



17th St. & Constitution Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
United States of America

Organization of American States

P. 202.458.3000
www.oas.org

FIFTY-FIFTH REGULAR SESSION
April 29 - May 1, 2014
Washington, D.C.

**INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE
CONTROL COMMISSION
CICAD**

Secretariat for Multidimensional Security

OEA/Ser.L/XIV.2.55
CICAD/doc.2081/14
25 April 2014
Original: English

**SYNTHETIC DRUGS AND NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES IN LATIN AMERICA:
NEW FINDINGS AND CHALLENGES
MARTIN RAITHELHUBER, UNODC**



UNODC

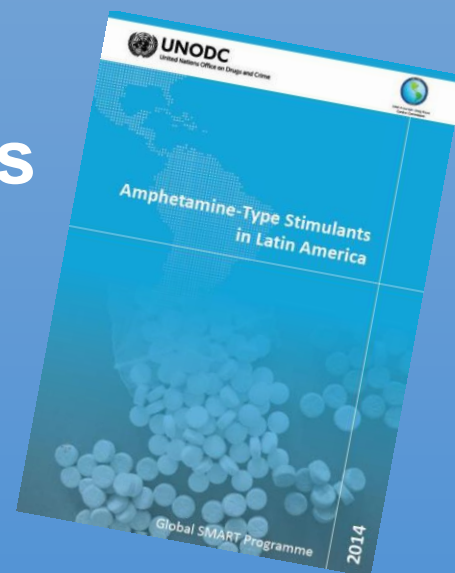
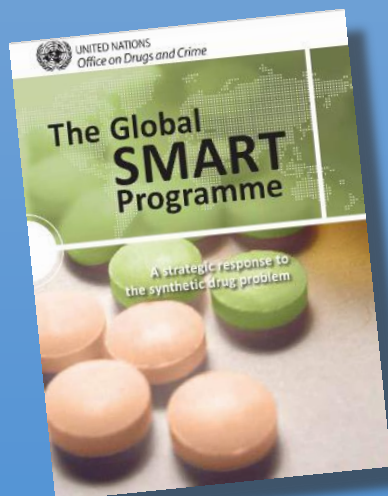
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Global SMART
Programme

Synthetic drugs and new psychoactive substances in Latin America:

New findings and challenges

CICAD 55 (2014)



Martin Raithelhuber, Illicit Synthetic Drug Expert

Global Synthetics Monitoring: Analysis, Reporting, Trends (SMART) Programme

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



Content

- Amphetamine-type stimulants in Latin America
- ATS and ecstasy use
- New psychoactive substances – the global situation
- New psychoactive substances – challenges for Latin America



Data constraints in Latin America

- Outdated information on amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) use prevalence in many countries (10+ years)
- In many drug use prevalence surveys, still no distinction between prescription stimulants and ATS or between methamphetamine and amphetamine
- Recently some countries started to differentiate between the use of amphetamines (amphetamine and methamphetamine) and non-medical use of prescription ATS in their surveys
- The UNODC-CICAD cooperation is leading to better prevalence data and greater awareness of ATS in the region



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Global SMART
Programme

Amphetamine-type stimulants in Latin America *Estimulantes de tipo anfetamínico en América Latina*



