

Comments of the World Health Organization on the Co-chairs' paper on the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

6 July 2017

WHO understands that the co-chairs' paper is now open for comments that may go beyond those expressed at the first meeting of the intersessional process. Our detailed comments are provided in the attached version of the document, and a summary of key points is presented below:

- Many of WHO's comments and suggested additions reflect the need for the multi-sector/multi-stakeholder approach to be further integrated/mainstreamed into all components of the post-2020 thinking and discussions.
- The co-chairs' paper includes reference to the vision, aspirational targets, the 11 essential elements, potential road map(s), measurable objectives, clear milestones and national action plans - it would be useful to conceptualize how all of these components might work together, and how they will feed into indicators of progress (both existing and potentially new).
- Collection and consolidation of data on the impacts of chemicals on human health and the environment needs to be included, along with estimation and communication of the full scope and magnitude of these impacts. This is extremely important for increasing political awareness and priority. As such, we have added a point under scope.
- Would it be possible to provide some examples or clarification of what is envisioned in the reference to "Voluntary standards, common objectives of protection and codes of practice, to which relevant stakeholders may voluntarily commit for some issues, should also be considered" in the first point under "governance"?
- Under "National Implementation" we think it would be important to reference the WHO chemicals road map here and have added a suggested bullet to this point.
- There seems to be some overlap between the different sections of the document - some ideas are repeated in more than one section, while others may fit better in another section. While this is to be expected as the outcome of a brainstorming type session, to aid the upcoming discussions, it might be useful to better define the different sections (at least on a conceptual basis) and then to further refine the points included. This point is reflected in many of the comments and suggestions in the attached document.

CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY¹

As an output of the first meeting in the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, the co-chairs of the meeting prepared this summary, which sets out their views of the contributions of the participants. This summary also incorporates input received from participants during the initial comment period following the first meeting in the intersessional process, reflecting factual additions and clarifications to the document.

Based on the co-chairs' summary a further elaborated document will be prepared throughout 2017 to support the preparations for and discussions at the second meeting in the intersessional process. All SAICM stakeholders will have opportunities, on multiple occasions, to provide input to this document through an open, transparent and online consultative process.

The co-chairs', with the support of the SAICM secretariat, will consolidate the input received as part of the process for the development of the document.

Call for input:

All SAICM stakeholders are invited and encouraged to submit input and suggestions on areas and issues that they feel are not already covered or sufficiently addressed in the co-chairs' summary.

The deadline for input is 7 July 2017. Input should be sent directly to the Strategic Approach secretariat at saicm.chemicals@unep.org.

Introduction

The fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM4), through Conference resolution IV/4, launched an intersessional process to provide recommendations for consideration at ICCM5 on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

ICCM resolution IV/4 specifies that the work of the intersessional process is to be informed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, resolution 1/5 of the United Nations Environment Assembly and the outcome document "Strengthening the sound management of chemicals and wastes in the long term".

The present summary sets out the co-chairs' views of the contributions of the participants in the first meeting of the intersessional process on SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 held in Brasilia, Brazil from 7 to 9 February 2017. This summary should be read in conjunction with the official report of the meeting.

¹ Document to be formally edited.

While the Co-Chairs' summary is not intended to present a consensus view, in some areas there was a common understanding. The document is solely that of the Co-Chairs and is non-negotiated.

It is important to note that the discussions at the first meeting of the intersessional process and the Co-Chairs' summary of the meeting are not intended to limit any additional ideas and views to be considered in further discussions on the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

The present Co-Chairs' summary will be submitted to all SAICM stakeholders for further input and comments in order for it to further inform the discussions during the intersessional process on SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

Why a future platform for sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020?

This section describes why a future platform for sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 is being considered. This section is further linked to the vision for such a future platform.

Vision

- It should be built on the vision set out in UNEA I/5 and referenced in ICCM resolution IV/4, namely "To achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and of hazardous wastes in ways that lead to the prevention or minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, as an essential contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development."²
- It is essential to enhance political awareness and commitment, at the highest levels, in order to meet this vision.

