

# OECD's Mutual Acceptance of Data (MAD) system

### Objective

As many of the *same* chemicals are produced and traded internationally, different national chemical control policies can lead to duplication in safety testing and government assessments. To address this problem, OECD has developed the Mutual Acceptance of Data (MAD) system, a multilateral agreement which allows participating countries (including non members) to share the results of various non-clinical tests done on chemicals using OECD *methods* and *principles*. This reduces duplicative testing, allows governments to work together when assessing chemicals, and saves government and industry resources.

### Outcome

The foundation of the MAD system is the approximately 150 OECD Test Guidelines (*methods*), the OECD *principles* of Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) and additional guidance on GLP and compliance monitoring. Member countries and non members who are part of the MAD system, work through the OECD to continuously update the Test Guidelines and GLP documents, and they monitor how each country complies with the requirements of MAD. This approach provides governments with confidence that non-clinical test data generated under the MAD system, anywhere in the world, can be used in regulatory assessments.

### Benefits for countries & industries

By reducing duplicative testing, and creating a framework for sharing work, the MAD systems saves governments and industry around €150,000,000 each year. These net savings are a direct result from harmonising the testing and assessment of new pesticides and industrial chemicals and the systematic investigation of high production volume chemicals, and are listed in Table 1.

But, benefits quantified in monetary terms are not the only that accrue from the MAD system; broader qualitative benefits include the health and the environmental gains from governments being able to evaluate and manage more chemicals than they would if working independently. They also include the avoidance of delays in marketing new products; according to industry sources, these could represent similar amounts of money as those saved by avoiding duplicative testing (for example, delays in registrations of a pesticide might lead to missed sales for a full growing season). These qualitative benefits are described in Table 2.

Find out more:  
[www.oecd.org/ehs/mad](http://www.oecd.org/ehs/mad)  
[www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety](http://www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety)



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**Table 1. Estimated annual costs and savings of the OECD's EHS Programme**

Costs to government and industry of participating in the EHS Programme		Savings for government and industry resulting from the programme		
Organisation	Cost	Chemical	Activity	Savings
Country Costs	EUR 11 648 000	New industrial chemicals	Testing	EUR 27 576 000
		New Pesticides	Testing	EUR 134 640 000
Secretariat Costs	EUR 3 579 800			Industry reporting
			Government assessment	EUR 2 408 700
		High production volume chemicals	Testing	EUR 1 547 100
Government assessment	EUR 508 680			
<b>Total (Rounded)</b>	<b>EUR 15 228 000</b>	<b>EUR 168 230 000</b>		

**NET SAVINGS DUE TO THE EHS PROGRAMME = EUR 153 000 000 (Rounded)**

**Table 2. Qualitative benefits of the EHS Programme**

Benefits for governments	Benefits for industry	Benefits to society
Creation of networks among government and industry experts in OECD countries	Creation of networks among government and industry experts from the OECD countries	Reduction in animal testing
Forum to develop new policies to harmonise OECD-wide (9 Council Decisions, 12 Council Recommendations, 1 Council Resolution)	Reduction in delays for marketing new products	More chemicals can be evaluated, and action taken if necessary, than if countries work independently
Development of technical instruments that improve the quality of chemical evaluations and regulations	Harmonised classification and labelling systems for chemical products	Worldwide availability of transparent, government-vetted, high quality information and data
Access to information and advice from countries with different policy experience	Reduction in non-tariff trade barriers	
Harmonised classification and labelling systems for chemical products	Opportunity to obtain information about OECD countries' policies and regulations	
Much increased availability of safety data on high production		

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