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Strategic Approach
to International
Chemicals Management

English only

**Latin America and Caribbean regional meeting on the Strategic Approach
to International Chemicals Management**

Panama City, 14-16 February 2008

Item 3 (b) and (C) of the provisional agenda*

Information about SAICM Implementation activities: Intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations

Information provided by organizations on planned activities in support of SAICM implementation

Note by the secretariat

1. In order to inform discussion at the present Latin American and Caribbean regional meeting, organizations were invited to submit information on their initial SAICM implementation activities.
2. The secretariat has the honour to circulate, in the annex to the present note, completed questionnaires for the information of the meeting, which were recently received by the secretariat and supplements those contained in document SAICM/RM/LAC.1/INF/3. The annex contains questionnaires completed by the following:
 - Intergovernmental organizations: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

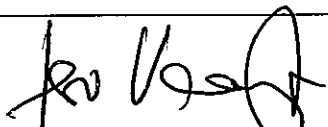
* SAICM/RM/LAC.1/1.

Annex

Information provided by organizations on planned activities in support of SAICM implementation

Questionnaires submitted by the following:

- Intergovernmental organizations: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Questionnaire for Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on initial efforts to implement SAICM		Please return to the SAICM Secretariat by 10 December 2007 11-13 chemin des Anémones CH-1219 Châtelaine, Geneva Switzerland Tel: +41 22 917 86 31 Fax: +41 22 797 34 60 Email: saicm@chemicals.unep.ch
Organization Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)		Person submitting this questionnaire Mr <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ms <input type="checkbox"/>
		Is this person the Organization's SAICM focal point? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Address Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153 Rome - Italy		Functional Title Senior Officer
		Department/Section Plant Production and Protection Division
Phone +39 06 57055757	Fax +39 06 57056347 or 53324	E-Mail gero.vaagt@fao.org
Has an official SAICM focal point been nominated? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
IGOs: Have SAICM objectives been incorporated in your organization's programme of work? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> (Attach a description or elaborate here if desired.) Please see attached Annex .		
National NGOs: Have you participated in a planning meeting(s) of national stakeholders? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please elaborate (e.g. describe the nature of the meeting(s):		
Has work commenced on preparing a SAICM implementation plan for your organization? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please elaborate (e.g. indicate the timeframe for preparing the plan and note its relationship, if any, to previous plans):		
NGOs: Has a project proposal been submitted for consideration by the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund Implementation Committee: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please elaborate (e.g. provide the title of the project proposal): If no, is a project proposal in preparation? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Other comments: Coordination with IOMC partner organizations		
Signature Dr Gero Vaagt		Date 04 February 2008

Annex to Questionnaire for intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on initial efforts to implement SAICM
February 2008

- At its 131st session, the FAO Council has adopted SAICM under agenda item CL 131/17* (*New International Development on Pesticide Management*). This paper is being widely circulated at international fora.
- The paper “*Comparison between the pesticide-related activities identified under the SAICM Global Plan of Action and individual articles of the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides*” has been prepared by FAO in order to highlight the linkages between the Code of Conduct and SAICM.
- The relationship and opportunities for synergies between SAICM and the Code of Conduct were addressed by the FAO Panel of Experts on Pesticide Management during its last two sessions in 2006 and 2007. Reports and recommendations are available at <http://www.fao.org/AG/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/> This website contains a section dedicated to FAO’s involvement in SAICM, to be found under the section Management of Pesticides.
- Currently FAO focuses on highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs) in support of the progressive ban on these pesticides. At the 20th session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG) held in April 2007, FAO organized a multistakeholder side event on HHPs. Presentations were delivered by developing and industrialized countries, pesticide industries and NGOs. These presentations are available on request. More information is contained in COAG/2007/Inf.14*. The last meeting of the FAO Panel of Experts on Pesticide Management defined the term HHPs and provided guidance to the classification.

* CL 131/17 and COAG/2007/Inf.14

The text of these two documents are available in five official languages of FAO (Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Spanish), and can be downloaded from <http://www.fao.org>.

04 February 2008

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Questionnaire for intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on initial efforts to implement SAICM

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Organization: United Nations Environment Programme		Person submitting this questionnaire: Mr.x Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Per Bakken
		Is this person the organization's SAICM focal point? Yes x No <input type="checkbox"/>
Address: International Environment House 11-13, Chemin des Anémones CH-1219 Châtelaine Geneva Switzerland		Functional Title: Head
		Department / Section: Chemicals Branch , Division for Technology, Industry and Economics
Phone: + 41 22 917 81 83	Fax: +41227973460	Email: info@unepchemicals.ch

Has an official SAICM focal point been nominated? Yes x No

IGOs: Have SAICM objectives been incorporated in your organization's programme of work? Yes x No

Work plan for implementation of SAICM within UNEPs environment constituency.

The activity is based on the decision 23/9 II of the Governing Council of UNEP in which the Executive Director is requested, as a matter of high priority, to make appropriate provision for the implementation of the United Nations Environment Programme's responsibilities under the Strategic Approach and to make provision for activities to support developing countries and countries with economies in transition in implementing the strategic approach to international chemicals management, taking into account the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, the effective implementation of which is a matter of high priority. In response, an inter-divisional working group has developed a work plan to support the Strategic Approach implementation activities. The work plan consist of activities within the following 4 areas:

- Activities related to capacity building
- Activities related to risk assessment, management and communication
- Activities related to international actions on specific chemicals and MEAs of relevance for chemicals
- Activities for monitoring of progress

The work plan for UNEPs implementation of SAICM was noted in "decision 24/3 II: Chemicals management" of the Governing Council of UNEP at its 25th meeting, February 2007. The work plan can be found on the website: http://www.unep.org/gc/gc24/information_documents.asp as UNEP/GC/24/INF/15.