Comment [WHO1]: It would be better to refer to Rio+20 para 213 because it is not sector specific

Furthermore, the following elements may be considered:

- The vision may be timeless (not limited to 2030) and aspirational, and linked to measurable objectives and practical targeted actions, including qualitative and quantitative elements.
- It should take into account the SAICM Overall Policy Strategy, the Overall Orientation and Guidance for achieving the 2020 goal of sound management of chemicals, including the 11 basic elements.
- It should take into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its entirety and particular goals 3, 6 and 12 recognizing that the sound management of chemicals and waste is an essential prerequisite for sustainable development while respecting the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- All stakeholders need to prioritize efforts to ensure the 11 basic elements of sound management of chemicals and waste, as set out in SAICM's Overall Orientation and Guidance, exist in all countries.
- ~~The vision may be timeless (not limited to 2030) and aspirational, and linked to measurable objectives and practical targeted actions, including qualitative and quantitative elements.~~

Comment [WHO2]: It would be useful to describe in what way these elements are to be considered? Are they to be considered for inclusion in the vision? Would some of them fit better under scope? Or are they meant to be additional general principles or goals?

Also, suggesting reordering so related ideas are together.

Comment [WHO3]: Related to the previous comment, it would be useful to conceptualize how the vision, the aspirational targets, 11 essential elements, the road map(s), and the national implementation plans might all work together, and how they will feed into indicators of progress (both existing and potentially new).

² United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 1/5 on chemicals and waste – Annex I, paragraph 7: Strengthening the sound management of chemicals and wastes in the long term.

- ~~It should take into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its entirety and particular goals 3, 6 and 12 recognizing that the sound management of chemicals and waste is an essential prerequisite for sustainable development while respecting the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals.~~
- Recognize the different but complementary roles of various sectors and stakeholders and, within this context, consider both collectively and individually ~~Consider efforts, in particular,~~ where we have the largest opportunity to foster change and to have the greatest impact.
- It should be complementary to and foster coordination with the work of, other environmental multilateral agreements or frameworks, whether legally binding or voluntary, while avoiding duplication and overlap and to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels.
- Momentum should build upon strengthening the linkages of chemicals to policy areas of high priority like climate change and gender, amongst others.

What could a future platform for sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 cover?

This section describes what a future platform for sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 could cover. This section is further linked to the scope for such a future platform. Making progress on the scope of the future platform is a priority for the second meeting of the intersessional process.

In considering the *scope*, the following elements may be considered:

Scope

- Scope should consider the 11 basic elements and 6 core activity areas set out in the Overall Orientation and Guidance, as well as the WHO health sector roadmap, as a practical way to reflect on the scope beyond 2020. A roadmap for chemicals and waste could be considered.
- It should also consider ~~include and address~~ the elements on ‘Strengthening the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long-term’ as incorporated in United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution 1/5 on chemicals and waste.
- The scope could be broader than the current SAICM, including waste. ~~The scope could be broader than the current SAICM, including the consideration of sectors, prevention and waste.~~ At this meeting, there was no discussion regarding what type of waste issues are being considered in the scope of the beyond 2020 context.
- ~~The basics of chemicals and waste management systems must remain a priority in those countries – largely in the developing world – that still face basic regulatory challenges, while also considering how to be responsive to emerging issues of concern.~~
- There are several Sustainable Development Goals where clear connections can be made and where measurable objectives and milestones and supplementary indicators could be developed in support of the 2030 Agenda.
- At the global, regional and national level, the scope could take into consideration, inter alia, linkages to: prevention policies; new emerging issues; climate change; a broadened health agenda; institutional strengthening; the life cycle approach; the potential contribution of

Comment [WHO4]: While this seems a good general principle on a government by government, organization by organization, sector by sector basis, it isn't clear how it works in practice when dealing with such a collection of countries, regions, IGOs, NGOs, sectors etc. Each will have different opportunities and abilities to make an impact. What we really want is to call on everyone to 'put their best foot forward' in the same direction. Suggested changes are to try to convey this idea and/or at least start the conversation.

Comment [WHO5]: It isn't clear how these four points are to be considered as part of the "vision" – they seem more suited to scope, governance or function – unless we are expecting a much longer vision statement?

Comment [WHO6]: Some reordering is suggested.

Comment [WHO7]: Why does it only "consider" the OOG but "include and address" UNEA 1/5? SAICM documents should be given precedence.

Comment [WHO8]: This seems repetitive perhaps it is a typo and needs to be deleted?

Comment [WHO9]: Any broadening of the scope needs to be clearly defined, particularly the inclusion of waste.

sustainable chemistry; sustainability; as well as gender and vulnerable populations, especially indigenous peoples, women, children, and through them future generations.

- The basics of chemicals and waste management systems must remain a priority in those countries - largely in the developing world - that still face basic regulatory challenges, while also considering how to be responsive to emerging issues of concern.
- Collaborative actions should be fostered on new and emerging issues, particularly issues not currently covered under existing policy frameworks and agreements.
- The Aichi Targets for biodiversity were referenced as a potential model approach.
- Work should be based on relevant scientific data and information and consider key elements of chemicals management systems.
- ~~At this meeting, there was no discussion regarding what type of waste issues are being considered in the scope of the beyond 2020 context.~~ Collection and consolidation of data on the impacts of chemicals on human health and the environment needs to be included in the scope, along with estimation and communication of the full scope and magnitude of these impacts.

