was officially approved by the country's executive body – the Council of Ministers – in April 2019. Since then, the UAE has taken another key step in its journey, with the first meeting for the implementation of the strategy.

In attendance were representatives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, Environment Agency, Office of Weapons, Ammunition and Explosives, Environment Protection and Development Authority and the Federal Customs Authorities. There were also representatives from several municipal authorities, including Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, Fujarah and Dubai.

Protecting the public

Held on 28th July, the meeting covered the specific approach to be taken when it comes to implementing the plans. Chemicals are a key component across several sectors – from [shale oil](#) to construction and manufacturing. However, their impact on public health and the environment also has to be considered. That's especially true when it comes to transport and disposal.

The National Strategy for Integrated Chemicals Management aims to create strong legislation – and relevant authoritative bodies – to regulate how chemicals are imported, circulated and disposed of, to protect the environment and public health.

Safe handling throughout the life cycle

"The handling and disposal of chemicals, given that they are an essential component in most industries, have posed many environmental and health concerns," [said Othaibah Al Qaydi](#) from the Department of Municipal Affairs in MOCCA. "The UAE is acutely aware of the challenge and is tackling it at various levels in multiple ways, including through ratifying and complying with relevant international agreements"



He continued, “The national strategy for integrated management of chemicals seeks to ensure the safe handling of high-risk chemicals throughout their life cycle, from production until they are carefully disposed of. It provides an institutional framework for entities that license the trade, import, and suitable disposal of chemicals to prevent the illegal circulation of harmful substances.”

At present, the strategy has not been made public. However, it’s sure to become a key part of the UAE efforts to develop sustainably over the coming decades.