



# ELIMINATING LEAD IN PAINT IN SEVEN ASIAN COUNTRIES ASIAN LEAD PAINT ELIMINATION PROJECT 2012-2015



2015



European Union



a toxics-free future

# ELIMINATING LEAD IN PAINT IN SEVEN ASIAN COUNTRIES

## 2015

**IPEN** sincerely thanks the European Union, which made the Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project possible, with funding totaling 1.4 million euros.

IPEN also thanks its partner organizations in each country for their dedication and hard work:

**Bangladesh** — Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO)

**India** — Toxics Link

**Indonesia** — BaliFokus

**Nepal** — Center for Public Health and Environmental Development (CEPHED)

**Philippines** — EcoWaste Coalition

**Sri Lanka** — Centre for Environmental Justice (CEJ)

**Thailand** — Ecological Alert and Recovery Thailand (EARTH)

Many individuals have contributed their expertise to IPEN's Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project and its Global Lead Paint Elimination Campaign. IPEN would like especially to thank Dr. Scott Clark, Professor Emeritus, University of Cincinnati, who has taught everyone in the IPEN network so much about lead paint. Special thanks also to Perry Gottesfeld, Occupational Knowledge International, for his longstanding dedication to lead elimination.

IPEN is comprised of 700 participating organizations in 116 countries, primarily developing countries and countries with economies in transition. IPEN brings together leading environmental and public health groups around the world to engage in international efforts to minimize and, whenever possible, eliminate hazardous toxic chemicals both internationally and within their own countries.



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# PREFACE

The health impacts of lead exposure on young children's brains are lifelong, irreversible and untreatable. The World Health Organization (WHO) calls lead paint "a major flashpoint" for children's potential lead poisoning and says that "since the phase-out of leaded petrol, lead paint is one of the largest sources of exposure to lead in children." WHO and other authoritative health officials agree that no safe level of lead exposure in children has been determined. And WHO lists lead-caused mental retardation as among the top ten "diseases whose health burden among children is due to modifiable environmental factors."

Nonetheless, paint with high lead content continues to be widely sold and used in low- and middle-income countries, despite being banned in high income countries for more than 40 years.

IPEN's Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project was developed to eliminate lead in paint in seven Asian countries: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project is one part of a larger, campaign to eliminate lead paint worldwide. In 2007 and 2008, NGOs in IPEN's network collected and analyzed decorative (home use) paints on the market in 11 developing countries, and in countries with economies in transition. The results were startling. In every one of these countries, many of the solvent-based, decorative enamel paints contained dangerously high lead levels. In response, IPEN launched a worldwide lead paint elimination campaign. Since then, IPEN-affiliated NGOs and others have sampled and analyzed paints on the market in approximately 40 low- and middle-income countries.

Currently, IPEN is executing agency for the African Lead Paint Elimination Project, a 1 million USD project in four African countries funded by the Global Environment Facility, with United National Environment Programme (UNEP) serving as the Implementing Agency.



# INTRODUCTION



**THIS BOOKLET TELLS THE STORY OF HOW SEVEN ASIAN COUNTRIES SUCCEEDED IN** reducing lead levels in paint in their countries. The Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project was implemented over 3.5 years (2012-2015) in seven countries (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand) with funding from the European Union totaling 1.4 million euros.

When IPEN launched its Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project in mid-2012, a majority of solvent-based, decorative enamel paints from leading brands analyzed in seven participating countries contained high lead levels.

At the conclusion of the project in June 2015, the market-leading brands in all seven countries had eliminated lead from their decorative paints and many smaller manufacturers had as well.

Two Project countries (Nepal and Philippines) established mandatory limits on lead in paint of 90 parts per million (ppm) total lead (dry weight) — as protective as any regulatory control in force anywhere in the world.

The Nepal standard requires information on paint can labels about lead concentrations and a precautionary message about avoiding lead exposure hazards during repainting and building renovation.

The Philippine paint regulation covers both industrial and decorative paints, making it the most rigorous regulation in the world. Major paint producers in the Philippines also are participating in the world's first, third party, Lead Safe Paint Certification Program – a program, developed under the Project, that will independently verify and certify that the lead content of their paints is below 90 ppm.

## SETTING A LEAD PAINT STANDARD

Most highly industrialized countries adopted laws and regulations to control the lead content of decorative paints more than 40 years ago. When lead pigments, lead driers and other lead compounds are not added to paints and raw materials are carefully selected, the total lead content will generally be well below 90 parts per million (ppm) dry weight, the strictest standard in the world. Many countries have adopted mandatory lead paint content limits in the range of 90 to 600 ppm total lead (dry weight).



