Second Teleconference of the Bureau of the
International Conference on Chemicals Management for its fifth session
Wednesday, 17 June 2020 from 14:00 – 16:30 CET

REPORT OF THE TENTH MEETING OF THE ICCM5 BUREAU
17 June 2020

1) Opening and welcome

The President of the International Conference on Chemicals Management for its fifth session (ICCM5), Ms. Gertrud Sahler, welcomed participants\(^1\) to the tenth meeting and second teleconference of the ICCM5 Bureau.

The President introduced Dr. Dharmendra Kumar Gupta and Mr. Dinesh Runiwal, who were nominated by Ms. Geeta Menon, ICCM5 Bureau Member Asia and the Pacific, to participate at this meeting on her behalf. Ms. Sahler expressed her sincere thanks to India for joining this bureau meeting.

The President also thanked the other participants for their continued commitment since the last bureau meeting and for their valuable inputs, which had been compiled in document SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.2/3.

She noted the challenges facing the bureau on how to advance the work of the Intersessional Process (IP) to ensure adequate preparation of “Beyond 2020” recommendations for ICCM5. Also, that challenges remain for addressing the sound management of chemicals and waste and fulfilling the SDGs.

The President emphasized that despite the difficulties posed by the COVID pandemic, everyone must be prepared to advance the work, including through virtual meetings. Further, that bureau members should actively engage and use the available time and resources to prepare for ICCM5 efficiently.

The President indicated that the main purpose of this meeting was to discuss and decide next steps and timelines. She proposed that the bureau use the Co-chair’s scenario note as a basis for the discussions.

The President requested and received approval for the report of the ninth meeting and first teleconference of the ICCM5 Bureau SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.1/Report taking into consideration written comments received from the CEE region Bureau Member.

The President invited Ms. Nalini Sharma, SAICM Coordinator, to give brief opening remarks. Ms. Sharma welcomed the attendees and indicated her appreciation for the bureau’s continued commitment and inputs. She thanked her team for their support and indicated the Secretariat is open to all requests from the bureau for assistance.

The President thanked the Secretariat and closed this agenda item.

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\(^1\) The list of participants is presented in the Annex to this report.
2) Adoption of the agenda

The President introduced the provisional agenda as set out in document SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.2/1 indicating that the discussions would focus on Agenda item 4a to enable the bureau to take urgent decisions concerning preparations for IP4 and ICCM5.

The meeting agenda was agreed and adopted by the participants.

3) Confirmation of dates for the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) and the intersessional process

The President opened the agenda item by indicating the new proposed dates for ICCM5 scheduled for 5-9 July 2021, in Bonn, Germany. She reconfirmed the desire to reschedule IP4 in March 2021, though specific dates had not yet been set, as well as Romania’s commitment to host the meeting.

The President reminded everyone that this topic was discussed in detail at the ninth meeting of the ICCM5 Bureau and there was general support for this rescheduling with some exceptions. She noted inputs received on this topic since the last bureau meeting were compiled in SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.2/2.

Regarding IP4, the President indicated that regions and stakeholders supported holding a physical IP4 meeting before ICCM5. Further, that most bureau members had signalled a preference for IP4 to be held in Romania in March 2021, rather than back to back with UNEA-5. The President indicated she was very pleased Romania still supports this option and invited comments from the floor.

The Bureau Member representing CEE indicated he had spoken with a representative from Romania who had asked him to urge bureau members to take a decision on IP4 very soon.

The majority of participants voiced continued support for the proposed rescheduling for IP4 and ICCM5. Regarding the new ICCM5 dates, the President highlighted that despite serious attempts to find alternative arrangements, other options were not available. It was not possible to find an alternative venue that meets UN standards and that options on dates were limited as other agencies in Bonn were having to reschedule a number of their meetings. She hoped for everyone’s understanding considering the unusual constraints posed by the COVID pandemic and highlighted that there were ongoing discussions with Switzerland on options to support stakeholders.

The representative from Asia-Pacific expressed the need for a minimum two-week period between ICCM5 and BRS COPs to allow delegates adequate preparatory time. The President responded that with ICCM5 scheduled for 5-9 July 2021 and the BRS COPs scheduled for 19-30 July 2021, along with the provision of additional support for delegates, that different options were available to allow for this scheduling, i.e., delegates would have the option to return to their home country between meetings or remain in Europe with additional support provided.

The President returned to document SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.2/2 noting that UNEP had been requested to make available a calendar of major events for 2021-2022. Some members had requested that other future UNEP meetings could be rescheduled to reduce pressure on delegates, which she supported.

The Bureau Member from the LAC region supported the need to make decisions at this meeting and that additional financial support for delegates between the two meetings would be welcomed.

The President reiterated that she would come back to the bureau on this, following formal discussions with Switzerland.

The President closed agenda item 3 by thanking everyone and confirming the bureau’s support for the new dates for ICCM5 and rescheduling of IP4 in March 2021, with specific dates pending discussion and confirmation with Romania.
4) Discussion on next steps to develop recommendations for consideration by ICCM5 for the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020

The President opened Agenda item 4 by reminding participants that this item was discussed during the previous teleconference and inputs received were compiled in document SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.2/2.

