

# Overarching Policy Strategy

## I. Introduction

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1. The present Overarching Policy Strategy flows from the commitments expressed in the Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management developed in the context of the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The structure of the strategy is as follows:

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2. The involvement of all relevant sectors and stakeholders, including at the local, national, regional and global levels, is seen as key to achieving the objectives of the Strategic Approach, as is a transparent and open implementation process and public participation in decision-making, featuring in particular a strengthened role for women. The main stakeholders in the Strategic Approach are understood to be Governments, regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals involved in the management of chemicals throughout their life-cycles from all relevant sectors, including, but not limited to, agriculture, environment, health, industry, relevant

economic activity, development cooperation, labour and science. Individual stakeholders include consumers, disposers, employers, farmers, producers, regulators, researchers, suppliers, transporters and workers.

## II. Scope

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3. The Strategic Approach has a scope that includes:
  - a. Environmental, economic, social, health and labour aspects of chemical safety,
  - b. Agricultural and industrial chemicals, with a view to promoting sustainable development and covering chemicals at all stages of their life-cycle, including in products.<sup>1</sup>
4. The Strategic Approach should take due account of instruments and processes that have been developed to date and be flexible enough to deal with new ones without duplicating efforts, in particular the efforts of forums dealing with the military uses of chemicals.

## III. Statement of needs

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5. A major driving force for the establishment of the Strategic Approach has been the recognition of the growing gaps between the capacities of different countries to manage chemicals safely, the need to improve synergies between existing instruments and processes and the growing sense of urgency regarding the need to assess and manage chemicals more effectively to achieve the 2020 goal articulated in paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.<sup>2</sup> There is also the need for countries to have more effective governance structures to help make the Strategic Approach a lasting success.
6. Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, at which the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 were adopted, much has been done to improve chemicals management. Regulatory systems have been introduced or strengthened; much more information has been made available about chemicals; many chemicals have been assessed at the national level and internationally; a wide range of risk management measures have been introduced; and new

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<sup>1</sup> The Strategic Approach does not cover products to the extent that the health and environmental aspects of the safety of the chemicals and products are regulated by a domestic food or pharmaceutical authority or arrangement.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of paragraph 23 is set out in the appendix.

tools such as the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and pollutant release and transfer registers have been taken up and developed. New international instruments and programmes have been created. Industry has developed and extended its own programmes to contribute to better chemicals management, and there are now in many countries active and well informed public interest movements promoting awareness and good practices with regard to chemicals. It is, however, recognized that:

- a. The existing international policy framework for chemicals is not completely adequate and needs to be further strengthened;
- b. Implementation of established international policies is uneven;
- c. Coherence and synergies between existing institutions and processes are not completely developed and should be further improved;
- d. There is often limited or no information on many chemicals currently in use and often limited or no access to information that already exists;
- e. Many countries lack the capacity to manage chemicals soundly at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;
- f. There are inadequate resources available to address chemical safety issues in many countries, particularly to bridge the widening gap between developed countries on the one hand and developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the other.

7. Risk reduction (including preventing, reducing, remediating, minimizing and eliminating risks) is a key need in pursuing the sound management of chemicals throughout their entire life cycle including, where appropriate, products and articles containing chemicals. It is recognized that:

- a. Risk assessment and management strategies, supported by improved scientific understanding of the role and behaviour of substances, addressing product life-cycles, are central to achieving risk reduction;
- b. Risk reduction measures, appropriately informed by scientific methods and consideration of social and economic factors, are

- needed to reduce or eliminate the harmful effects of chemicals and their inappropriate uses;
- c. Risk reduction measures need to be improved to prevent the adverse effects of chemicals on the health of children, pregnant women, fertile populations, the elderly, the poor, workers and other vulnerable groups and susceptible environments;
  - d. The development of safer alternatives, including alternatives to chemicals of concern, and affordable sustainable technologies should be accelerated;
  - e. Developing countries and countries with economies in transition need better access to affordable, safer technologies and alternatives, which will also assist in reducing illegal traffic in hazardous chemicals.
8. Knowledge, information and public awareness are basic needs for decision-making for the sound management of chemicals, including products and articles containing chemicals. It is recognized that:
- a. Technological information, the results of hazard and risk assessments, socio-economic methodologies and the tools to develop and apply science-based standards, harmonized risk assessment and management principles are not available to all actors, and the pace of scientific research in these areas needs to be accelerated;
  - b. There is a lack of clear, accessible, timely and appropriate information on chemicals for ready use by local populations.
9. Governance is an important issue that needs to be addressed through a multi-sector and multi-stakeholder approach in pursuing the sound management of chemicals. There is therefore a need to recognize:
- a. That in many countries some stakeholders, particularly women and indigenous communities, still do not participate in all aspects of decision-making related to the sound management of chemicals, a situation which needs to be addressed;
  - b. That implementation of the present international regime for the sound management of chemicals, including binding instruments and other relevant initiatives, is uneven, a situation which needs to be addressed. There are gaps, overlaps and duplication in

chemicals management activities and there is a need in many countries for enhanced coherence, consistency and cooperation to ensure efficient and effective use of available resources at the national, regional, and international levels. Many countries have not ratified or implemented regional and global legally binding instruments and other relevant initiatives, addressed gaps in national chemicals regimes or developed national mechanisms for coordinating chemicals activities;