Comment [WHO10]: This has been cut & pasted almost verbatim from the section on new and emerging issues. As written, it doesn't really seem to belong under scope.

Perhaps it could be combined with the point below it and become something like: "The scope should be flexible enough to accommodate interest in new and emerging issues, while recognizing that the basics of chemicals and waste must remain the priority in many countries."

Comment [WHO11]: Does this belong under "scope" or under "governance"?

Comment [WHO12]: This seems to be more of a "governance" issue.

How could the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 be realized?

This section describes how a future platform for sound management of chemicals and waste could be realized. This section is connected to governance, new and emerging issues, science-policy interface, financing, sustainable and green chemistry as well as national implementation.

The how will be informed by the independent evaluation of SAICM and should focus on the gaps in reaching the 2020 goal.

Drawing on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, linkages should be made to other agendas such as biodiversity, oceans and climate change, food and agriculture, health, gender and labour.

In considering the how, the following elements should be taken into account:

Governance

- The voluntary, flexible, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach, that has been integral to the nature of SAICM, should continue. Voluntary standards, common objectives of protection and codes of practice, to which relevant stakeholders may voluntarily commit for some issues, should also be considered.
- Some participants advocated to explore more elements, as well as potential elements, that would be legally binding. Potential legally binding elements could also be explored.
- Functionally, the design should promote broader participation in general and encourage wider sector participation at all levels (national, regional and global) along with a targeted approach, as an essential means to promote impact, involvement, ownership and commitment.
- There is a need to increase industry engagement, by for example promoting partnership approaches in the future platform and by including the waste and downstream sectors.
- Partnerships should focus on public needs and be in line with agreed principles and values. They should be transparent and accountable; ensure multi-stakeholder involvement;

Comment [WHO13]: Would it be possible to provide some examples or clarification of this suggestion?

Comment [WHO14]: Would it be possible to clarify what is meant by "broader" and "wider"? Is it more people? More diversity? A greater number of sectors or a more balanced showing from the current sectors?

provide an added value; and complement rather than substitute commitments made by governments.

- The future platform needs to link sectors and promote synergies, fill the gaps and coordinate with decision-making bodies of the Participating Organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), other relevant agencies and organizations. This could include augmenting the current stakeholder-based arrangements for the ICCM (i.e. governments, NGOs and IGOs) to one where the sectors (e.g. agriculture, environment, health and labour) can play a more formal role. There are opportunities to link sectors in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- The new platform should take into account the need for greater networking within sectors (as well as between them) on issues related to chemicals management and engagement of sectoral networks (e.g. chemicals and health network called for in the WHO road map).
- Measuring progress, including objectives and milestones, and supplementary indicators, in addition to the SDG targets and indicators, as well as a related plan of action including at the national level. The 11 basic elements and 6 core activity areas set out in the Overall Orientation and Guidance are a useful starting point.
- It may also be useful to ask the various sectors and stakeholder groups to consider developing some specific objectives, milestones and indicators on some items that they could report on as part of the larger picture (e.g. perhaps industry would like to have an indicator on the implementation of responsible care).
- Measurable objectives, as noted in paragraph 10 of ICCM Resolution IV/4, should be considered, including on means of implementation in order to ensure effectiveness.
- Clear milestones would support the capacity to evaluate progress and would ensure transparency.

New and emerging issues / Issues of concern

- Ensure an information and knowledge base on chemicals and waste, including early warning systems that can inform work on new and emerging issues.
- Focus on scientific and technical capacity building facing new and emerging issues that require global action on specific chemicals and groups of chemicals, taking into account different needs at the regional level.
- The basics of chemicals management systems must remain a priority in those countries largely in the developing world that still face basic regulatory challenges, while also considering how to be responsive to the issues of concern.
- Build on existing efforts by stakeholders and sectors and focus on prevention and minimization.
- Develop a concept for a process of nomination, prioritization and evaluation that is robust and relevant with clear criteria for acceptance. Future activities on emerging issues should be focused on where there is added value.
- Monitoring of already identified emerging issues.
- There should be reflection on and consideration of the implementation of a lifecycle approach.
- Give priority to the identification of hazardous chemicals in products and throughout their lifecycle.

Comment [WHO15]: This has been cut and pasted under “scope”.

The context of EPIs the following point is proposed as an introduction to the section, i.e.