Specific activities are explained below.

National NGOs: Have you participated in a planning meeting(s) of national stakeholders? Yes No

If yes, please elaborate (e.g. describe the nature of the meeting(s)):

Contribution Description:

UNEP activities and in particular the activities in Chemicals Branch in the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE) are relevant for the implementation of SAICM and the Bali Strategic Plan. For a summary of ongoing activities see document UNEP/GC/24/INF15. Below are summarized some activities of UNEP in implementing SAICM.

1. Activities related to Mercury, lead and cadmium as well as POPs

The Overarching Policy Strategy of SAICM underlines that activities related to mercury, lead and cadmium as well as POPs are important for the achievement of the overarching goal of SAICM.

Mercury

The UNEP Governing Council at its 24th meeting acknowledged the progress made to address the global mercury issue. It also recognized that current efforts to reduce risks from mercury are not sufficient, and that further international action is required. It agreed that there was a need for updated information on global mercury emissions, and UNEP is undertaking this. The work to address the mercury challenge has been undertaken using two main approaches.

The first approach is to strengthen the mercury partnerships program. Discussions are underway to develop an overarching framework for the partnership program, including the development of formal business plans and identification of clear goals for each of the partnership areas. These will be discussed at a meeting of partners and stakeholders in early April 2008, where further discussions will also be held on operational guidelines for the partnership program and clear overall goals for the program.

In addition to the original five partnership areas, the GC decision flagged the need to expand the number and scope of partnerships to include new, growing or related sectors such as vinyl-chloride monomer production, non-ferrous metals mining and cement production and waste combustion. Consideration is being given to the best way to include these areas, whether by expanding the scope of existing partnership areas or the number of partnership areas. .

Within the structure of the partnerships work, a number of country projects are underway, with the main focus of the work being on the development of mercury inventories. The 'Toolkit for Identification and Quantification of Mercury Releases' is being pilot tested by countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. These inventory projects will lead to the development of national plans for managing the identified mercury problems, and it is intended that further activities will be built on the outcomes of these and future inventory projects. Work on encouraging using non-mercury products in healthcare and other sectors is ongoing in a number of regions. Work with the Basel Secretariat has continued during 2007, with guidelines on environmentally sound management of mercury-containing waste available as an initial draft.

The second approach to the mercury challenge identified by the Governing Council is the need to review and assess the options of enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments. An ad hoc Open Ended Working Group was established by the Governing Council to undertake this task. The Working Group was to meet twice; once before the next special session of the Governing Council and the second time prior to the next meeting of the Governing Council. The first meeting of the Working Group was held from 12 to 16 November in Bangkok, Thailand. The group discussed the options of voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments, with a major focus being on the possible response measures to deal with mercury. Discussions were informed by a paper prepared by UNEP entitled 'Analysis of Possible Options to Address the Global Challenges to Reduce Risks from Releases of Mercury'. The meeting also developed an ambitious program of intersessional work to contribute to the work of the second meeting, which will be held in October 2008.

Lead and cadmium

The interim reviews of lead and cadmium were considered at the Governing Council, and work has been underway to gather information to address the identified data gaps and to compile an inventory of existing risk management measures. The draft revised reviews will be available for comment early in 2008, and the reviews will be presented to the Governing Council at its next meeting.

Persistent Organic Pollutants

Technical support to the parties and secretariat of the Stockholm Convention for its implementation is provided by UNEP Chemicals, with particular emphasis to the POP substances representing high environmental risks, such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and releases of dioxins and furans. Additional support is provided through projects and events targeting alternatives to and sound management of POP pesticides. An example is the CD and web publication of the Resource Tool on the Sound Management of Pesticides.

The 3rd Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on POPs adopted an open and transparent process to update and improve UNEP's Standardized Toolkit for the Identification and Quantification of Dioxin and Furan Releases. The elements are jointly implemented by the Convention Secretariat and UNEP Chemicals and include the Toolkit Expert Meetings (Geneva, December 2007) and projects to close gaps in the Toolkit. Since May 2007, UNEP Chemicals with the funding from the Swedish government through SIDA and the Chlorine Chemistry Division of the American Chemical Council is implementing a project to determine emission factors of unintentional POPs from open burning of waste in developing countries, *i.e.*, Mexico

and China. Another project on emission factors from burning of sugarcane and forest fires has been developed.

The UNEP/GEF project on “Assessment of Existing Capacity and Capacity Building Needs to Analyse POPs in Developing Countries” has developed guidelines for the analysis of Persistent Organic Pollutants and nine developing country laboratories have participated in interlaboratory comparison studies. An online databank, containing detailed information from about 190 POPs laboratories worldwide has been launched at <http://www.chem.unep.ch/databank/Home/Welcome.aspx>.

In collaboration with the Secretariat of the Basel Convention, UNEP has supported the development of national inventories and national action plans for PCB and PCB-containing equipment on a regional basis, and is elaborating on this work to assure continuation of initial progress. Examples include a project in seven countries in Central America which will be expanded to the Latin America and Caribbean region.

In collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Stockholm Convention secretariat UNEP Chemicals developed and launched the DDT Information System to facilitate the exchange of information and experience on issues related to the use and replacement of DDT for the control of vector-borne diseases such as malaria. Similarly, UNEP Chemicals developed and launched the Termiticide Information System, one product of the efforts between itself and the Global Expert Termite Group, established in 2000 by UNEP and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This web resource collates information on multiple aspects of termite control to facilitate the elimination of termiticides which are POPs.