She thanked the Co-chairs for providing the draft scenario note and the Secretariat for their proposal on virtual meetings which were well prepared documents that would serve as a good basis for the discussions. The President suggested dealing with items 4 a) and 4 b) together because of their strong connection.

a) Intersessional Process co-chairs’ draft scenario note

Upon invitation from the President, the Co-chairs provided a high-level overview of their scenario note available as document SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.2/4.

Following the presentation from the Co-chairs, the President invited the Secretariat to briefly present their paper on virtual meetings SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.2/3. The President voiced appreciation of the Secretariat’s successful past experiences with virtual meetings. She also noted that other agencies, including the GEF Council, have recently had success with virtual meetings.

Before opening the floor for comments, the President underlined that the compilation of recommendations document (SAICM/IP.4/2) would remain the basis for negotiations at IP4.

The President indicated that in moving forward it would be important to define the mandates for each Virtual Working Group (VWG) as well as their expected outcomes. She proposed the following three options on outcomes to allow for some flexibility: (i) Suggestions for alternative text to address areas of divergence; (ii) Produce compromise text (suggest removal of brackets); or (iii) Identify gaps.

The President invited comments on the draft scenario note. Key discussion points and conclusions from the discussions included: the need for a longer consultation period to review important documents; that VWGs should be open to all stakeholders; their overall goal be clarified; the number limited to the most important topics; not holding sessions in parallel; individual mandates being clearly defined; a VWG being dedicated to the topic of finance; the selection procedure and roles of participants be clearly outlined and ensuring that the VWGs and their outcomes would not be perceived as negotiations.

Regarding the virtual technical briefings, there was general approval for proceeding as proposed. Suggestions to include additional briefings were made, including inviting the health sector to prepare a health-related technical briefing; inviting the Swiss colleagues to present a technical briefing on standards; and the possibility of arranging a technical briefing on finance issues.

During the discussions, several participants voiced concern that VWG topics should focus only on technical issues that can be advanced virtually. Some also suggested merging the topic of finance with capacity building as these are related. However, a number of participants preferred that finance be discussed independently as a dedicated VWG topic due to its importance and relevance to the Beyond 2020 discussions.

The President assured and reminded everyone that the VWGs would be informal and would not replace negotiations at IP4 or ICCM5. She reiterated that the compilation of recommendations prepared for IP4 was a standalone document and that any outcome from virtual working groups would be kept separate. At the same time, she stressed that the VWGs must be more than just to maintain momentum but also support the process and position stakeholders to hold more informed discussions at IP4 and ICCM5.

The Co-chairs echoed the President’s appreciation for the issues and concerns raised, echoing that these would be taken into consideration in the revised Co-chairs scenario note. Also, that the VWG outcomes would need a certain legitimacy and be recognized as important inputs to IP4 and ICCM5, which will serve to motivate stakeholders to willingly participate and contribute their time and effort. The Co-chair (Canada) proposed holding a bilateral discussion with the Bureau Member from the Africa region to discuss and explore ideas on how to move forward on the topic of finance.
It was agreed that additional consultations would take place on the scenario note and the proposal to convene virtual meetings with a deadline for comments on 3 July 2020. The President indicated that the time before the next bureau meeting would be used to consult with the Co-chairs and Secretariat to reflect on these discussions and revise the scenario note, taking into consideration additional feedback received.

The President then closed this agenda item.

b) Draft proposed mandates for the virtual working groups

Agenda item 4 b was covered under agenda item 4 a and will be further discussed at the next bureau meeting.

c) Considerations for the development of a high-level declaration for consideration at ICCM5

In opening this agenda item, the President reminded the bureau that this topic was briefly discussed at the last teleconference. She noted that input received was compiled in document SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.2/2.

The President informed participants she would soon ask the Secretariat to send out a call for nominations for an informal group with up to three representatives from each region and stakeholder constituencies. She indicated she would inform everyone at a later bureau meeting the progress of this specific work.

A number of participants fully supported the President’s proposal. The representative from Asia-Pacific indicated his concerns for the proposed process for developing the high-level declaration. He indicated his region has made proposals on modalities and that his region requires additional time for consultation. The representative from the CEE region highlighted that this work should be taken up informally, such as through this type of Friends of the President group, and that a Bureau would not normally engage in this type of task.

The President indicated that her proposal is for an informal group and its task would be to develop elements of a high-level declaration. She also reiterated that it would not be a negotiation group, and all are welcome to propose ideas and suggestions for elements that would be recognized and considered.

The Western Europe and Others Regional Focal Point indicated that with the expected workload of the VWGs in the upcoming months, that the timing for the discussions relating to the high-level declaration should happen later in the process as this element would be needed closer to ICCM5. The IOMC Chair stressed it was important to ensure sectoral representation.

After this exchange of views, the President closed this agenda item.

5) Discussion on linkages to the post-2020 biodiversity framework

The President invited the Secretariat to provide a brief update on the post-2020 process for biodiversity.

