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Opinion

A Case Study of an Environmental Project Evaluation in a Major Industrial Installation in the Greater Asopos River Area in Greece

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This paper presents carried out work on the realization path, mode selection, some of the results and the self-evaluation of Environmental Protection Processes as applied in a Major Industrial Site, namely the self-evaluation of Preliminary Orientation Environmental Liability Assessment Study (POELS). The ultimate goal of this work is to illustrate the role of the self-evaluation of Environmental Protection Processes in Environmental Liability issues in order to identify/assess/evaluate major risks at the facility and risk mitigation measures. As a general rule of thumb, discovery of pollution, a pollution condition or a pollution event is typically the trigger for an environmental loss or claim. Pollution is generally attributed to the emission of hazardous or nonhazardous wastes (air pollutants, liquid and solid wastes), and categorized as one of the following occurrences:

a) Current Operations-New Conditions,

b) Sudden and Accidental Releases,

c) Gradual releases,

d) Pre-existing conditions,

e) On-Site Pollution, and

f) Off-site Pollution.

The POELS methodology is in compliance with the Greek and European Union regulations and environmental law specific to the Asopos River Basin Area. Its objectives were to identify major risks at the facility and risk mitigation measures, where risk levels are unacceptable. The Industrial installation site, process characteristics and emissions inventory coupled with industry measurements and current legislation were used as input data to the POELS analysis. Overall, the evaluation approach and relevant review found that the First-time POELS offered a good quality induction programme for first-time study related to Environmental Liability legislative needs.

Framework-Introduction

One of the most important factors driving an interest in environmental insurance and risk management in Europe is the European Union Environmental Liability Directive (ELD) 2004/35/CE. This is EU-wide legislation that establishes a common framework for the prevention and remedying of environmental damage at a reasonable cost to society. The implementing legislation for the ELD only became effective in 2007 (2009 in Greece), and so its impact on environmental events in member states is only beginning to show. To prevent damage the ELD also requires operators to proactively manage any damage they have, or may, cause. If there is an imminent threat of environmental damage, an operator must carry out preventative measures without delay, and is legally required to notify the relevant competent authority, if measures fail to dispel the threat. This paper presents some of the results and the self-evaluation of a POELS of a full industrial scale manufacturing installation located relatively close to the city of Athens. The surface soil has a high content in heavy metals, and the wells of the region have a high content of heavy metals and particularly hexavalent Chromium sometimes over the existing standard of 50ppb for potable water. Recent legislation sets up strict environmental standards for the Area. The ultimate goal of this work is to illustrate the role of the POELS in order to identify (at

a preliminary level) major risks at the facility and risk mitigation measures, where risk levels are unacceptable, and to enhance its ability to assess the relevant environmental risks in order to achieve even more demanding environmental targets having in mind ELD obligations and to present a self-evaluation methodology for assessing the POELS itself.

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