2. UNEP/UNDP partnership initiative on the implementation of SAICM (Mainstreaming)

One of the strategic priorities of the Quick Start Programme under SAICM is to undertake analysis, interagency coordination, and public participation activities directed at enabling the implementation of SAICM by integrating - i.e. mainstreaming – the sound management of chemicals in national strategies, and thereby informing development assistance cooperation.

Based on this the partnership initiative, which draws on UNDP and UNEP’s comparative expertise, focuses on mainstreaming sound management of chemicals into the development agenda of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. This is achieved through implementation of the initiative in a number of countries with the purpose to enable these countries to access funding for to improve cross-sectoral governance of sound management of chemicals, assess their present management regimes and to identify areas that need reinforcement and finally, improve the incorporation of the sound management of chemicals into their national development processes and plans. A description of the programmatic partnership is to be found Annex I. The initiative is being tested in Ecuador, Uganda, Zambia, Belarus, Macedonia and Cambodia. The possibility to include other projects in the programmatic partnership is being investigated.

3. Regional workshops on development of legal and institutional infrastructures for sound management of chemicals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

SAICM recognizes that sound management of chemicals will depend on the development of national legal and institutional infrastructures including legislation, regulation and assessment of chemicals together with monitoring and enforcement of these.

However, most developing countries and many countries with economies in transition have not managed to establish the necessary national legal and institutional infrastructures for the sound management of chemicals.

Based on this the Swedish Chemicals Agency (KEMI) and UNEP, Chemicals has developed a project to assist developing countries and countries in transition in the development of such infrastructures. The project focuses in its initial phases in gathering of information of the status of the development of legal and institutional infrastructures for developing countries and countries with economies in transition. More information on the project can be found on the website <http://www.chem.unep.ch/unepsaicm/riqa06/default.html>

4. Assistance to countries in projects under the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund.

UNEP is supporting the implementation of projects in Moldova and Armenia that have received funding from the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund. The projects are:

- Moldova and UNEP partnership on capacity building for improving the environmentally sound management of chemicals in the Republic of Moldova and the implementation of SAICM”
- Armenia and UNEP Partnership Initiative for Sound Management of Chemicals and Implementation of SAICM in

The projects will start in spring 2008.

5. Chemicals Information Exchange Network

SAICM recognized that information and knowledge together with public awareness are basic needs for decision-making for the sound management of chemicals. In particular in a rapidly globalizing economy, access to scientific and technical information has a critical role to play in development and the sound environmental management of chemicals as called for in Chapter 19 of Agenda 21. In line with the objectives of the 2002 Johannesburg Summit of ensuring the sound management of chemicals by 2020, UNEP Chemicals launched the Chemical Information Exchange Network (CIEN) project to improve access to sources of information on chemicals and to facilitate networking at the national and sub-regional levels. Existing projects in 13 African countries was strengthened, with emphasis on building their technical capacity in using CIEN as a base for their reporting mechanism for the Implementation of MEAs. Following regional workshops recommendations concerning strengthening the capacity of the Stockholm Convention, UNEP Chemicals launched several tools to catalyze information exchanges. These include the electronic (e-learning) tools, to assist countries building their capacity for environmentally-sound management of chemicals through improved access and use scientific and technical information on chemicals together with and electronic forum (e-forum) to provide a platform for exchange of information and experience among national stakeholders and other individuals involved in the use and management of chemicals.

6. Illegal international traffic

SAICM stressed that illegal traffic in hazardous substances and dangerous products is a pressing concern for many countries, especially for developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

UNEP organized in cooperation with the Czech government a Symposium on Illegal International Traffic in Hazardous Chemicals that was held in Prague, Czech Republic, from 6 to 8 November 2006. The symposium concluded that illegal traffic comprised a number of elements, including the substance in question, the generation or manufacture of the substance, its movement, its transboundary movement, and its use and disposal.

It was recognized that if one or more of the elements were illegal then the traffic was “illegal”. It was stressed, furthermore, that a number of measures were indicated for each of these elements:

- (a) Legislation;
- (b) Enforcement of legislation;
- (c) Information exchange;
- (d) Training of national authorities;
- (e) Awareness-raising;
- (f) Others.

It was agreed that activities related to each of the measures were necessary to address illegal international traffic. A number of UNEP activities contributing either directly or indirectly to the achievement of the objectives set out in paragraph 18 of the Strategic Approach are underway and are outlined below.

An ongoing activity in UNEP is the Green Customs Initiative, where the secretariat assistance is located in the OzoneAction Branch in DTIE, is secretariat. The GCI is a partnership of international organisations and Secretariats that cooperates to enhance the capacity of customs and other relevant border enforcement personnel to deal with environmentally-sensitive items covered by the respective trade-related agreements represented by the Partners. It offers an integrated approach for providing information, training and awareness-raising to facilitate legal trade in such commodities and prevent their illegal trade.

The Partners are: the Secretariats of the relevant multilateral environmental agreements (Basel, Montreal, Stockholm, Rotterdam, CITES, Cartagena), Interpol, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the World Customs Organization, as well as UNEP (Division of Technology, Industry and Economics – DTIE; Division of Environmental Law and Conventions – DELC; and UNEP’s Regional Offices).