In Sri Lanka, many paint brands did not initially comply with a mandatory lead paint standard enacted just before the Project began, and that came into force January 2013. Now, 90 percent of the brands on the market comply with the 600 ppm limit.

In the other four countries (India, Indonesia, Thailand, and Bangladesh), proposed, mandatory regulations to control lead in paint are in development. High level public officials have indicated support for lead paint regulation, and IPEN expects their formal adoption soon. But paint companies aren't waiting for regulation. In each of these countries, market leaders have reformulated their paints to meet the proposed, new standards.



# BANGLADESH

## MAJOR PRODUCERS BELOW 90 PPM; EXPECTING A MANDATORY STANDARD SOON



**ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (ESDO) BEGAN ANALYZING** lead content in decorative enamel paints sold in Bangladesh in 2010 and found that most paint companies in Bangladesh sold paints with high lead levels. Some were large regional companies, such as Asian Paints, that had already phased out lead paint elsewhere.

By 2013, however, leading paint brands in Bangladesh with major market share had largely stopped producing paints containing more than 600 parts per million (ppm) lead. And by 2015, based on ESDO's most recent paint analysis, all paint from brands representing 84% of market share contained less than 90 ppm lead and would comply with the most stringent paint regulation anywhere in the world.

Though the Bangladesh government has not yet established a mandatory standard and the 2015 study shows that some small manufacturers continue to produce paints with high lead content, there are promising developments that suggest regulation is coming soon:

- Five leading paint brands now appear to comply with a 90 ppm lead content limit; 7 brands – 85% of the paint market – no longer sell paints containing more than 600 ppm lead, and number of smaller paint manufacturers that have reduced lead levels has increased since 2013
- All relevant government ministries have discussed and reviewed Draft Guidelines developed by ESDO for a 50 ppm Lead Paint Standard and complete lead paint elimination
- In 2015, the Director General of Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) told ESDO in a meeting that it would enforce 50 ppm mandatory standard for lead in household enamel paints.



***“This project has created a momentum for a long-term achievement and has created a strong solidarity amongst the participants in the seven Asian countries.”***

– DR. SHAHRIAR HOSSAIN, ESDO

- The General Secretary of the Bangladesh Paint Manufacturers has said publicly that “manufacturers have agreed to eliminate the use of lead in paints by 2016 and set up the immediate standard of 50 ppm by 2015.”
- The Ministry of Environment and Forest has indicated support for a lead in paint phase-out.
- The Minister of Primary Mass Education has informally said it would enact a Government Order to ban the further use of leaded paint in all primary schools in Bangladesh; a formal announcement is now awaited.

These have been hard won gains. At the outset of ESDO’s participation in the Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project, campaign political unrest made public outreach difficult, industry was resistant to lead paint regulation, and the public was largely unaware of the issue.

Despite these challenges, ESDO held forums, conducted school awareness programs, organized children’s painting contests, organized rallies and public meetings, led a petition campaign, generated news reports on lead, and met regularly with both paint industry leaders and government officials. In the end, ESDO generated more than two hundred press articles and 65 radio/television broadcasts on the topic of lead in paint and generated an extremely large social media presence for lead paint elimination.

All of which, ESDO believes, has generated the momentum required for the government to enact lead paint regulation by the end of 2015 with a goal of complete elimination by 2017.

## **PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN BANGLADESH**

- Paint brands with 85% of total market share no longer sell paints with more than 600 ppm lead
- Director General of Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) has indicated the Institution intends to establish a mandatory 50 ppm lead paint standard
- The Ministry of Environment and Forest has indicated support for a lead in paint phase-out
- The Minister of Primary Mass Education has indicated the intent to ban the use of leaded paint in all primary schools in Bangladesh





# INDIA

## MARKET LEADERS HAVE REDUCED LEAD IN PAINT; THIRD PARTY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM DEVELOPED



**MANY PEOPLE WERE SURPRISED WHEN STUDIES CONDUCTED BY TOXICS LINK (TL) IN 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2011** revealed that paints sold in India and many other countries continued to have extremely high levels of lead, despite bans for nearly forty years in most industrialized countries. TL's studies drew international attention to the problem of lead in paint, and played an important role in the establishment of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead in Paint (GAELP), an initiative of the World Health Organization and United Nations Environment Programme, which has as its objective "the phase-out of the manufacture and sale of paints containing lead and to eventually eliminate the risk such paints pose."

