

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING COUNCIL AT ITS TWENTY-SECOND  
SESSION/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM  
*Extract from Decision 22/4 (Chemicals), adopted on 7 February 2003*

IV Strategic approach to international chemicals management

The Governing Council,

Recalling its decisions 18/12 of 26 May 1995, 19/13 of 7 February 1997, 20/23 of 4 February 1999 and SS.VII/3 of 15 February 2002 concerning global policies related to chemicals management and the necessity to further develop a strategic approach to international chemicals management,

Taking note of the substantive work on chemical safety undertaken by the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety and the importance of its contribution to the further development of the strategic approach to international chemicals management, to be conducted in a fully participatory manner in conformity with decision SS.VII/3, including identifying any gaps in the implementation of the Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action beyond 2000,<sup>i</sup> and suggesting remedies for any identifiable gaps,

Recalling also the aim set out in paragraph 23 of the Plan of Implementation,<sup>ii</sup> adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development on 4 September 2002, of achieving, by 2020, that chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, using transparent science-based risk assessment procedures and science-based risk management procedures, taking into account the precautionary approach, as set out in principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and support developing countries in strengthening their capacity for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste by providing technical and financial assistance,

Recalling further paragraph 23 (b) of the Plan of Implementation, in which the World Summit endorsed the further development of a strategic approach to international chemicals management based on the Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action beyond 2000 of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety by 2005, and urged that the United Nations Environment Programme, the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, other international organizations dealing with chemical management, and other relevant international organizations and actors closely cooperate in this regard, as appropriate,

Having considered the progress report of the Executive Director on the strategic approach to international chemicals management (UNEP/GC.22/INF/22),

Noting the preparatory work undertaken by the steering committee formed to act as a facilitative steering mechanism to deal with practical aspects of the strategic approach process and comprising representatives of the seven participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme,

1. Decides to proceed with the further development of a strategic approach as envisioned in decision SS.VII/3 and underlines that the scope of the strategic approach<sup>iii</sup> should be clearly defined and take into account economic, social and environmental aspects of chemicals management, with a view to contributing to sustainable development, and decides that this approach should be regularly reviewed to assess progress on chemical safety, in the light of the targets set at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in cooperation with other relevant processes;

2. Requests the Executive Director to compile possible draft elements of such a strategic approach for consideration by the first preparatory meeting and invites Governments, relevant international organizations and other actors to contribute to that compilation;
3. Endorses the concept of an open-ended consultative process involving representatives of all stakeholder groups as envisaged in decision SS.VII/3, taking the form of preparatory meetings and the convening of an international conference;
4. Requests the Executive Director to propose to the co-conveners that they consider holding the international conference in conjunction with the ninth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in early 2006, with a view to the latter serving as a high-level segment of the conference that would consider adopting the completed strategic approach document on behalf of the United Nations Environment Programme and inviting the governing bodies of other relevant organizations also to endorse it;
5. Calls upon the Executive Director to strive to ensure that the process of further developing the strategic approach remains open, transparent and inclusive, providing all stakeholders opportunities to participate in the substantive work;
6. Invites participating organizations in the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, Governments, the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, the Global Environment Facility and other major agencies responsible for the funding and delivery of international development cooperation, and other relevant organizations and stakeholders, to collaborate actively in the further development of the strategic approach;
7. Notes the importance of coordination between the development of the strategic approach to international chemicals management and the work of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, and the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, with due regard to their respective mandates;
8. Calls upon Governments and other stakeholders to contribute the extrabudgetary resources needed to support the further development of the strategic approach;
9. Requests the Executive Director to report at the eighth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum on progress in the development of a strategic approach;
10. Requests the Executive Director to report to the twenty-third session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum on progress and the outcomes of the preparatory meetings;
11. Requests the Executive Director to provide additional resources<sup>iv</sup> for the implementation of the present decision to cover its core infrastructure costs.

---

<sup>i</sup> Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, third session, Forum III final report (IFCS/Forum III/23w), annex 6.

<sup>ii</sup> Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1) chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

<sup>iii</sup> Heavy metals and their compounds are included in the definition of chemicals for the purpose of the further development of the strategic approach to international chemicals management.

<sup>iv</sup> Estimated by the secretariat to be \$600,000 for the biennium.