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime



Inter-American Drug Abuse
Control Commission

**Amphetamine-Type Stimulants
in Latin America**



UNODC

Oficina de las Naciones Unidas
contra la Droga y el Delito

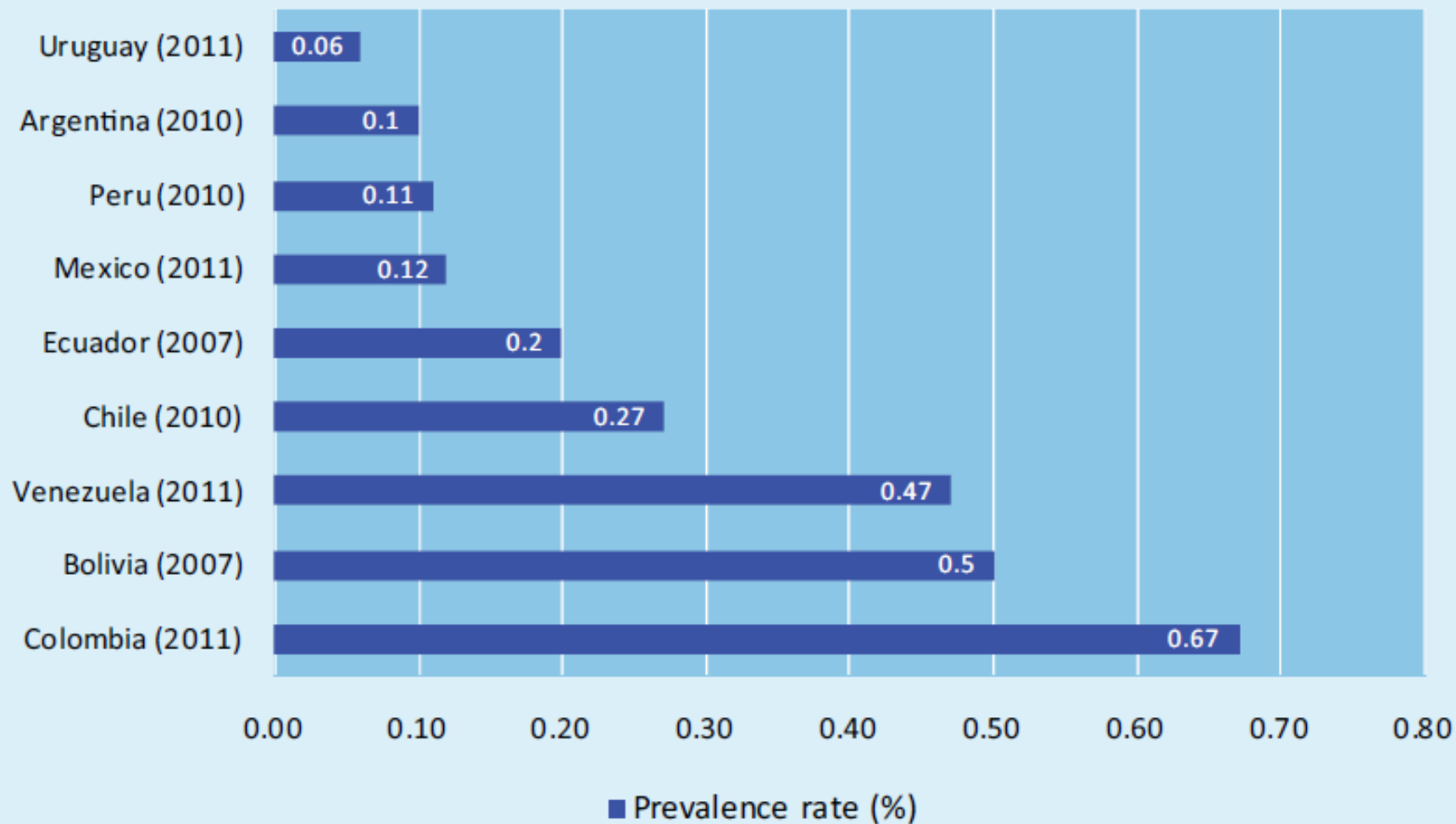


Comisión Interamericana para el
Control del Abuso de Drogas

**Estimulantes de tipo
anfetamínico en América Latina**



ATS use in the general population (annual prevalence)





ATS use (youth)

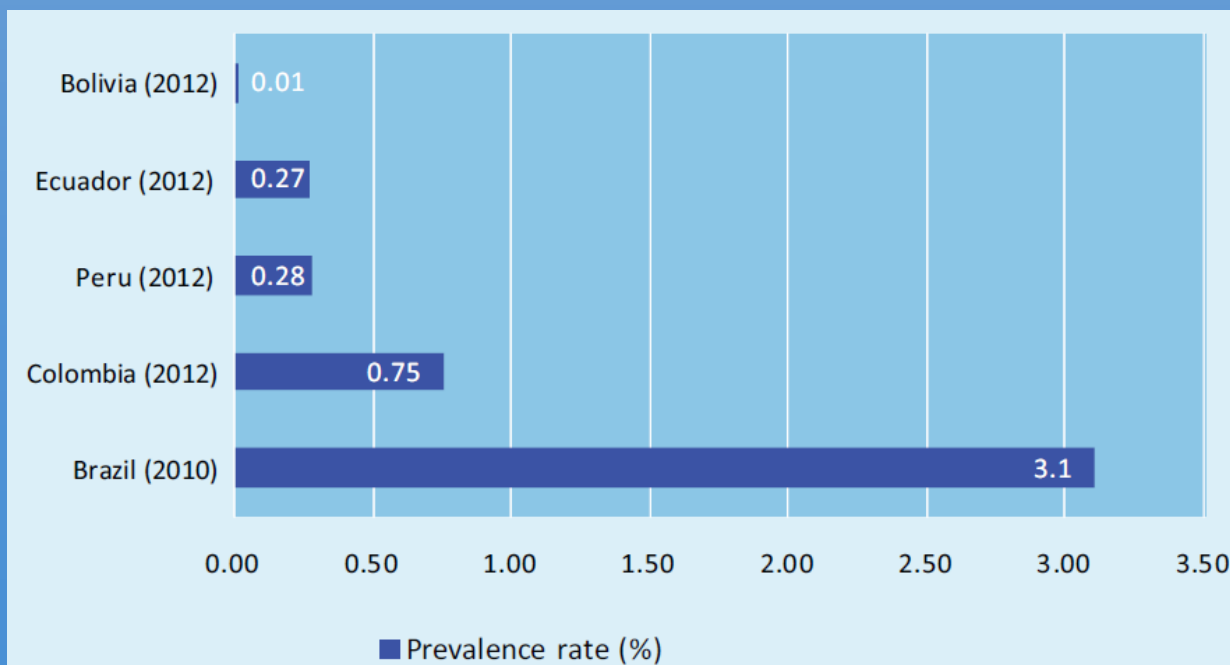
- Higher ATS than cannabis and cocaine use among high-school students in Ecuador (7.2% ATS lifetime), Honduras (3.0% ATS annual) and Venezuela (2.6% ATS lifetime)
- In Brazil (1.7% ATS annual compared to 1.8% for cocaine), El Salvador (1.1% ATS annual same as cocaine), Paraguay (2.6% ATS annual, higher than cocaine at 0.7%) and Peru (1.5% ATS annual compared to 0.9% for cocaine) the use of non-specified ATS was reported to be higher or comparable to cocaine use among high-school students