The Secretariat reported that the Co-chairs of the intersessional process and SAICM Secretariat recently met with the Co-chairs of the post-2020 biodiversity framework and CBD Secretariat. The CBD Secretariat is coordinating efforts on the post-2020 framework for which there are many parallels with the SAICM intersessional process, including opportunities for linkages.

The CBD Secretariat requested comments on their proposed global biodiversity monitoring framework which will be released in the coming weeks. The Secretariat highlighted potential to work together on proposed impact indicators and other areas. The Secretariat will share the framework with the bureau as they may wish to provide input from the national, regional or sectoral perspectives. Furthermore, the Secretariat proposed to review the framework with inputs from the Co-chairs of the technical working group on targets, indicators and milestones.
It was agreed that the Secretariat would provide an update at the next bureau meeting. The Bureau Member from the LAC region thanked the Secretariat for this work and highlighted the importance of seeking synergies with different clusters.

6) **SAICM budget for 2020-2021**

The President invited the Secretariat to introduce document SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.1/rev and SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.1/5. She asked the Secretariat to clarify the differences in the proposed 2020 and 2021 budgets considering the workload had not changed.

The Secretariat indicated the proposed budget in 2021 is higher due to a realistic reflection of actual costs. The Secretariat noted that the IP4 costs presented reflects an average of estimates for holding IP4 in Romania and Nairobi and supporting 40 participants. The revised ICCM5 budget for 2021 reflects travel costs for 400 participants as well as, costs for the meeting venue related costs, Secretariat staff official travel, UNEP internal evaluation and 13% Programme Support Costs. In addition, the Secretariat currently estimates a total cost of USD 630,000 for holding Regional Meetings. The Secretariat will provide a revised budget to the bureau that includes costs for face to face regional meetings.

The Secretariat noted that the indicative budget could change depending on different factors including which costs the host countries would cover for each of the meetings and whether back to back meetings are held.

The President then asked for clarification on the additional P3 Management Officer not budgeted at OEWG3. The Secretariat indicated the position is under the Chemicals and Health Branch and as many meetings were planned in 2020 additional logistical support was sought.

The President requested the Bureau to provide additional comments by 3 July 2020. The President closed this agenda item and indicated that budget approval would be sought at the next bureau meeting.

7) **Next teleconference of the bureau**

It was agreed that the eleventh meeting of the ICCM5 Bureau, and third teleconference, would be held Wednesday, 29 July 2020 from 2 – 4:30 p.m. CEST.

8) **Any other matters**

The President thanked the Secretariat for organizing the second teleconference of the ICCM5 Bureau.

The Bureau Member from the CEE region took the opportunity to request that the Secretariat publish all documents on the SAICM website. The representative of the Public Interest Organizations requested that the Secretariat send an email with the documents to be commented on and due dates.

It was also discussed whether the recording of the meeting would be circulated. Following some discussion, the President indicated the issue would be taken up at the next meeting of the bureau.

9) **Closure of the meeting**

The President closed the meeting at 17:05, thanking all bureau meeting participants for their active participation in the discussions.
Annex

Participants

**Bureau Members:** Ms. Gertrud Sahler (Germany, ICCM5 Bureau Member Western Europe and Others Group), Mr. Szymon Domagalski (Poland, ICCM5 Bureau Member Central and Eastern Europe), Ms. Valentina Sierra (Uruguay, ICCM5 Bureau Member Latin America and the Caribbean), Mr. David Kapindula (Zambia, ICCM5 Bureau Member Africa), and Dr. Dharmendra Kumar Gupta and Mr. Dinesh Runiwal representing India on behalf of Ms. Geeta Menon, Bureau Member Asia and the Pacific.

**Regional Focal Points:** Mr. Mohsen Naziri Asl (Iran representing Asia-Pacific), Mr. Vladimir Lenev (Russian Federation, representing Central and Eastern Europe), Ms. Suzanne Leppinen (Canada representing Western Europe and Others) and Ms. Ana Fernandez Blanco (Argentina representing Latin America and the Caribbean) and Mr. Kouame Georges Kouadio (Cote D'Ivoire representing Africa).

**Representatives of non-governmental participants and the IOMC:** Ms. Susan Wilburn (Health NGOs), Mr. Joe Di Gangi (Public Interest Organizations), Mr. Rory O’Neill (Labour NGOs), Ms. Servet Goren (Industry) and Mr. Bob Diderich (chair of the IOMC).

**SAICM Secretariat:** Ms. Nalini Sharma (Principal Coordinator), Ms. Brenda Koekkoek, Mr. Jose de Mesa, Mr. Oleksandr Nazarenko, Mr. Ardeshir Zamani and Ms. Lisa Benedetti.

**UN Environment Programme:** Mr. Tim Kasten (Director, a.i. Policy and Programme Division, UNEP), Ms. Monika G MacDevette (Chief, Chemicals & Health Branch, Economy Division, UNEP), Erika Mattsson (Administrative Officer, Chemicals & Health Branch, Economy Division, UNEP) and Jitendra K. Sharma (UNEP India Office).

**Observers:** Mr. David Morin (Co-chair of the intersessional process), Ms. Judith Torres (Co-chair of the intersessional process), Jutta Emig (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany) and Mr. Vassilios Karavezyris (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany).