

MESSAGE TO STAKEHOLDERS

01/02/2021

Subject: Message from the SAICM ICCM5 President on the ICCM5 Bureau decision to postpone the face to face fourth meeting of the Intersessional Process (IP4) and the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5)

Dear SAICM Stakeholders,

At its fourteenth meeting held on 27 January 2021, the ICCM5 Bureau discussed at length the Covid-19 pandemic situation and the vaccination roll out programmes in their countries and regions. Following this extensive sharing of views, the Bureau agreed that it would not be possible to convene a face to face meeting in July 2021. In this regard, the Bureau have decided to postpone the face to face fourth meeting of the Intersessional Process (IP4) and the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5). They will continue to discuss the options for convening face to face IP4 and ICCM5 at their next and subsequent meetings. Stakeholders will be informed of the new dates once an end of the pandemic is foreseeable and travel restrictions are lifted around the world.

With its decision the Bureau also responded to the numerous requests of SAICM stakeholders to hold IP4 as well as ICCM5 as fully face to face meetings with open participation. While the current virtual working process to develop recommendations for consideration by IP4 and ICCM5 (outlined in the co-chairs' scenario note) has so far been valuable to keep the momentum, engage stakeholders and make progress in the lead up to IP4 and ICCM5, the Bureau and the IP Co-Chairs together with the SAICM Secretariat, will review and evaluate the current virtual working process. Based on the lessons learned over the past 4 months, the Bureau and the IP Co-Chairs will develop a revised and pragmatic plan to continue making progress through virtual working arrangements until face to face meetings are feasible.

Nevertheless, the 4 Virtual Working Groups will continue to finalize the work based on their mandates, with the last scheduled virtual meetings taking place over the next 2 weeks. I wish to thank the co-facilitators of these groups and all of their participants for their dedication in moving important aspects forward.

The Bureau as well as the SAICM Secretariat regret that this decision had to be taken but at this juncture, we see no alternative. Nevertheless, we are looking positively to the upcoming year and all efforts will be made to ensure that when face to face meetings are possible, SAICM stakeholders will be well prepared to agree on a new and ambitious instrument for the sound management of chemicals and waste.

Best wishes,
Gertrud Sahler
ICCM5 President