Ecstasy use

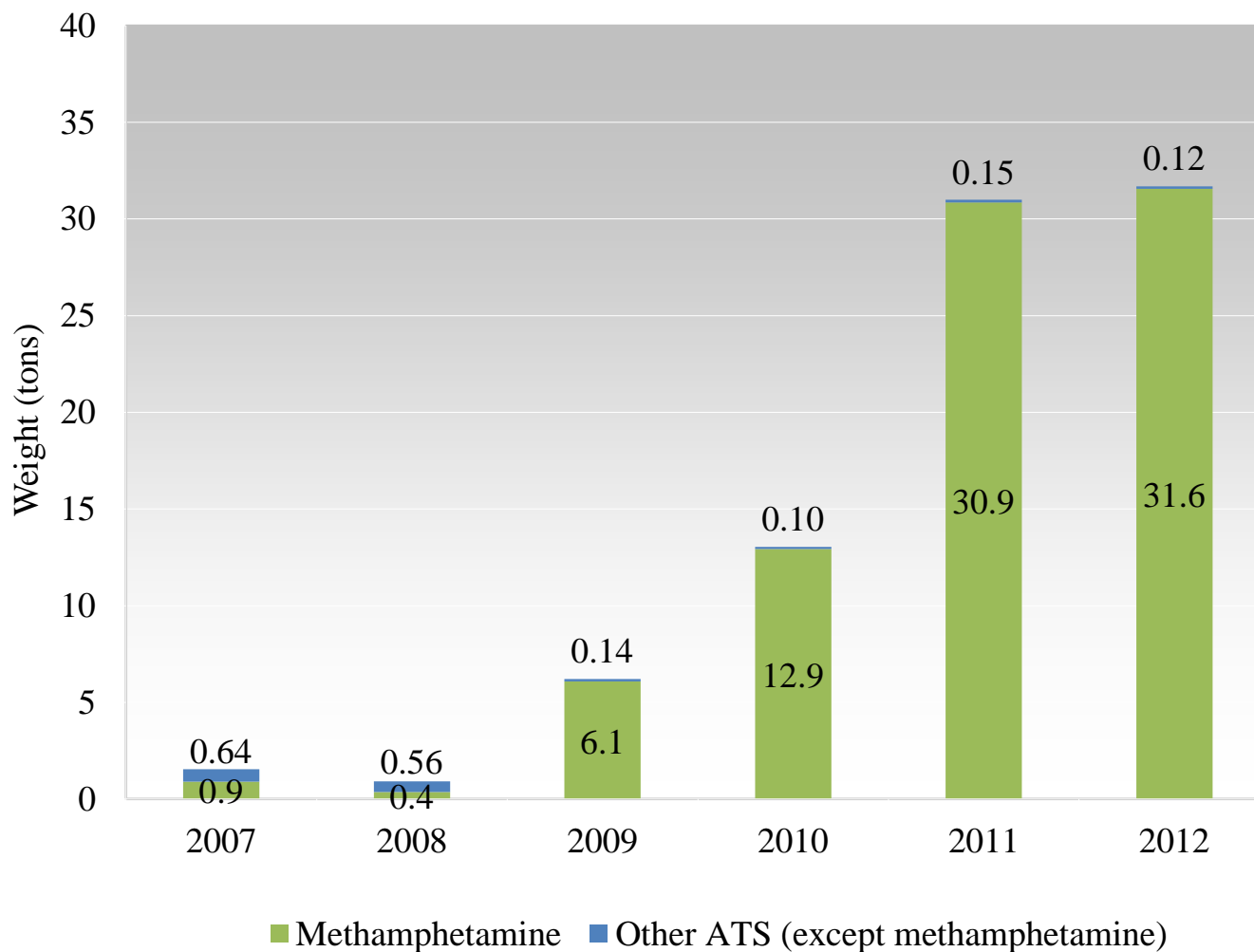
- Prevalence among the general population low
- Ecstasy-type substances are widely used among students in the region
- Some countries show relatively high prevalence

Annual prevalence of ecstasy use among undergraduate students in selected countries, latest year available





