

Fifteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

From 31 October to 4 November 2005, Ministers and Heads of Delegations from 30 countries met in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, for the fifteenth meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to build consensus and reflect on the main challenges of the environmental agenda in the context of sustainable development. Further information on the meeting can be found at <http://www.pnuma.org/foroalc/esp/html/15car05i.htm>.

The Forum adopted decisions necessary to undertake the implementation of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), which was approved at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) and incorporated in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

Based on the recommendations of a Preparatory Meeting of Experts, the Ministers of the Environment of the region adopted twenty decisions, including the following decision on sustainable management of chemicals in which the Ministers expressed support for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)*:

Decision 13 of the Fifteenth Meeting of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean:

Sustainable Management of Chemicals

Considering that the World Summit on Sustainable Development established as one of the objectives of the Implementation Plan that, by the year 2020, chemicals should be produced and used in such a way as to reduce adverse effects on human health and the environment, and also endorsed the development of a strategic approach for the integrated management of chemicals at the international level;

Taking into account that the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development urge the strengthening of cooperation and intra-regional coordination with the support of relevant agencies and institutions in each region;

Recalling that decision 23/9 of the UNEP Governing Council establishes a set of actions to be undertaken by the Programme and the Governments towards strengthening initiatives in the context of international agreements on the sustainable management of chemicals, supporting the development of a strategic approach to the integrated management of chemicals at an international level, strengthening actions aimed at the expansion of scientific, technical and technological knowledge on chemicals and their effect on human health and the environment, and adopting decisions to reduce the adverse impacts of chemicals on human health and the environment;

Considering the organization of the High Level International Conference on Chemical Safety to be held in Dubai in 2006, where the Strategic Approach to Integrated Chemicals

* Extract provided by the SAIM Secretariat for information purpose only, not for official use

Management shall be adopted, and that said approach demands additional efforts and resources from the countries in order to fulfil its commitments and achieve its objectives.

Decide:

1. **To promote** the fulfilment of the objective of using and producing chemicals in ways that minimize significant adverse effects on human health and the environment in the region by the year 2020.
2. **To support** the process for the development of a Strategic Approach to Integrated Chemicals Management (SAICM), ensuring that it includes the participation of all sectors involved, that it adequately considers the needs and situation of the countries in the region, that it includes the necessary means to guarantee implementation, such as the availability of technical, technological and financial resources.
3. **To urge** the agencies of the Inter-Agency Technical Committee, in line with their own mandates, to support the projects and actions undertaken by the countries in the region toward the implementation of the sustainable management of chemicals in the region, observing their commitments under the relevant international agreements and the objectives specified under SAICM.
4. **To further** the interaction and intersectoral work, *inter alia*, in the areas of health, agriculture and industry in our countries, fostering dialogue and the coordination of policies and programmes for the sustainable management of chemicals.
5. **To ask** UNEP and other agencies under the Inter-Agency Technical Committee to establish and strengthen initiatives and partnerships at the regional, subregional and interregional levels with a view to advance the implementation of programmes and actions for sustainable management of chemicals in the region, particularly in the context of capacity-building and technological support as outlined in the Bali Strategic Plan.
6. **To urge** the international agencies and Multilateral Environmental Agreements to strengthen regional structures aimed at building capacity and technology support to optimize the potential of the regional centres to support the countries of the region in the implementation of the sustainable management of chemicals.
7. **To strengthen** the bodies and initiatives devoted to the dissemination and exchange of information related to the management of chemicals, and consider the creation of a Latin American and Caribbean network for the exchange of information on environmental components vulnerable to chemical substances, *inter alia*, soil.
8. **To establish** bodies to be responsible for the exchange of experiences and information concerning the management of polluted sites, including the prevention, identification and restoration of these sites.
9. **To promote** synergy with other sectors involved in the management of chemicals.