

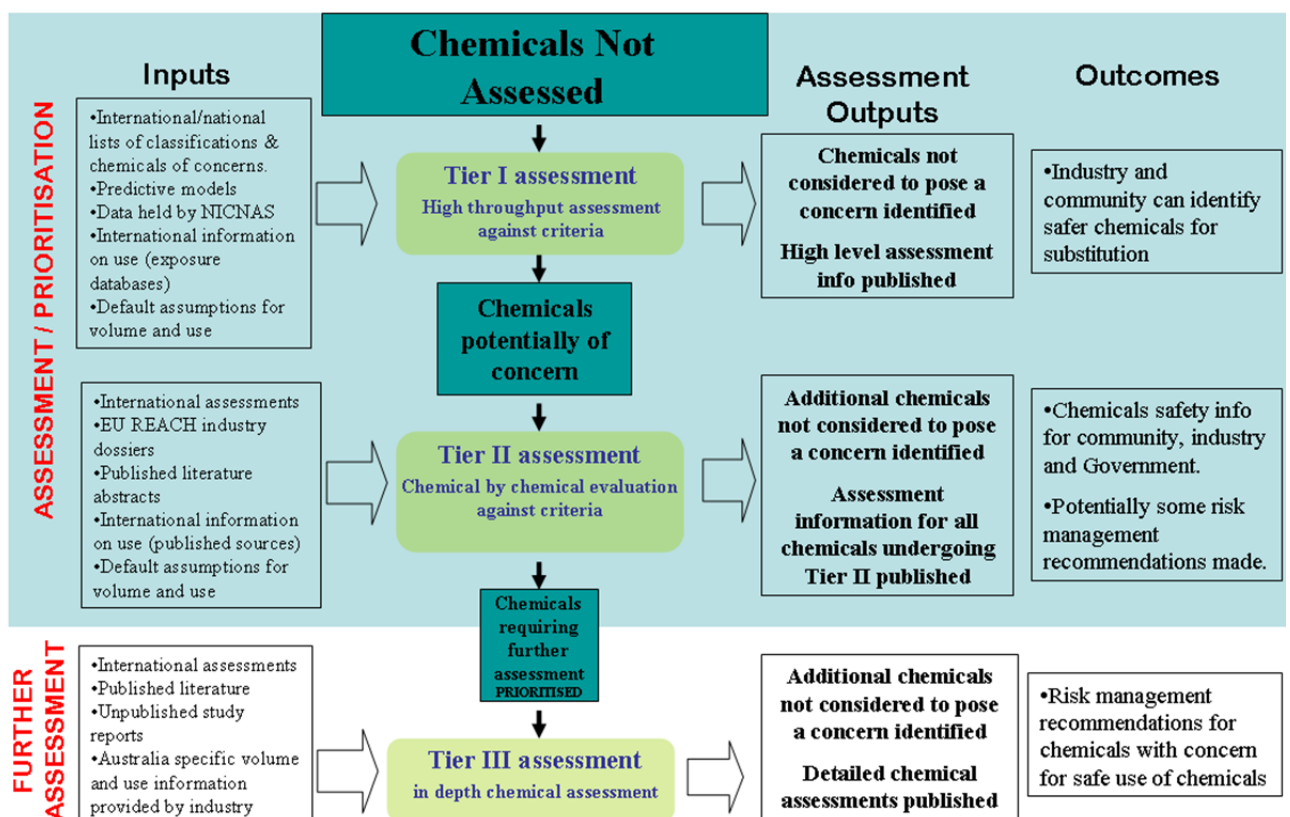
Factsheet 1: Overview of IMAP

The National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) is addressing the unknown human health and environmental impacts of unassessed industrial chemicals on Australia's national inventory¹. NICNAS has developed an innovative framework, Inventory Multi-tiered Assessment and Prioritisation (IMAP), to accelerate the assessment of these chemicals.

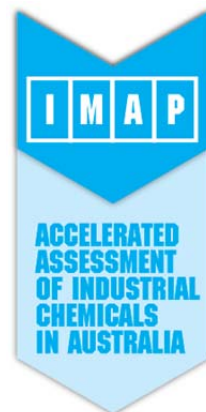
The objectives of the IMAP framework are the identification and rapid assessment of existing chemicals of concern, leading to enhancements in chemical safety information flow and chemicals management. It is a more flexible and transparent approach to the assessment of the large number of chemicals on the national inventory and is responsive to the needs of industry, community and government.

The IMAP framework is a science- and risk-based model designed to align the assessment effort with the human health and environmental impacts of chemicals. It consists of three levels (tiers) of assessment, with the assessment effort increasing with each tier, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: IMAP Framework



IMAP: Inventory Multi-tiered Assessment and Prioritisation



The need for reforms to the NICNAS Existing Chemicals Program to make it more flexible and responsive to the needs of industry, community and government was recognised through *The Existing Chemicals Program Review: Promoting safer chemical use – towards better regulation of chemicals in Australia (2006)*.

The Productivity Commission Research Report into Chemicals and Plastics Regulation (2008) reconfirmed the need for NICNAS to implement a program to greatly accelerate the assessment of existing chemicals.

The IMAP framework will be applied to chemicals on the national inventory in a staged manner. From July 2012, NICNAS is commencing the assessment of approximately 3000 chemicals (Stage One chemicals) listed on the Australian Inventory of Chemical Substances (AICS). The chemicals to be assessed in Stage One, along with *Fact Sheet 2 – Implementation of IMAP Framework: Stage One*, have been published on the NICNAS website.

Assessment outcomes from Stage One will determine whether a chemical:

- poses no unreasonable risk to human health or the environment, or
- requires risk management measures to be instituted for safe use, or
- requires more in-depth assessment to fully determine its impact on human health and/or the environment.

Over the next four years, Stage One chemicals will be screened and assessed – up to at least Tier II – and the outcomes (including recommendations for risk management measures) published in several batches on the NICNAS website.

Stage One of this program will conclude with an external review of the framework in the fourth year of operation. This review is expected to make recommendations on the most efficient and effective approach to the assessment and prioritisation of the remainder of the chemicals on the AICS.

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¹ The Australian Inventory of Chemical Substances (AICS)