ATS seizures in Latin America: almost exclusively Mexico



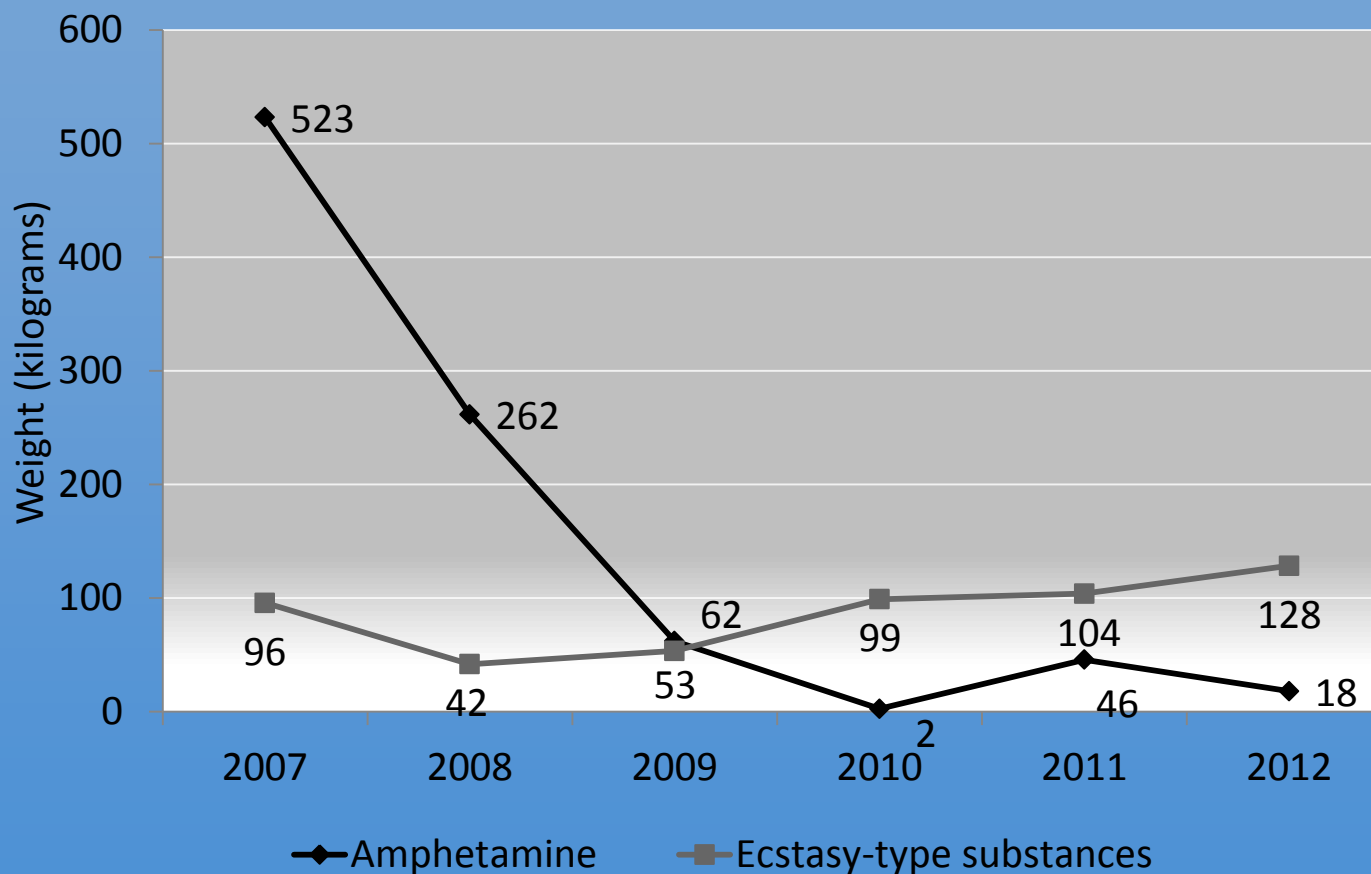


Methamphetamine use in treatment

- Prevalence of methamphetamine use is only available for the undergraduate students in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru), Brazil (among high-school students) and Mexico (among high-school students, only State of Mexico)
- Treatment data related to methamphetamine from 8 countries (Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Venezuela)
- High figures from Mexico (7,668 admissions in 2011), others much lower, some reported on methamphetamine treatment for the first time in 2012 (Colombia, Panama)