(Add pages as necessary)

NGOs: Has a project proposal been submitted for consideration by the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund Implementation Committee? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please elaborate (e.g. provide the title of the project proposal):
If no, is a project proposal in preparation? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Other Comments:

Signature: X Per Bakken	Date: 5. February 2007
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Questionnaire for intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on initial efforts to implement SAICM

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Organization: World Health Organization		Contact Person: Tim Meredith
		Is this person the organization's SAICM focal point? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Address: 20 Avenue Appia CH-1211 Geneva 27 Switzerland		Functional Title: Senior Adviser (Chemicals)
		Department / Section: Public Health and Environment
Phone: +41 (0)22 791 4348	Fax: +41 (0)22 791 4848	Email: mereditht@who.int

Has an official SAICM focal point been nominated? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
IGOs: Have SAICM objectives been incorporated in your organization's programme of work? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> (Attach a description or elaborate here if desired.) WHO has an ongoing programme on the sound management of chemicals, implemented through the WHO Department of Public Health and Environment, WHO Regional Offices and WHO country offices. Details are provided in the attached WHO SAICM paper which includes information from the WHO Regional Office for the Americas/Pan American Health Organization.
National NGOs: Have you participated in a planning meeting(s) of national stakeholders? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please elaborate (e.g. describe the nature of the meeting(s)):
Has work commenced on preparing a SAICM implementation plan for your organization? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please elaborate (e.g. indicate the timeframe for preparing the plan and note its relationship, if any, to previous plans): The plan has been developed, and will be updated as necessary
NGOs: Has a project proposal been submitted for consideration by the SAICM Quick Start Programme Trust Fund Implementation Committee? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If yes, please elaborate (e.g. provide the title of the project proposal): If no, is a project proposal in preparation? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Other Comments:

Signature: Tim Meredith	Date: 6 February 2008
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World Health Organization

FACILITATION OF HEALTH SECTOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Version 6 February 2008

I. Introduction and process for development of WHO initiatives

1. This document provides information on current and proposed initial future activities of the World Health Organization (WHO) in support of implementation of SAICM, focusing on the priorities developed by the health sector for SAICM.
2. The World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolution 59.15 on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management welcomed SAICM, urged Member States to take full account of the health aspects of chemical safety in national implementation of SAICM and requested the Director-General of WHO to facilitate health sector implementation focusing on human health-related elements. The full resolution is available on the WHO SAICM webpage: http://www.who.int/ipcs/features/saicm_revised/en/index.html
3. The detailed health sector priorities developed during the SAICM negotiations and reflected in the final text of SAICM, primarily in the Global Plan of Action (GPA) are provided at Annex 1. These priorities can be summarized under the following headings.
 - Actions to improve ability to access, interpret and apply scientific knowledge.
 - Filling of gaps in scientific knowledge.
 - Development of globally-harmonized methods for chemical risk assessment.
 - Development of better methods to determine impacts of chemicals on health, to set priorities for action and to monitor progress of SAICM.
 - Building capacities of countries to deal with poisonings and chemical incidents.
 - Strategies directed specifically at the health of children and workers.
 - Work to promote alternatives to highly-toxic and persistent chemicals.
 - Strategies aimed at prevention of ill-health and disease caused by chemicals.
4. The GPA contains numerous detailed activities in which WHO has a long-standing track record of work. This paper provides information on current and proposed WHO activities in support of SAICM implementation, including activities aimed at facilitating the broader engagement of the health sector. In some cases, proposals for new activities and increased emphasis on existing activities will rely on securing additional donor support. In these efforts WHO is guided by the health sector priorities and its mandate, i.e. human health.

Current and proposed initial future WHO initiatives

5. **Key current WHO activities and proposed initial future activities** (dependent on funding and further consultation), are provided in this section of this document, organized according to: global

activities addressing the health sector priorities; activities addressing WHO facilitation of health sector implementation; and a guide to information on regional activities.

6. Actions to improve ability to access, interpret and apply scientific knowledge. Examples:
 - INCHEM is a publicly available, free-of-charge to the end-user, web and CD database containing thousands of publications on chemicals. WHO has offered INCHEM as a formal contribution to the SAICM chemical clearing house. INCHEM receives in the order of 450,000 unique visitors per month, and it is hoped that access to INCHEM through the planned Global Portal (a development led by OECD) will further broaden its availability.
 - Development of norms and guidance for the collection, recording and use of biomonitoring data for risk assessment, surveillance and to evaluate the effectiveness of primary prevention. Possible actions include strategies for harmonisation of methods for producing comparable exposure monitoring data, interpretation and communication of results. This work will support regional strategies for health and the environment and monitoring exposure trends for persistent organic pollutants.
 - Development and updating international guidelines directed at assisting countries to develop effective regulatory responses to control exposure to hazardous chemicals in specific environments (e.g. drinking-water, wastewater use in agriculture, bathing water, etc.).
 - Development of guidance on assessing the priority of actions to focus public health efforts (e.g. in the context of drinking-water).
 - Development of a Risk Assessment Toolkit for country/local use, which will include tools such as how to identify priorities and problems, and case studies, for example how to identify and assess severely hazardous pesticide formulations.
 - A range of other activities will be elaborated addressing the interpretation and application of scientific knowledge. Also refer to the health sector priority on development of globally-harmonized methods for chemical risk assessment.

