Monitoring and analysis is paramount to understanding the dynamics of the synthetic drug markets and the harms they pose to public health. It informs the development of effective policies and responses to emerging drug threats.

To improve the capability and capacity of laboratories, law enforcement and border control agencies to detect and identify synthetic drugs and their precursors is a pre-condition for successful law enforcement and public health responses. Building national capacity to collect, manage and share this data ensures that information for evidence-based policy development is available at the national and global level.

Systematic international collaboration among all actors on a global level is crucial to address the challenges posed by an expanding synthetic drug market.

Early Warning Systems play a key role in early detection, communication and timely responses to emerging drug threats. More and stronger early warning systems need to be established with a focus on strengthening the generation and exchange of relevant information on emerging drug threats.

Improved information and data on synthetic drugs and emerging drug threats needs to be available globally. Translating trends into a threat analysis to communicate potential risks and raise awareness is key to reducing risks to public health and for effective policy design and programme interventions.

The rapid emergence of a large number of NPS on the global drug market makes it necessary to prioritize the most harmful, prevalent and persistent NPS for international control. Understanding the diverse and rapidly changing NPS market contributes to developing effective national control measures, which complement the international drug control system.

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The Global SMART Programme: SMART responses to synthetic drugs

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