Amphetamine and ecstasy seizures in Latin America



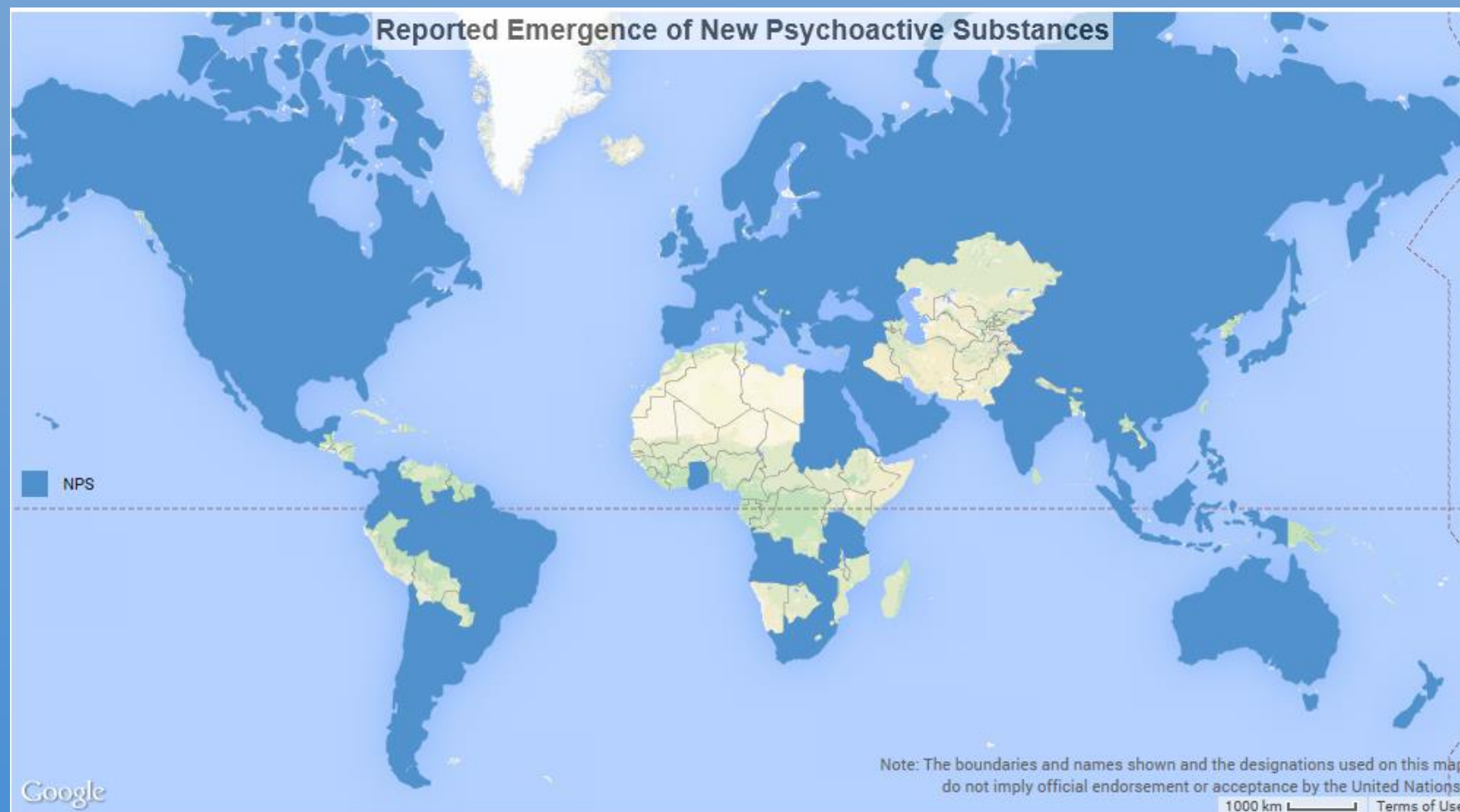


UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Global SMART
Programme

Global emergence of NPS



December 2013 - over 90 countries



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Global SMART
Programme

Global emergence of new psychoactive substances: What are new psychoactive substances (NPS)?

UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

NPS

Categories of new psychoactive substances sold in the market

Aminoindanes – These substances, of which 5,6-methylenedioxyl-2-aminoindane (MDAI) is an example, have been sold as NPS for their ability to produce the empathogenic and entactogenic effects of serotonin-releasing drugs, such as MDMA.

Synthetic cannabinoids – These are cannabinoid receptor agonists which produce effects similar to those of delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the principal psychoactive component in cannabis. Synthetic cannabinoids are often laced onto herbal products and sold as spice, K2, Kronic, etc.

Synthetic cathinones – These are analogues/derivatives of the internationally controlled substance cathinone, one of the active components of the khat plant. They generally have stimulant effects and include frequently reported NPS such as mephedrone and MDPV.

Tryptamines – These are derivatives of the naturally occurring tryptamine and have hallucinogenic properties. A common example is 5-Methoxy-N,N-dipropyltryptamine (5-MeO-DPT).

Ketamine and phenacycline-type substances – Ketamine is a human and veterinary anaesthetic which acts as a stimulant at low doses and a hallucinogen at high doses. It is one of the most widespread NPS in Asia. Phenacycline-type substances are another group of NPS that has recently appeared in the market. Phenacycline (PCP) and ketamine show structural similarity and are classified as arylcycloalkylamines. One of the most frequently reported substances in this group is 4-methoxyphenacycline (4-MeO-PCP).