7. Filling of gaps in scientific knowledge. Examples:
 - Assessing the risks of chemicals which contribute to environmental burdens of disease including the development of 'fast track' approaches for critical issues and tackling issues associated with multi-media exposure, and focused risk assessments based on country needs.
 - Preparation of high-quality international chemical risk assessments that can be used by countries for identifying, prioritising and managing risks to public health. e.g. to date 231 Environmental Health Criteria Documents and 67 Concise International Chemical Assessment Documents have been published.
 - Joint FAO/WHO Meetings on Pesticide Residues (JMPR), for pesticide assessments.
 - Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives meetings (JECFA), for assessment of food contaminants and food additives.
 - Supporting country assessments to identify health issues arising from chemicals, e.g. in drinking-water.
 - Focussed projects on recent/emerging issues, including the health impacts of manufactured nanomaterials, and endocrine disruptors.

8. Development of globally-harmonized methods for chemical risk assessment. Examples:
 - The IPCS Project on Harmonization of Approaches to the Assessment of Risk from Exposure to Chemicals has numerous activities that produce internationally-harmonized guidance for risk assessors. New emphasis is being placed on dissemination and uptake of the methods produced. Current initiatives include development of guidance addressing the problem of risk assessment of aggregate and cumulative exposure to chemicals, i.e. exposure to mixtures of chemicals in real-life scenarios; and guidance on issue identification and prioritization.
 - Use of toxicogenomics for risk assessment (with OECD).

9. Development of better methods to determine impacts of chemicals on health, to set priorities for action and to monitor progress of SAICM. Examples:
- A WHO publication on the burden of disease caused by environmental factors (25%) was released on 15 June 2006. Building upon this work, new country-by-country data were released in June 2007 showing the detail of impacts of environmental factors on health http://www.who.int/quantifying_ehimpacts/countryprofiles/en/
 - The INTOX Data Management System provides a means of collecting internationally comparable data on exposures to chemicals to support countries in implementing primary prevention measures. Projects in the training and use of the system to collect data to guide prevention activities, improve burden of disease and chemical injury data and collect data useful for implementation of chemicals conventions and agreements such as the Rotterdam Convention.
 - Further work focusing on the public health impacts of exposure to chemicals is planned. This work will include both burden of disease approaches and health impact assessments.
 - New work is needed on ways to monitor the progress and effectiveness of SAICM in relation to human health.
10. Building capacities of countries to deal with poisonings and chemical incidents. Examples:
- Efforts continue to foster the establishment of poisons centres in the many countries that have no centre, or insufficient centres. Tools for use by poisons centres need to be kept up to date, e.g. data management system and internationally harmonized terminology for documenting poisoning cases, poisons information and antidote monographs, training materials and networks of poisons centres.
 - The Global Chemical Incident Alert and Response System identifies and responds to chemical incidents of potential international public health concern, in accordance with the International Health Regulations (2005). This work is undertaken in partnership with WHO programmes on health Action in Crises (HAC), Epidemic and Pandemic Response (EPR) and those dealing with preparedness and response to natural occurrence, accidental release or deliberate use of biological and chemical agents or radionuclear materials that affect health.
 - Further development work is planned, for example, to enhance the capacity of poisons centres to respond to public health threats from chemicals, to provide teaching materials on clinical toxicology and to assist in the implementation of the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals.
11. Strategies directed specifically at the health of children and workers. Examples:
- Guidance and training materials related to children's health, e.g. guidance on how to establish Paediatric Environmental Health centres, and a Training package for the health sector on children's health and the environment.
 - Long-term research studies on children's health and the environment.
 - The 60th World Health Assembly in May endorsed a WHO global plan of action on workers' health 2008-2017 (Resolution WHA60.26) http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA60/A60_R26-en.pdf. In addition to a number of measures to protect and promote the health of workers, the global plan of action calls upon all Member States to define essential interventions for assessment and management of chemical risks in the working environment, and in particular integrated chemicals management at the workplace, as well as to strengthen environmental protection with regards to workers' health through implementation of the risk reduction measures foreseen in SAICM. Activities to implement the Global Plan of Action are being developed through regional consultations and with ILO and partners in the Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Occupational Health http://www.who.int/occupational_health/publications/newsletter/gohnet13_26nov07.
 - Production of some 1,600 International Chemical Safety Cards for the workplace (with ILO), with most available in 17 languages. Work is commencing on including on the cards the new chemical

classifications in accordance with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling.

- Promotion of and implementation of the International Chemical Control Toolkit (or "control banding") approach, which is a practical tool for use in small-scale workplaces to identify necessary controls for chemicals to minimize exposure (with ILO and UNITAR). WHO provides the Secretariat. More work at country level, e.g. with pilot countries is needed.
12. Work to promote alternatives to highly-toxic and persistent chemicals. Examples:
- The 2005 WHO Workshop on Chrysotile Asbestos Substitutes provides an example of one way to assess and make available information on safer substitutes.
 - New efforts will be placed on interventions, including utilizing settings-based approaches, such as schools and villages.
 - Development and implementation of tools for disease prevention and control, including assessment of the costs and benefits of interventions, best-practice solutions and guidance for effective decision-making.
13. Strategies aimed at prevention of ill-health and disease caused by chemicals. Examples:
- WHO is implementing its new prevention strategy for environmental health. This covers the following main themes, which all have a chemicals aspect: assessing and managing environmental risks to health; interventions for healthy environments; and emerging issues in health, environment and development.
 - One example of an action under this heading is provision of guidance on minimizing generation of hazardous chemicals, such as in health care waste incineration.
14. WHO facilitation of health sector implementation
- In all of the above activities, WHO will work with, and facilitate participation of, health sector partners, including Member States, WHO Collaborating Centres, IPCS Participating Institutions, non-governmental organizations, and with the health sector generally, as needed.
 - WHO maintains a SAICM website: http://www.who.int/ipcs/features/saicm_revised/en/index.html which provides information for the health sector. In addition, details of specific WHO activities on chemicals, for example by the International Programme on Chemical Safety, are available from the following website: <http://www.who.int/ipcs/en/>

Guide to WHO Regional Activities: Highlights and priorities

15. WHO Member States are grouped into six regions. For information on the regional groupings please visit: <http://www.who.int/about/regions/en/index.html>.
16. WHO has a country office in most of its Member States, headed by the WHO Representative. This comparative advantage allows WHO to be in a position to follow-up implementation very closely.
17. The following sections outline highlights and priorities of the WHO regional offices. These will be updated over time, as the SAICM regional processes develop.