Though large Indian paint companies began shifting away from using lead in paints following the release of TL's earlier studies, complete lead paint elimination has remained a challenge given India's large size and a vast paint industry with an estimated 2,500 manufacturers.

At the start of the Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project in 2012, TL launched an aggressive media campaign in both traditional and social media on the hazards of childhood lead paint exposure, including the publication of two new comprehensive national paint studies. It hosted high level meetings with government officials, paint industry representatives, and public health officials, organized school awareness programs and conducted a petition campaign calling for lead elimination.

TL also initiated a process for developing a third party paint certification program in India in cooperation with the Quality Council of India (QCI), an autonomous body founded as a joint initiative of government and industry to establish and propagate quality standards throughout Indian society.





***“The biggest accomplishment in this project is that we have been successful in changing things on the ground – not just in one country, but in several countries.”***

– SATISH SINHA, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, TOXICS LINK

Though Indian-based paint companies initially resisted lead paint elimination, Toxics Link’s work over the last three and half years has paid off. Paint companies holding 70% market share in India no longer sell paints with more than 90 parts per million (ppm) lead, and the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) – a government agency – has reduced the country’s voluntary lead paint standard from 1,000 ppm to 90 ppm.<sup>1</sup> It is now up to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to make the standards mandatory. In addition, QCI, together with TL and IPEN, has developed an India-specific Lead Safe Paint Certification program and is working to get paint companies to join the program.

Small and medium size (SME) paint companies remain a special challenge in India, especially given the country’s large size. SME representatives attending three regional meetings in different states hosted by TL in 2015 agreed that standards are necessary. However, most said they plan to wait for mandatory government standards before changing their formulations. TL’s most recent study, released in 2015, confirms this attitude, showing that while some smaller producers are beginning to shift away from leaded products, many continue to sell paint with high lead levels.

A national regulatory framework to phase out leaded paint is likely to be adopted in the near future. High level government representatives have acknowledged that lead paint is a public health problem. The Ministry of Health supports mandatory standards. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has indicated its intent to take the necessary steps to make the BIS standard mandatory. The Indian Paint Association, India’s largest paint association, indicated to Toxics Link that it supports mandatory standards. And its planning commission has included mandatory use of lead-free pigments and coatings in its 12th five year plan (2012-2017).<sup>2</sup>

## PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN INDIA

- Major paint companies with 70% market share sell no decorative paints with more than 90 parts per million (ppm) lead
- The Bureau of Indian Standards’ voluntary standard for lead in paint was reduced from 1,000 ppm to 90 ppm
- A third party paint certification program has been established in collaboration with Quality Council of India
- The Indian Chemical Industry’s planning commission has included mandatory use of lead-free pigments and coatings in its 12th five year plan
- The Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change have indicated their support for mandatory standards
- The Indian Paint Association, India’s largest paint association, publicly supports mandatory standards



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bis.org.in/qazwsx/cmd/cmd-ii16133.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Indian Chemical Industry, Five Year Plan 2012-2017, (<http://chemicals.nic.in/XIth%20Five%20Year%20Plan-Yr%202011.pdf>)

# INDONESIA

## A NEW VOLUNTARY STANDARD; MORE PAINTS WITH LOW LEAD LEVELS AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MANDATORY REGULATION IN TWO YEARS



**THE ISSUE OF LEAD IN PAINT WAS NOT ON ANYONE IN INDONESIA'S RADAR WHEN BALI-Fokus** shared with government officials its 2013 report documenting that paints with high lead content were widely available on the Indonesian market. The report, produced as a part of the Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project, shocked some Indonesian officials. One said BaliFokus had dropped a "bomb" on their lap. Citing fears of industry complaints and even bankruptcies, the Ministry of Environment (MoE) asked BaliFokus to postpone releasing the report and to contact paint companies to solicit their comments and reaction. When some paint manufacturers and the pigment vendor Clariant responded positively, BaliFokus published the report and held a press conference to release it.

In the report, BaliFokus proposed a national mandatory standard for lead in paint of 90 parts per million (ppm). Industry leaders responded by proposing a 600 ppm standard, arguing that a more stringent standard might adversely affect small and medium size paint companies. BaliFokus indicated it could accept this approach and began an outreach campaign aimed at the media and the public in order to raise awareness and to advocate for the early adoption of a mandatory standard.