Plant-based substances – This group includes plants with psychoactive properties. The most frequently reported are:

- Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa* Korth.), a plant indigenous to South-East Asia that contains the alkaloid mitragynine, a stimulant at low doses and sedative at high doses.
- Salvia divinorum, a plant indigenous to forest areas in Oaxaca, Mexico, which contains the active ingredient salvinorin A, a hallucinogenic substance.
- Khat (*Catha edulis*), a plant native to the horn of Africa and the Arabian peninsula. The leaves of the plant are chewed, resulting in the release of the stimulants cathinone and cathine.

Piperazines – These substances are frequently sold as 'ecstasy' due to their central nervous system stimulant properties. The most commonly reported members of this group are benzylpiperazine (BZP) and mCPP (1-(3-chlorophenyl) piperazine).

Other substances – NPS substances in this category are structurally diverse and do not fit into the categories mentioned above for example, 1,3-dimethyl-aminylamine (DMAA).

Phenethylamines – This group contains substances related to amphetamine and methamphetamine, and generally produces stimulant effects. However, modification of these compounds can lead to potent hallucinogens such as Bromo-Dragnoff.

UNODC definition:

- Substances of abuse
- Not controlled by the 1961 or 1971 Conventions
- May pose a public health threat
- Which have recently become available



What are the effects of NPS?

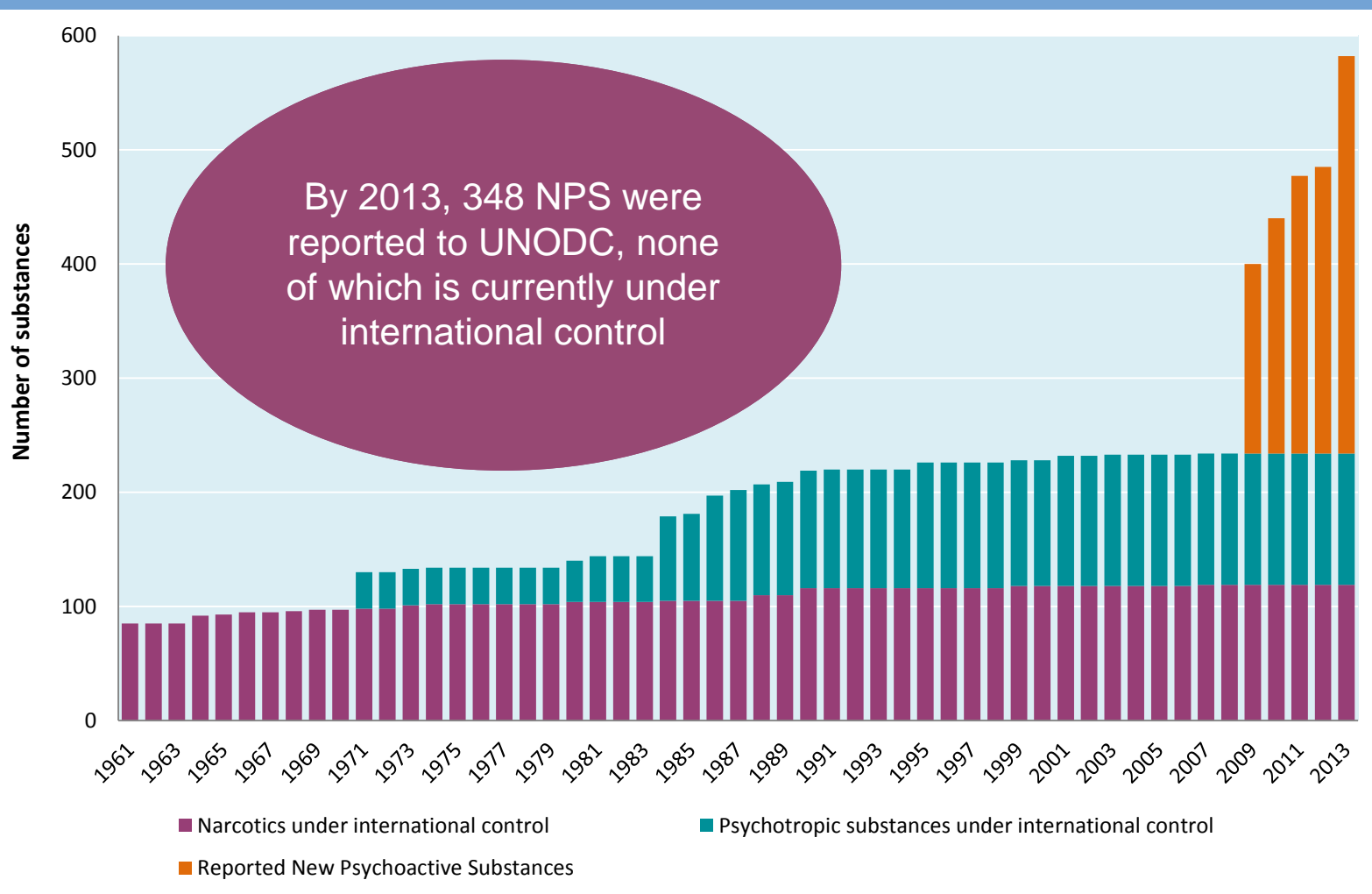
Mimic the effect of traditional drugs:

- Synthetic cannabinoids ('spice')
-> cannabis-like effects
- Synthetic cathinones (mephedrone)
-> stimulants like amphetamines
- Aminoindanes, piperazines -> entactogens like ecstasy
- Tryptamines, phenethylamines ('NBOMe') -> hallucinogenics like LSD
- Sold with correct or incorrect substance declaration, or (wrongly) under the name of controlled drugs
- Associated with serious health risks





Number of internationally controlled and non-controlled substances, 1961-2013

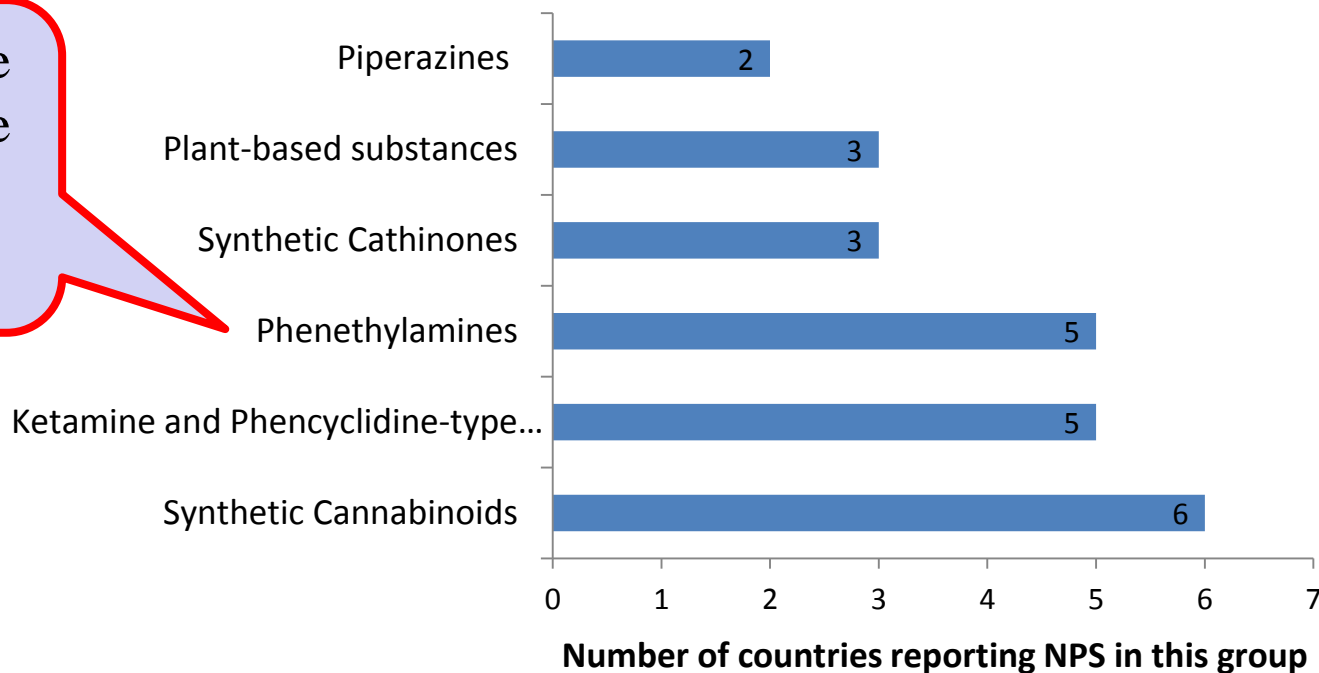




NPS emergence in Latin America

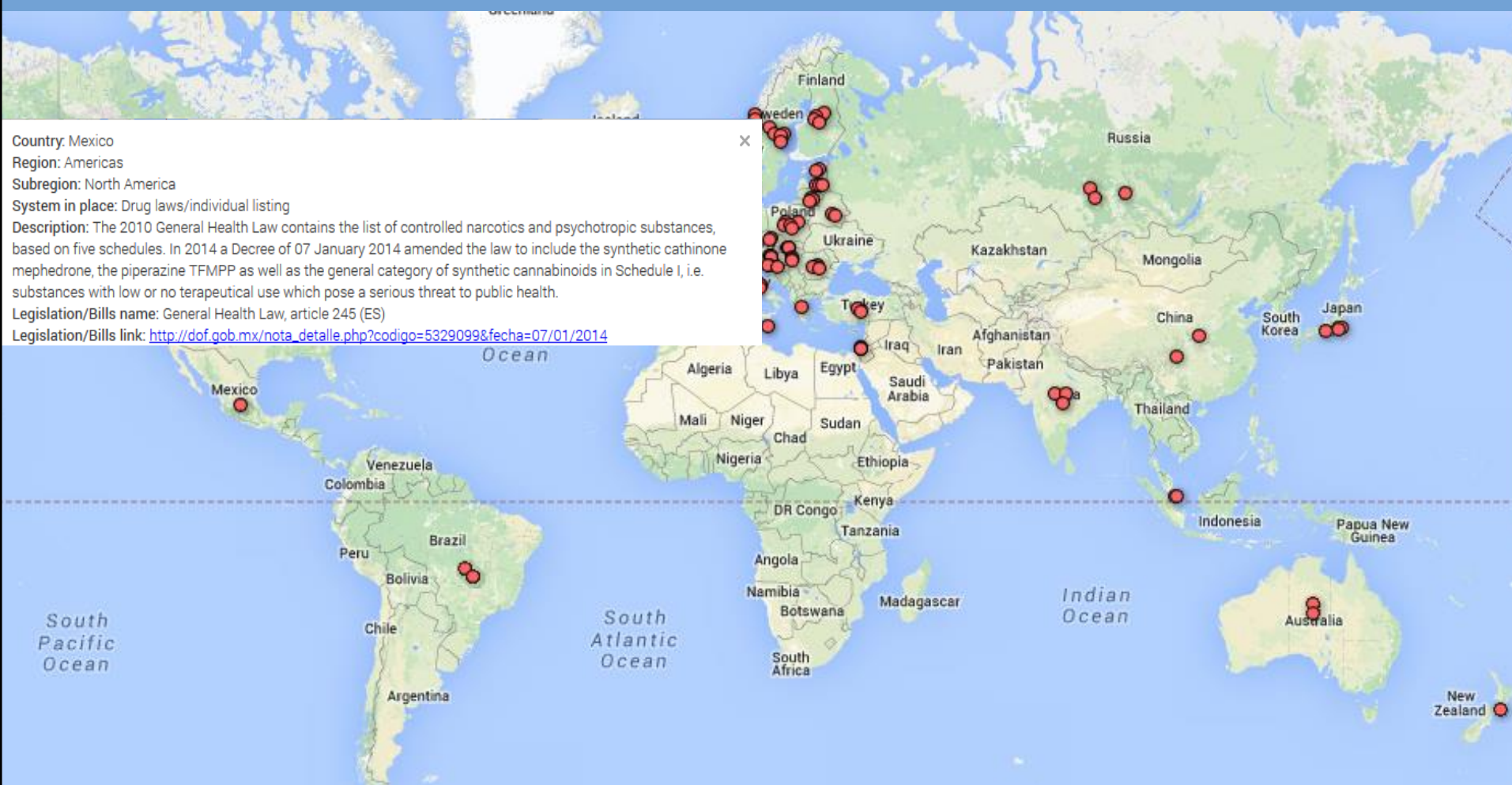
- Until Dec 2013, 9 countries in Central and South America reported NPS
- Total of 26 different NPS reported
- Highest number of reports received from Chile, Colombia and Costa Rica

25B-NBOMe
25C-NBOMe
25I-NBOMe
2C-I





Legislative responses to NPS early-2014






Challenges resulting from the NPS emergence in Latin America

- Drug users: may not be aware that they are taking an NPS instead of LSD, ecstasy or 2C-B: possible overdose, severe negative health effects, effects on the body not yet fully understood
- Health services: may not be aware of range of NPS on the market, their pharmacology and toxicology, how to identify them, how to best help emergency cases
- National drug laboratories: may not be in a position to identify the range of NPS already available to users
- Law enforcement: may not have the means to detect NPS with current methods
- Legislative systems: may not offer sufficient tools for interventions



What does the Early Warning Advisory Offer?



UNODC Early Warning Advisory on New Psychoactive Substances

Filter:

Year:

Means of Identification:

Regions:
-- Test Region --
Africa
Americas

Show Own/All:

Description:

Countries:
-- TESTING -- (Europe)
AFGHANISTAN (Asia)
ÅLAND ISLANDS (Europe)

(Ctrl+Click to select individual country for filter)

Substance Group:

