

8.3 The Seveso Directive (2012/18/EU) (European Union)

OECD GP Activity	UN SF Activity	UN SD Goals / Targets
8. Natech risk in regulations, standards, codes and guidance	3. Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience	3.D Strengthen the capacity of all countries ... for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks

Classification according to OECD Guiding Principles, UN Sendai Framework Priorities/Activities, and UN SDGs and Targets

Figure 1: The continuous improvement cycle to prevent major accidents in the Seveso-III-Directive (2012/18/EU)



Source: © European Union, 2017

Short Facts:	Natural Hazard(s) Considered:
<p>Governance approach: Directive</p> <p>Source: European Union</p> <p>Entry into force: Seveso I in 1982 (82/501/EEC), superseded by Seveso II from 1996 (96/82/EG) and Seveso III from 2012 (2012/18/EU)</p> <p>Targeted Stakeholders: Operators of establishments (where certain hazardous substances in certain amounts are “present” on site)</p> <p>Scope of applicability: International, national, establishments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooding • Earthquake • Lightning • Wildfire • Volcanic activity • Storms <p>Climate change: Not specified</p>

Description

In 1976, the catastrophic accident in the Italian town of Seveso, where unknown amounts of the highly toxic dioxin TCDD were released into the environment, resulted in the severe contamination of the surrounding area with long-term evacuation of inhabitants and extensive damages to the surrounding eco-systems. Based on this and other, similar major accidents, the European Economic Community (EEC) passed the directive 82/501/EEC to prevent and control the risk of such major accidents at specific industrial activity (Seveso-I-Directive) in 1982. With further similar accidents happening in the years that followed (e.g. at Bhopal, Toulouse or Enschede), the directive was amended several times by the European Commission (EC), finally resulting in the Seveso-III-Directive (2012/18/EU) published in July 2012.

The Directive applies to more than 12,000 establishments in the EU that use or store hazardous substances in large quantities, mainly in the chemical and petrochemical industry. Depending on the amount of dangerous substances used, establishments are categorized into lower and upper tier, with latter being regulated more strictly.

The framework of the Directive includes a continuous cycle of improvement including prevention, preparedness and response as well as provisions on lesson-learning.

By order of the Directive, **operators** of establishments are required to:

- Notify all concerned establishments
- Issue a major accident prevention policy
- Produce a safety report for upper-tier establishments
- Produce internal emergency plans for upper-tier establishments
- Provide information in case of accidents

Furthermore, **Member State authorities** are obligated to ensure that the following requirements are fulfilled:

- External emergency plan for upper-tier establishments are developed
- Land-use planning for the siting of establishments is conducted
- Relevant information is accessible to the public
- Necessary past-accident measures are taken
- Accidents are reported to the European Commission
- The unlawful use of establishments is prohibited
- Inspections are conducted

In addition, the concerned public needs to be informed and consulted about the risk of the establishment and on best behaviour in case of emergency.

Annex II part 2 of the Directive requires that the location of the establishment be described in safety reports (of upper-tier establishments) including meteorological, geological and hydrographic conditions. Annex II part 4 paragraph 1 iii of the Directive requires explicitly that risks due to natural hazards be considered in accidental risk analysis and determination of required major accident prevention measures in safety reports. According to this, natural hazards should be considered in identification and evaluation of major hazards as a part of the safety management system of all establishments.

Link/Contact:

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/seveso/index.htm>



Comments by the UN/OECD Natech-Steering Group:

A review of the practical implementation of the obligations by operators at the local level would be useful.

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