In November 2014, after 3 consultation meetings with a committee on paint standards, the Indonesian standards agency, Badan Standarisasi Nasional (BSN) Indonesia, proposed a new voluntary SNI (Standar Nasional Indonesia) establishing a maximum limit of 600 ppm lead content for decorative paints manufactured and sold in Indonesia. Although this new standard had not been officially released as of late summer 2015, manufacturers welcomed it as complementary to other national standards. BaliFokus is hopeful that





***“We learned that the lead paint issue is not a technical issue but rather a health, social and policy issue. When we addressed potential impacts on children’s health as our main concern, the public and the industry responded positively. These responses gave us the confidence to push for policy interventions.”***

– YUYUN ISMAWATI, SENIOR ADVISOR OF BALIFOKUS FOUNDATION

this voluntary standard, once it is adopted, will become the first step toward a mandatory standard since, in Indonesia, voluntary standards can be considered for mandatory regulation after two years.

Even in the absence of a mandatory standard, however, the BaliFokus effort has resulted in reductions in lead in paint. When BaliFokus first analysed paint samples in 2013, only one market leading company – ICI/Akzo Nobel (Dulux & Catylac brands) – was compliant with a 600 ppm standard. A second study released in 2015 indicated that two additional market leading companies – Pacific Paint and Mowilex – now are also compliant.

A number of other developments makes BaliFokus optimistic about the prospects for complete elimination of lead in paint in Indonesia.

- The Ministry of Industry’s Directorate of Industry Basis and Manufacturing has indicated that it welcomes BaliFokus advocacy for a mandatory standard and that it will follow up the voluntary standard with a mandatory regulation to achieve its target/goal to phase out harmful chemicals by 2020
- The Ministry of Environment and Forestry has indicated it sees lead paint elimination as a “quick-win” under the Indonesia’s 10YP Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) program
- The Ministry of Environment and Forestry Deputy with responsibility for Hazardous Substances has indicated its appreciation and support for BaliFokus’ efforts as an example of the implementation of government’s regulation on Hazardous Substances
- The Ministry of Health, Directorate of Children’s Health Protection welcomed the initiative and thanked BaliFokus for providing information they did not previously have on how lead in paint is harmful to children’s health.
- The Lembaga Kebijakan Pengadaan Publik (Public Procurement Policy Institute), a government procurement policy agency, agreed to include lead-free paint criteria in public procurement requirements and further support through its Sustainable Public Procurement Program

## PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN INDONESIA

- Paint market leaders (ICI/Akzo Nobel, Pacific Paint, Mowilex) are producing paint that is compliant with a 600 ppm voluntary standard even before a mandatory standard is adopted
- The Indonesia standards agency has developed a voluntary 600 ppm standard that, when adopted, can be reviewed and become mandatory in two years
- The Ministry of Environment and Forestry sees lead paint elimination as a “quick-win” under the Indonesia’s 10YP SCP program
- Awareness of lead paint has become a public health issue for first time in Indonesia





# NEPAL

## ONE OF THE STRICTEST LEAD PAINT STANDARDS IN THE WORLD



### CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT (CEPHED) BEGAN

its campaign to eliminate lead in paint after studies conducted in 2010, and 2011 revealed that enamel decorative paints sold in Nepal contained extremely high lead levels. Paint companies selling high lead products included major regional companies that had already eliminated lead in paints sold in other countries.

Today, Nepal has one of the strictest lead paint standards in the world – a limit of 90 parts per million (ppm). The regulation, which took effect on 20th June 2015, also requires information on paint can labels about lead concentrations and a precautionary message about avoiding lead exposure hazards during repainting and building renovation.

The Department of Education now also requires all public and private schools to only use paints meeting the 90 ppm standard. And many paint companies have joined in endorsing the standard, including the multi-national companies that once widely sold leaded paints in Nepal and whose paints now already meet the new standard.

CEPHED's most recent sampling and analysis, conducted in 2014/2015, shows that paint companies with 70% of market share in Nepal now appear to comply with the new, mandatory standard.

These accomplishments are the result of a more than three year campaign waged by CEPHED as part of the Asian Lead Paint Elimination Campaign. After releasing reports on lead in paint in 2010, 2011 & 2013 CEPHED formally requested all relevant Government agencies (Ministry of Industry; Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment); and the Office of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministries (OPMCM) to enact mandatory lead paint standards in Nepal along with a monitoring and enforcement mechanism. In response, the Office of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministries (OPMCM) urged all concerned Ministries to immediately establish such a policy. However, individual ministries were not quick to act, and despite repeated OPMCM directives over the next two years, nothing moved forward.