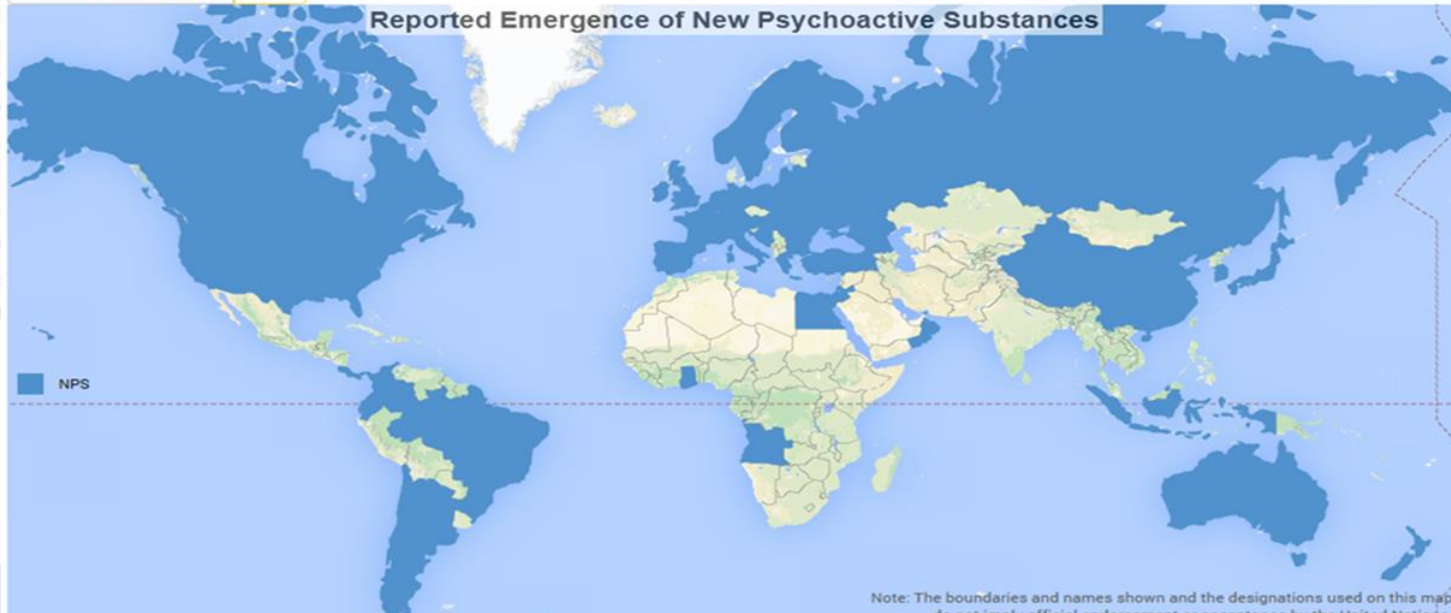
Substance:

Selected Countries (ISO-codes):

Page Size:

[Substance Finding List](#) [Map](#)

Reported Emergence of New Psychoactive Substances



Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Global SMART
Programme

UNODC Support to Member States



Training on portable
device for rapid NPS
detection



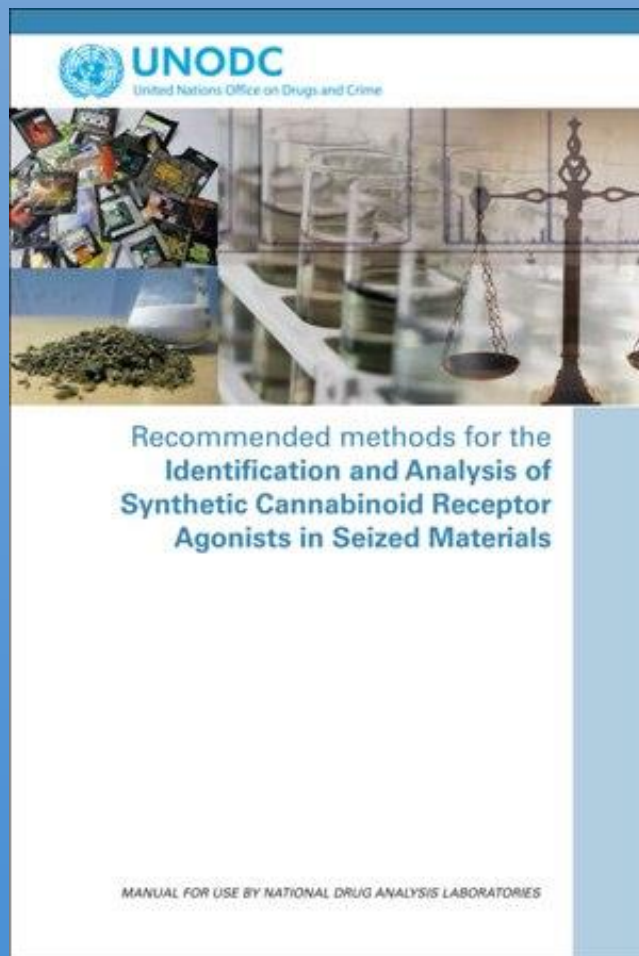


UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Global SMART
Programme

Guidelines for NPS identification in forensic laboratories



(available in English, French, Russian and Spanish)



Summary

- While cannabis is the most popular drug, ATS play an important role among the younger population along with cocaine
- Data collections tools in many countries need further improvement to reflect ATS and NPS use
- Low level of ATS seizures in most countries: absence of ATS, lack of enforcement capacity, different priorities (cocaine)?
- NPS are emerging in several countries, targeting existing synthetic drug markets
- Drug problem in the region needs approaches which include ATS and NPS

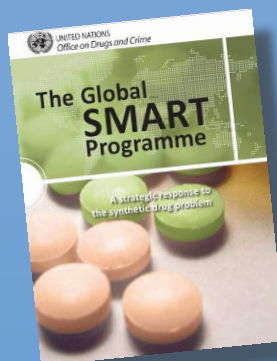
➤ **ATS/NPS Identification and awareness**



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Global SMART
Programme



Thank you!

globalsmart@unodc.org

www.unodc.org