Regional Office for Europe (EURO)

18. WHO EURO aims to promote a healthier environment, intensify primary prevention and influence public policies in all sectors so as to address the root causes of environmental threats to health. EURO medium term (2008-2013) priority actions which will support SAICM are provided below.
19. Develop and update evidence-based assessments, norms and guidance on priority environmental health risks (e.g., air quality, chemical substances, EMF, radon, drinking water, waste water

reuse); provide technical support to international environmental agreements and for monitoring the MDGs.

- Identify progress in scientific evidence on health impacts of air pollutants allowing improvement of the existing (or creation of new) WHO guidelines.
 - Provide the Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution with the assessment of health risks from pollutants transported over long distances.
 - Facilitate participation of Member States from WHO-Euro in SAICM, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and in other international agreements or programs.
 - Develop and update evidence-based assessments and guidance for monitoring priority environmental health risks and the MDGs.
 - Establish environment and health information system supporting policy-making in Europe.
 - Assessment of occupational burden of disease in Europe.
 - Development and implementation of EURO Regional Programme on Workers Health (good practice guidance).
 - Support the countries to eliminate the hazardous child labour.
20. Technical support and guidance to countries for the implementation of primary prevention interventions that reduce environmental health risks, enhance safety, and promote public health, including in specific settings and among vulnerable population groups (e.g. children, elderly).
- Develop and implement chemical emergency response capacity, enhancing chemical safety.
 - Support countries in the risk assessment and management of chemical exposures of vulnerable populations (e.g. WHO EURO response to the lead poisoning of minority groups in Kosovo).
21. Technical assistance and support to countries for strengthening occupational and environmental health policy- making, planning of preventive interventions, service delivery and surveillance.
- Assist Member States in upgrading their air quality monitoring network, focusing on development of monitoring of particulate matter.
 - Provide technical support to the Member States for strengthening policies and actions related to chemical safety.
 - Technical assistance and support to countries for strengthening environmental health policy-making and surveillance (EHIS).
 - Human biomonitoring and environmental health surveillance.
 - Support countries to strengthen the health system for delivery of occupational health services and surveillance.
 - Implementation of WHO global and regional strategy to reduce occupational risks in countries in transition.
22. Guidance, tools, and initiatives supporting the health sector to influence policies in priority sectors (e.g. energy, transport, agriculture); assessing health impacts; costs and benefits of policy alternatives in those sectors; and harnessing non-health sector investments to improve health, environment and safety.
- Guidance, tools supporting the health sector to influence policies in priority sectors.
23. Enhance Health Sector leadership to support a healthier environment and influence public policies in all sectors so as to address the root causes of environmental threats to health. Including by responding to emerging and re-emerging environmental health concerns from development, evolving technologies, global environmental change as well as consumption and production patterns.
- Regular engagement of global and regional policymakers and stakeholders in high-level health and environment forums.

24. An environment and health minister's process was launched in 1989 with the aim to eliminate the most significant environmental threats to health as rapidly as possible, with the approach that prevention is better than cure. Progress made towards this goal is marked by a series of ministerial conferences held every five years. The Fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health took place in Budapest, in 2004 under the theme "The future of our children". The Fifth Ministerial Conference will take place in 2009 in Italy.

Regional Office for Africa

25. The Strategic Approach for International Chemical Management provides the framework for chemical safety work by the WHO Regional Office for Africa. WHO works with countries and partners to:

- Integrate chemical issues into the broader development agenda.
- Promote ratification of relevant conventions.
- Strengthen country capacities for implementation of international norms and standards.
- Promote alternatives in order to reduce and phase out highly toxic pesticides.
- Support capacity building.

26. Specific emphasis is given to the following activities:

- Development of national profiles.
- Capacity building to deal with poisonings and chemical incidents.
- Judicious use of pesticides in the context of integrated vector management.
- Surveillance and pollution prevention.

Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

27. Priority activities:

- Collaborate with relevant UN agencies and NGOs to promote the ratification of international conventions on environment addressing chemicals management.
- Provide technical support to countries participating in the SAICM process to develop the health-related aspects of their national implementation plans.
- Provide technical support to countries to update their national profiles for chemicals management.
- Provide a technical capacity building package to selected countries for chemicals management.
- Provide technical support to countries for the establishment and strengthening of poisons and chemicals information centres.