***“Research-based, persistent advocacy and closely working with concerned government as well as professional associations worked well in our country. Achieving a mandatory lead paint standard enhanced and strengthened the reputation of our organization with government officials and made it easier for us to communicate with them, not only about this project but other parallel projects, chemical issues, environment issues and public health issues as well.”***

– RAM CHARITRA SAH, CENTER FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT

To promote action by the relevant ministries, CEPHED launched an intensive media and public information campaign on lead in paint and the need for mandatory regulations. Between 2013 and the end of 2014, CEPHED generated more than 70 newspaper accounts, extensive coverage in electronic media, hundreds of follow up contacts with government agencies, and organized or participated in nearly 50 meetings, exhibitions, school rallies and/or events all aimed at educating the government, the paint industry, school leaders, the media and the public about lead in paint.

Early support from the Department of Education (DOE) and Private and Boarding School's Organization, Nepal (PABSON) also played a critical role in raising the profile of lead paint issues nationwide. In 2013, DOE added its logo to posters developed by CEPHED that detailed the hazards of lead paint exposure and distributed them to many public and private schools throughout the country. PABSON also added its logo to CEPHED's posters, distributing them to over one thousand schools in more than 60 districts. Painters suffering from occupational exposure to lead, paint workers trade union and children were also visible participants in the campaign.

A key turning point occurred when the Ministry of Science Technology and Environment (MOSTE) – the agency responsible for regulating hazardous substances and enacting a mandatory standard – formed a technical committee to study and propose new mandatory regulations and nominated CEPHED to be a committee member. Ultimately, the Government of Nepal adopted the regulatory limit for lead in paint of 90 ppm proposed by CEPHED and this technical committee. The new regulation was formally announced on December 22, 2014 when it was published in a National Gazette, and it entered into force in 20th June 2015.<sup>3</sup>

With a mandatory regulation in place and with paint companies with majority market share now compliant, Nepal has come far in just a few years. However, more still needs to be done. A new paint



study report released by CEPHED in 2015 – just before the mandatory standard took effect – showed that many smaller paint companies continue to sell non-compliant, high lead paints.

When CEPHED released its 2015 lead paint report, representatives of Berger Paints, Kansai Paints, and the Federation of National Chambers of Commerce and Industries, actively participated in CEPHED's report launching event, supporting the standard and committing to comply with it. This kind of high level and coordinated multi agencies support suggests that complete lead paint elimination may not be far away in Nepal.

## **PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN NEPAL**

- New, mandatory lead paint standard of 90 parts per million (ppm)
- Manufacturers are required to include lead concentrations and precautionary information to avoid lead exposure hazards during building renovation and rehabilitation projects on paint can labels
- Paint companies with 70% of market share in Nepal are already compliant with the new standard
- The Department of Education requires all public and private schools to use paints that are compliant with the 90 ppm standard
- Many paint companies, including the multi-national companies, have endorsed the standard and committed to comply with the standard
- Government agencies (Ministry of Health and its departments, as well as a research council) have started investigating blood lead levels in children with a goal of further protection

3 [http://moste.gov.np/image/data/Press%20Release/NOTICE/Nepal\\_Gazette.pdf](http://moste.gov.np/image/data/Press%20Release/NOTICE/Nepal_Gazette.pdf)



# PHILIPPINES

## A WORLD CLASS LEAD PAINT REGULATION; THE WORLD'S FIRST THIRD PARTY LEAD CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



### THE PHILIPPINES HAS ONE OF THE STRONGEST LEAD PAINT REGULATIONS IN THE

world. Adopted in 2013, the Chemical Control Order (CCO)<sup>4</sup> prohibits the use of lead in paints in excess of 90 parts per million (ppm) and restricts lead in other products. The CCO applies to industrial as well as decorative paints, and it imposes a ban on the use of lead in the production of toys, school supplies, cosmetics, food and drink packaging, water pipes and fuel additives. It also requires paint can labels to carry warnings that lead dust is hazardous. CCO violators are liable for “applicable administrative and criminal sanctions.” The CCO’s restrictions on paints for decorative and household applications enter into force in 2016; those for industrial applications in 2019.

Major paint companies controlling the majority of the Philippine paint market (Boysen and Davies) no longer produce paints with more than 90 ppm lead, and many smaller companies are taking steps to reformulate their paints in order to comply with the CCO. The Philippine Association of Paint Manufacturers (PAPM) has given assurances that their members’ will phase out lead as provided for in the paint regulation.