New and emerging issues / Issues of concern

While recognizing that the basics of chemicals management systems must remain a priority in those countries - largely in the developing world - that still face basic regulatory challenges, we also need to be responsive to emerging issues of concern. In this regard, the following should be considered: (to be followed by the points in the section).

Comment [WHO16]: Please clarify the focus. Is it Impacts? Exposures? Releases? Uses?

Comment [WHO17]: Is this being proposed as a new or emerging issue? Given the reference to lifecycle in the vision, it seems like this might belong somewhere more fundamental like under scope?

Comment [WHO18]: This is new from the previous version. Wouldn't priority be placed on activities of most interest/highest priority for the stakeholders who will be working on the issue, and from which the most prevention and risk reduction can result?

It seems a bit premature to identify and prioritize specific topics like this one and could lead to a completely different discussion. For example why should priority be given to simply “identifying” hazardous chemicals in products? What about understanding the impacts of those chemicals? Or reducing the risks of chemicals we already know are there?

- **Actions should be categorized to facilitate work planning, for example:**
 - Areas where scientific information exists and there is a need to increase the knowledge basis.
 - New emerging issues where we need to promote understanding and awareness.
 - Development of national or regional chemicals and waste management systems, including refinement of existing systems.
 - Issues which need global or coordinated action.

Comment [WHO19]: Shouldn't we also consider issues which are not necessarily "new" but are of emerging importance – where information and solutions exist but capacity or knowledge transfer is required? (e.g. lead in paint).

Science-policy interface

- Explore how to strengthen the link between science, public health and policy in global chemicals and waste governance.
- Recognize the existing mechanisms for provision of science advice on chemicals and waste by intergovernmental and international bodies such as UNEP, WHO and the chemicals and wastes conventions secretariats.
- Consideration of the social interface and the full range of scientific and public health disciplines.
- Explore approaches on the use of science to inform policy-making and action, including existing mechanisms, in other clusters, such as climate change and biodiversity.
- Recognize that the link between science and policy is not always direct since there are other considerations, drivers and facts - besides scientific facts - that need to be taken into account and addressed in policy decisions, especially at the global scale.
- There were also come comments regarding the need to focus on scientific capacity building and caution about diverting resources from implementation.

Financing

- The integrated approach to address the financing of the sound management of chemicals and waste is composed of mainstreaming, enhanced industry involvement and dedicated external financing (UNEP/GC 27/12 and UNEA 1/5). The implementation of the integrated approach is essential for financing the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long term.
- Providing sustainable, adequate, comprehensive and predictable financing in the long term with emphasis on the role of developed countries.
- A broader range of contributions should be considered that are predictable, sustainable and adequate.
- Mainstreaming in national budgets and sectoral policies.
- Provide effective capacity building in relevant areas and also focus on the importance of building and strengthening institutional capacity and the need to engage industry in solutions.
- Broadening the donor base for sound management of chemicals and waste, including exploring untapped resources linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Building on existing funding structures at all levels, including lessons learned from existing funding mechanisms.
- Promote enhanced funding for the sound management of chemicals and waste under the GEF Trust Fund, Green Climate Fund and others with access for all eligible countries and relevant stakeholders, in accordance with applicable rules.

- It is necessary to remove or avoid institutional barriers so that funding is available and accessible to a broad range of sectors and stakeholders. Coupled with this, there should be a mechanism to better ensure that funding is matched to the most appropriate actor/sector to undertake the type of work required or being requested (e.g. funding for projects that focus on health impacts should go to a health sector organization). This will enhance the ability of other sectors and stakeholders to contribute to the sound management of chemicals as well as improve efficiency.

Sustainable and Green Chemistry

- There was some debate concerning the definition of sustainable versus green chemistry. However, there was agreement that there were useful aspects of these concepts that should be followed up at the next intersessional process meeting.

National Implementation

- National Action Plans were mentioned as a possible tool to address the sound management of chemicals and waste, focusing in particular on building in-country capacity for basic chemicals and waste management with the support of international cooperation.
- The WHO road map could also be drawn on in the development of such plans.
- Additional elements such as institutional strengthening and information sharing were highlighted for making progress at the national level.

Next steps following this stakeholder comment period:

- i. From July to September 2017, the co-chairs will further develop the work, incorporating the input received.
- ii. The next document would be posted on the Strategic Approach website for further stakeholder comments during October and November 2017.
- iii. The co-chairs would produce a final document in December 2017 that would be made available for discussion during regional meetings held in January and February 2018 in preparation for the second meeting in the intersessional process scheduled for March 2018.