Regional Office for the Western Pacific

28. *Regional initiative on environment and health.* This initiative which is relevant for both the WHO Western Pacific Region and also the South-East Asia Region, started with the first high-level meeting in November 2004 held in Manila, involving the director and director-general level officials of both ministries of health and the environment from countries of ASEAN and East Asia (China, Japan, Mongolia and Republic of Korea). Following the recommendations of this meeting, a ministerial Regional Forum on Environment and Health is organized for August 2007, and a Charter of the Regional Forum prepared. WHO and UNEP are the joint secretariat to the Regional Forum. Two of the priorities identified for 2008-2010 under the Charter are related to the work of SAICM:

- Toxic chemicals and hazardous substances; and

- Contingency planning, preparedness and response in environmental health emergencies (including chemical emergencies).
29. For each priority area, a regional Thematic Working Group (TWG), involving relevant government agencies, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, international agencies, and other relevant groups, is established at the regional level.
30. The work plans of the two TWGs are also aligned with the recommendations of the Asia Pacific SAICM regional meeting. The TWG meetings to finalize the work plans will be held in June 2007. Health input will be provided to the work plans of the TWGs.
31. *Building capacities of countries to deal with poisonings and chemical incidents.*
- Efforts will continue to establish poisons centres in countries where no such centre exists, and strengthen the functions of existing poisons centres and expand the network of poisons centres in developing countries in the Region (priority countries: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Pacific island countries). In 2007, WHO supports Cambodia and Mongolia in this area.
 - Collaboration will continue to support the development of national capacity in planning and preparation for, and responding to, chemical incidents (priority countries: China, Philippines, Viet Nam). In 2007, WHO supports China in this area.
32. *Strategies directed specifically at the health of children and workers*
- Under the Healthy Environments for Children Initiative, WHO continues to collaborate with countries to address chemicals in the environment that affect the health of children (priority countries: Mongolia, Philippines, Japan, Pacific island countries). Through the facilitation of WHO, the experiences in Japan in this area is presented at the Scientific Conference on Environment and Health held in Seoul in early May 2007.
 - Elimination of asbestos-related diseases has become a major concern in Asia. WHO and ILO co-sponsored the first Asia Asbestos Conference organized by the Health Ministry of Thailand in July 2006 in Bangkok. With the support of WHO, the Ministry of Health, Viet Nam organized a national conference on asbestos. A WHO regional meeting on occupational health held in the 4th quarters of 2007 addresses the asbestos issues and recommendations to tackle the problem.
 - WHO continues to support countries in developing national capacity to deal with chemicals at workplaces. In 2007, collaboration is extended to Cambodia and Mongolia.

Regional Office for South-East Asia

33. WHO has an office in each of the 11 South-East Asia (SEA) region Member States. There are five WHO chemical safety advisers in the SEA region. WHO works with chemical safety focal points in all eleven SEAR national governments (MoH and/or MoE and/or Min Ag).
34. In their current 2006-2007 WHO sponsored work plans, all SEAR countries are implementing environmental health activities which are part of the SAICM GPA. Priority activities are focussing on capacity building and information sharing for health, environment and agriculture professionals and policy makers from government and non government organizations on the following topics:
- Strengthening institutional networking to address the health impacts of, and mitigation measures for, arsenic contamination of ground water.
 - Promoting the use of WHO Guidelines and Training Modules for the diagnosis, surveillance and management of arsenicosis.
 - Improving drinking water quality management by applying water safety plans.

- Conducting applied total diet studies on chemical contaminants throughout the food chain and evaluate the impacts on human health.
- Using evidence based data on chemical food contaminants (pesticide and heavy metal residues) for national policy making.
- Advising consumer groups on how to more effectively interact with other stakeholders to improve food safety and public health.
- Reducing reliance on pesticides through Community based participatory approaches such as the integrated management of disease vectors and pest crops (IPVM).
- Monitoring poisonings to reduce exposure to highly toxic pesticides at community level.
- Assessing heavy metals exposure of workers to reduce their burden of disease
- Assessing exposure and promoting alternative cooking methods to reduce respiratory illnesses related to indoor air pollution
- Creating national capacity for the sound management of hazardous wastes and health care waste through large training programmes.
- Using the life cycle and healthy settings approaches to prepare national action plans for the protection of children's environmental health.
- Establishing a regional help desk for chemical safety to provide basic advice to countries on availability of expertise, policy guidance, funding and on implementation of relevant multilateral environmental agreements.

Regional Office for the Americas.

35. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) as WHO's Regional Office for the Americas works with countries and partners to:

- Support the implementation of the National Chemical Substances Profiles
- Promote and support the participation of the countries of the Region in SAICM, as well as in international agreements: Rotterdam, Stockholm, Basel, and others.
- Promote the coordination of risk assessment methodologies in contaminated sites.
- Support the exchange and dissemination of information on chemical products in virtual libraries, such as the Regional Virtual Library of Toxicology developed by SDE/PAHO: <http://www.bvsde.paho.org/>
- Support projects to strengthen poisoning surveillance systems directed to toxic substances of main concern such as: pesticides and mercury among others.
- Support projects designed to substitute/eliminate the use of persistent organic pollutants, for example: DDT in Central America and Mexico.
- Support and promote information and knowledge management through the establishment of networks of professionals and institutions linked to chemical safety, like RETOXLAC in Latin America and the national networks in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Panama, among others, which contribute to the creation of protocols, guides, educational materials, and multicenter research.
- Promote and support projects to strengthen and or create toxicological centers.
- Promote the coordination of national information systems for the report of poisoning/exposure cases, through INTOX/IPCS or their own national software.
- Develop subregional programs of comprehensive action to reduce risks on chemical substances.
- Develop and implement a Regional Workers' Health Program with a module on chemical substances.
- Develop and implement a Regional Child Health Program that includes, among others, WHO proposed activities such as: national profiles on the status of Children's Environmental Health (CEH), training package for the health sector, CEH's indicators, and promotion of the Environmental Pediatric History (Green Sheet).

- Support the development of response capabilities diagnosis and the preparation of health sector plans to address chemical incidents.
- Develop training materials for the various levels associated with chemical products, such as: primary management of poisoning cases, risk assessment, risk communications, etc. Many of them available in self-teaching methodologies: <http://www.bvsde.paho.org/sde/ops-sde/cursotoxi.html>

36. PAHO/WHO Activities supporting countries in compliance with the HEMA Agenda of Cooperation of the Declaration of Mar del Plata:

- Advisory services and/or support projects geared toward strengthening the pesticide poisoning surveillance systems. Example: PLAGBOL, PLAGSALUD and others.
- Jointly with ACTO it has participated in projects geared toward reducing the risks by exposure to mercury in Amazon region.
- Advisory services for the implementation of projects and/or work plans geared toward reducing the impact on health and environment of pesticides and mercury. Example in MERCOSUR.
- Strengthen the mechanisms of cooperation among the countries for priority chemical products.
- Compile, produce, and to disseminate information through different means for facilitates access of the people's to the information and to the knowledge of adverse effects to the health and the environment by exposure to chemical substances. Information available in the Virtual Toxicology Library of SDE/PAHO (<http://www.bvsde.ops-oms.org>)
- Advisory services for the strengthening of the national risk assessment systems for the pesticide registry and risk assessments in contaminated sites.
- Implementation of subregional plans for prevention, preparation, and response to chemical emergencies, example in the Andean Region.
- Advisory services for development and implementation of plans of response to chemical emergencies.
- Development of instruments of education, promoting the distance learning on chemical substances and its impact on health and environment.
- Promote the organization of fora on children's environmental health
- Prepare Children Environmental Health Atlas.

Register your interest in health sector activities

37. In order to facilitate implementation of health-related elements of SAICM by the health sector, health sector contacts worldwide are invited to register their interest in receiving updates on health sector activities and/or inclusion in a shared workspace WHO plans to develop to facilitate health sector implementation activities. Please register your interest by providing your full contact details to the following e-mail address: ipcsmail@who.int, specifying SAICM on the subject line.

Conclusion

36. WHO will periodically update this paper to reflect work completed, views of Member States and feedback from the health sector generally, and to reflect the available resources for future efforts.
37. WHO programme delivery mechanisms will be at the global, regional and country level, through WHO's extensive network of regional and country offices. It is hoped that SAICM regional meetings will play an important role in identifying regional priority activities in which WHO can play a part.
38. Feedback on WHO efforts and the health sector activities generally is encouraged. Please send to: ipcsmail@who.int

SAICM health sector input

1. This summary provides input from the Health Sector to SAICM over the course of its development by the PrepCom.
2. In the context of coordination of Health Sector views, countries call strongly for a multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder process for development, implementation and assessment of SAICM, to reflect the principle that human beings lie at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. The need for integration of chemicals into mainstream health policies is agreed, as is the contribution that the sound management of chemicals can make to achievement of the WSSD Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals.
3. The importance of establishment and strengthening of inter-sectoral processes and approaches at regional and country level is emphasized. Use of advocacy, community empowerment, participation and ownership is highlighted. Coordination at all levels should be improved, including at national, regional and international levels.
4. SAICM implementation should involve periodic follow-up and assessment of progress and include the use of indicators of human exposure and health. Mechanisms for ongoing Health Sector engagement in the process of implementation at all levels need to be agreed.
5. Currently, the following main areas of health input for SAICM are foreseen.
 - **Filling of gaps in abilities to access, interpret and apply knowledge** (e.g. improved availability of information on the hazards, risks and safe use of chemicals (including those in manufactured products), in forms relevant to end users, and improved use of existing risk assessments).
 - **Development and use of new and harmonized methods for risk assessment**, e.g. methods for assessment of dose-response relationships and risks to vulnerable groups, in particular children, pregnant women and fertile people, the elderly and the poor; new tools for risk assessment, making best use of (molecular) epidemiology, clinical and exposure data, and scientific advances in toxicogenomics; harmonized methods for risk assessment of carcinogens, mutagens, reproductive toxins, genotoxins and immunotoxins; and new risk assessment methods relevant to real-life exposures, e.g. aggregate/cumulative exposures, use of simple analytical methods for in-field exposure assessment.
 - **Development of better methods and criteria to determine the impact of chemicals on health (and thereby on economy and sustainable development) to set priorities for action, for the detection of chemicals, and to monitor progress of SAICM.** This will also assist with implementation of Millennium Development Goals and place chemicals and health on development assistance agenda. These methods should be able to be used at country level. Means of determining health impacts of policy decisions are required.
 - **Building capacities of countries to deal with poisonings and chemical incidents.** An integrated approach to establishment and strengthening of poisons centres and surveillance, alert and response mechanisms for chemical incidents is proposed. This would include technical cooperation on a regional basis.
 - **Filling of gaps in science** (e.g. gaps in understanding of endocrine disruptors).
 - In addition to risk assessment methods, broad **strategies specifically directed to the health of children and young families** are needed. These would include recommendations arising from Forum IV.
 - Inclusion of specific **actions for worker health protection**, including farmers and children, and linking of these to broader health policy and actions, in consultation with the labour sector.
 - Inclusion of a **range of preventive strategies**, education and awareness raising, and capacity building in risk communication.
 - As a priority, further **work to promote alternatives to highly-toxic, persistent and bioaccumulating chemicals**, taking into account the whole life-cycle of chemicals including waste. This would include using tools such as cleaner production and integrated pest and vector management.