In addition, seven paint manufacturers, including two non-members of the paint industry association, have provided the EcoWaste Coalition with letters affirming their commitment to comply with the law. These companies include Andalusia, FH Colors and Coatings, Globesco, H-Chem Industries, Superglobe, Times Paint and Treasure Island.

To ensure paint companies comply with government regulations, PAPM and the EcoWaste Coalition jointly launched a process to develop a certification program to reward companies with recognition for reformulating paint products without added lead.

Today the country’s top two major paint producers are participating in the world’s first, third-party, Lead Safe Paint Certification Program – a program, developed under the Project, that will independently verify and certify the lead content in paints. The Lead Safe Paint Certification logo, which will be issued after a rigorous verification process will help architects,

<sup>4</sup> <http://server2.denr.gov.ph/uploads/rmdd/dao-2013-24.pdf>



***“Toxic chemicals are not always a top priority in developing countries with a great deal of poverty. We put children at the center of our campaign so that consumers and government officials would respond naturally as parents. We also managed to gain the trust and confidence of the paint companies by showing that we were not just there to fight them and hurt their business.”***

– MANNY CALONZO, SENIOR ADVISOR, ECOWASTE COALITION

contractors, painters, bulk purchasers and consumers make informed decisions when buying paint.

Several key strategies EcoWaste employed during the Asian Lead Paint Elimination Campaign led to this turn around. Paint analysis studies conducted by EcoWaste in 2013 and 2015 – and the resulting media coverage – increased the credibility of EcoWaste’s claim that lead in enamel paint was pervasive in the Philippines. Support from the country’s highest environmental and health officials and partnerships with the health sector elevated the public’s and officials’ understanding of the hazards of lead exposure.

A steady stream of events centered around children, organized by EcoWaste, established a strong connection between children and lead exposure and convinced everyone that the issue would remain highly visible until it was resolved. EcoWaste also gained the trust of Philippines’ small paint manufacturers by working with them to resolve technical issues posed by lead elimination.

In the end, both government and industry leaders publicly thanked EcoWaste for its advocacy. And its critical role was incorporated into the new regulation where it is named as one of the groups that will participate in ongoing consultations on implementation.

In acknowledgement of EcoWaste’s role, Environment Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje wrote: The DENR would like to acknowledge the valuable inputs of the EcoWaste Coalition in the formulation of this policy, your commitment to collaborate with DENR to promote this CCO and your staunch advocacy on chemical safety,

sustainable consumption and lifestyle at the national and international arenas. Thence, we look forward to working with EcoWaste Coalition in information, education and communication (IEC) programs to promote industrial compliance and public awareness on this DAO and on the hazards posed by the use and release of lead and lead compounds in the workplace and into the environment.”



## PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN PHILIPPINES

- Lead in paints in excess of 90 parts per million (ppm) is prohibited in both industrial and decorative paints
- Lead is banned in the production of toys, school supplies, cosmetics, food and drink packaging, water pipes and fuel additives
- Paint cans must carry labels with warnings that lead dust is hazardous for children, pregnant women and the elderly people
- Paint companies with majority market share no longer produce paints with more than 90 ppm lead
- Philippines’ major paint producers are participating in the world’s first, third party, Lead Safe Paint Certification Program – a program that will independently verify and certify the lead content in paints
- De La Salle University – Dasmariñas through its Environmental Resource Management Center adopted a procurement policy stating that “paints should be lead-safe certified”
- The EcoWaste Coalition published the first Filipino children’s storybook on lead poisoning prevention entitled “Ang Makulay na Bahay” (The Colorful House) written by medical doctor and award-winning children’s literature author Dr. Luis Gatmaitan

# SRI LANKA

## 90% OF MARKET MEETS MANDATORY 600 PPM STANDARD



**CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (CEJ)** BEGAN WORKING TO ELIMINATE LEAD IN decorative paint in 2009 after a study conducted by the Indian NGO, Toxics Link, showed high levels of lead in paint in Sri Lanka. In 2011, CEJ initiated a lawsuit seeking a mandatory lead paint standard. As a result, a new mandatory 600 parts per million (ppm) lead standard for enamel paint and floor paint was gazetted on August 2011 and became law on 1 January 2013. The law also made 90 ppm a mandatory lead standard for emulsion paint and paint used on toys. However, a 2013 CEJ study, conducted immediately after the regulation took effect, found that only half of the country's leading paint brands met the new Sri Lankan standard.

As a part of the Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project, CEJ sought to increase both consumer and producers' awareness about lead paint health hazards. To increase compliance with the new law, CEJ conducted information and training sessions with manufacturers and visited companies individually at their facilities to discuss paint reformulation.

To help create consumer demand for lead safe products, CEJ focused on increasing consumer awareness of the danger posed by high lead content paints. Parents, teachers and children in both schools and pre-schools received posters and stickers on lead hazards developed by CEJ. In one very successful media event, CEJ repainted a pre-school with lead safe paints. CEJ also conducted 40 awareness programs around the country and visited paint retailers all over the country to raise awareness of lead paint issues. These and other activities resulted in widespread media attention, which helped to popularize the issue and keep it in the public eye.

At the same time, CEJ continued to advocate with government officials for additional regulation that would result in complete elimination of lead in paint in Sri Lanka, including placing paints, varnishes, driers and pigments on the controlled items list of the Department of Customs.

Following a 2014 CEJ study, which found high levels of lead in dust at schools and preschools, Sri Lanka's Consumer Affairs Authority (CAA) took paint regulation one step further by requiring all paint manufacturers and traders of paints used in

***“In other issues such as waste dumping we close one waste dump and it moves to another place and we sue and it moves to another place. After 20 years, we are still fighting the waste dumping. In this project we’ve actually changed something, and it is lasting change.”***

– HEMANTHA WITHANAGE, DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

the building industry to “print legibly the total content of Lead in paint in mg/ kg on the packs of containers of paints...”

By 2015, all of these activities had paid off. A mid-2015 CEJ study of lead in paints in Sri Lanka showed that brands with 90% of market share were not only compliant with the 600 ppm mandatory standard, but would also comply with a 90 ppm standard – the strictest standard now in force anywhere in the world. The same study also found that more than half of the brands produced by small and medium companies which were found to have high lead levels in the previous, 2013 study now comply with the national mandatory 600 ppm standard.

Some smaller companies, however, continue to sell paints with high lead levels. However, most of these were produced before the mandatory standard took effect, and there is good reason to believe that this will be ending soon. In June 2015, Sri Lanka’s Consumer Affairs Authority announced it would begin a “crack-down” on paint manufacturers who fail to conform to lead content regulations, including pulling certain brands off the shelves.

In addition, the paint company, Multilac, with 20% market share, has agreed to participate in the third-party Lead Safe Paint Certification program, developed under the Project, to independently verify its lead content claims. Some other, smaller manufacturers have also expressed interest in a low-lead verification system.

Finally, the Association of Building Contractors says it plans to recommend paint with low lead content, and the Presidential Secretariat has agreed to put lead free paint into procurement documents for pre-schools.

## **PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN SRI LANKA**

- A mandatory 600 parts per million (ppm) lead paint standard for enamel paint and floor paint. A mandatory 90 ppm lead paint standard for emulsion paint and paints used on toys
- Paint brands with 90% of market share are now compliant with the 600 ppm mandatory standard and most would meet a 90 ppm standard – the strictest standard now in force anywhere in the world
- All paint manufacturers and traders of paints used in the building industry are required to put the total lead content in mg/kg on paint containers
- One major paint company, Multilac, with 20% market share, has agreed to participate in the third-party Lead Safe Paint Certification program to independently verify its lead content claims





# THAILAND

## A COMMITMENT TO A MANDATORY 100 PPM LEAD PAINT STANDARD



**THE DANGERS OF LEAD PAINT FIRST CAME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE THAI PUBLIC IN 2009** when EARTH released a study of paints sold in Thailand, which revealed that nearly 80% of the analyzed enamel decorative paints exceeded Thailand's voluntary standard of 600 ppm. Half of these paints contained lead levels in excess of 10,000 ppm. The following year, a major research institution associated with Ramathibodi Hospital identified enamel decorative paint in Bangkok childcare centers as a major source for children's lead exposure.

In response, the Thai government strengthened voluntary standards for enamel paints from 600 ppm to 100 ppm. However, a second paint study by EARTH in 2013 found that little had changed. Nearly 80% of paints analyzed contained high lead levels, and 40% contained levels in excess of 10,000 ppm

An aggressive campaign by EARTH as part of the Asian Lead Paint Elimination Project over the last three years to reduce lead in paint and establish mandatory lead paint standards has resulted in significant progress.

- In 2015, the Director of the Ministry of Industry's made an official commitment to issue a mandatory 100 ppm enamel paint regulation<sup>5</sup>
- A draft labeling regulation<sup>6</sup> for lead-containing paint products has been approved by a sub-committee of the Consumer Protection Board and is pending final approval. It would require labels to say "Lead is dangerous for brain and red blood cells. Prohibited for use in homes or buildings."
- High ranking officials from both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Industry attended a 2014 International Lead Poisoning Prevention event organized by EARTH – the first time these ministries have both attended such an event

5 Secretariat of the Prime Minister. "TISI enforces Safety Standard for Alkyd Enamel Paints." March 20, 2015 [www.thaigov.go.th/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=90862](http://www.thaigov.go.th/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=90862)  
<http://www.tisi.go.th/tisi-news-list/item/3732>

6 (Draft) Notice of the Label Committee on Paints with Leaded Ingredients as Label-Controlled Products. (no online access yet)

***“Regulation of lead in paint is an example of health-centered policy, developed from active participation from children’s health advocates, consumers, and the public health sector. Previous voluntary regulation had been ineffective in protecting children and consumers from lead exposure. We also learned how to work with government on the ‘prevention’ side and not only the ‘pollution’ side of environmental issues.”***

– PENCHOM SAETANG, EARTH

- Beginning in 2013, some local governments began to issue legally-binding municipal notices requiring that publicly-funded child-care centers purchase only paints that comply with lead content standards.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2013, the Thai Cabinet issued a resolution in favor of making voluntary standards for lead content in oil-based (enamel) household paints mandatory.<sup>8</sup> The resolution also advised public schools to require the use of paint with lead levels below 90 ppm.

EARTH credits four key strategies for this remarkable shift in government policy.

#### **New, well-researched, scientific data on lead levels in paints.**

EARTH’s professionally produced, scientific reports offered irrefutable evidence of the problem of lead in paint and created credibility for EARTH’s recommendations and proposals.

**Public awareness and outreach campaigns.** EARTH’s lead paint reports and events highlighting the impact of lead exposure received widespread media coverage and kept the issue of mandatory regulation in front of the public. Its outreach materials on lead paint exposure were so effective that government agencies reproduced and distributed them widely at their own events.

**Diversity of stakeholders.** A national alliance, created at the project’s beginning, brought a diverse set of stakeholders together including government agencies, health officials, pediatricians, engineers and representatives of the new military government that had taken power in 2014.

**Industry engagement.** Industry is largely self-regulated in Thailand and, at the outset, the Thai Paint Manufacturers Association strongly opposed EARTH’s decision to release paint study results to the public. But in a survey of paint manufacturers conducted by the National Institute of Development Administration and EARTH in July 2014 that asked individual SMEs about their willingness to eliminate lead in paint, 95 percent of paint manufacturers indicated that they would comply with mandatory regulations. In addition, an overwhelming majority indicated they would prefer a clear government policy with strong enforcement and penalties rather than a voluntary standard. The results of the survey gave EARTH a clear mandate to continue its campaign.

Though there is no lead paint standard in Thailand yet, the campaign has made progress toward achieving its most important goal – the elimination of lead in paint. A 2015 analysis by EARTH found that one-third of the companies whose paints had lead levels above 100 ppm in EARTH’s 2013 study, have now either reduced or eliminated lead ingredients from their enamel paints.

### **PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THAILAND**

- One-third of the companies with lead levels above 100 ppm in 2013, have either reduced or eliminated lead ingredients from their enamel paints
- The Director of the Ministry of Industry has made an official commitment to issue a mandatory 100 ppm enamel paint regulation
- Draft regulation that would require paints with high lead content to carry a warning (“Lead is dangerous for brain and red blood cells. Prohibited for use in homes or buildings.”) has been approved by a sub-committee of the Consumer Protection Board and is awaiting final approval



<sup>7</sup> For example: Gear Rural Municipality, Narathiwat. Municipal Notice on the Impact of Lead in Paints and Toy Products. February 5, 2013. Also: Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior. Most Urgent Letter No. MI 0893.2/W5682 to Governors in Every Province. December 25, 2012

<sup>8</sup> Prime Minister’s Cabinet Order No. NR 0505/22272. August 20, 2013. [http://www.cabinet.soc.go.th/soc/Program2-3.jsp?top\\_serl=99308510](http://www.cabinet.soc.go.th/soc/Program2-3.jsp?top_serl=99308510)



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