- c. That the mechanisms used to address the social and economic impacts of chemicals on human health, society and the environment, including liability, compensation and redress, need to be improved in some countries;
- d. That chemicals issues are only sometimes featured in relevant national policy documents, including development assistance plans or strategies, sustainable development strategies and, as appropriate, poverty reduction strategies;
- e. That there is a need to promote the role of all sectors of civil society and the private sector in the implementation of the Strategic Approach.

10. Capacity-building and technical assistance in relation to all aspects of the sound management of chemicals are among the essential elements for the successful implementation of the Strategic Approach:

- a. The widening gap in capacity between developed countries on the one hand and developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the other should be bridged in order to make progress towards the goal articulated in paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Some developed countries, however, also face capacity issues in striving to meet this goal;
- b. There is a need for enhanced cooperation aimed at strengthening the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes and promoting adequate transfer of cleaner and safer technology to those countries.

11. Illegal international traffic in hazardous substances and dangerous products is a pressing problem for many countries, especially for developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

12. One of the challenges that will be faced by many countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in pursuing the goal articulated in paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation is to obtain access to the considerable financial and other resources needed to achieve the sound management of chemicals.

## IV. Objectives

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13. The overall objective of the Strategic Approach is to achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment. The objective will be achieved, among other ways, through the implementation of activities set out in the Global Plan of Action.

### A. Risk reduction

14. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to risk reduction are:

- a. To minimize risks to human health, including that of workers, and to the environment throughout the life cycle of chemicals;
- b. To ensure that humans and ecosystems and their constituent parts that are especially vulnerable or especially subject to exposure to chemicals that may pose a risk are taken into account and protected in making decisions on chemicals;
- c. To implement transparent, comprehensive, efficient and effective risk management strategies based on appropriate scientific understanding, including of health and environmental effects, and appropriate social and economic analysis aimed at pollution prevention, risk reduction and risk elimination, including detailed safety information on chemicals, to prevent unsafe and unnecessary exposures to chemicals;
- d. To ensure, by 2020:
  - i. That chemicals or chemical uses that pose an unreasonable and otherwise unmanageable risk to human health and the environment<sup>3</sup> based on a science-based risk assessment

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<sup>3</sup> Groups of chemicals that might be prioritized for assessment and related studies include: persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances (PBTs); very persistent and very bioaccumulative substances;

and taking into account the costs and benefits as well as the availability of safer substitutes and their efficacy, are no longer produced or used for such uses;

- ii. That risks from unintended releases of chemicals that pose an unreasonable and otherwise unmanageable risk to human health and the environment<sup>3</sup> based on a science-based risk assessment and taking into account the costs and benefits, are minimized;
- e. Appropriately to apply the precautionary approach, as set out in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, while aiming to achieve that chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment;
- f. To give priority consideration to the application of preventive measures such as pollution prevention;
- g. To ensure that existing, new and emerging issues of global concern are sufficiently addressed by means of appropriate mechanisms;
- h. To reduce the generation of hazardous waste, both in quantity and toxicity, and to ensure the environmentally sound management of hazardous waste, including its storage, treatment and disposal;
- i. To promote the environmentally sound recovery and recycling of hazardous materials and waste;
- j. To promote and support the development and implementation of, and further innovation in, environmentally sound and safer alternatives, including cleaner production, informed substitution of chemicals of particular concern and non-chemical alternatives.

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chemicals that are carcinogens or mutagens or that adversely affect, inter alia, the reproductive, endocrine, immune, or nervous systems; persistent organic pollutants (POPs), mercury and other chemicals of global concern; chemicals produced or used in high volumes; those subject to wide dispersive uses; and other chemicals of concern at the national level.

## B. Knowledge and information

15. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to knowledge and information are:

- a. To ensure that knowledge and information on chemicals and chemicals management are sufficient to enable chemicals to be adequately assessed and managed safely throughout their life cycle;
- b. To ensure, for all stakeholders:
  - i. That information on chemicals throughout their life cycle, including, where appropriate, chemicals in products, is available, accessible, user friendly, adequate and appropriate to the needs of all stakeholders. Appropriate types of information include their effects on human health and the environment, their intrinsic properties, their potential uses, their protective measures and regulation;
  - ii. That such information is disseminated in appropriate languages by making full use of, among other things, the media, hazard communication mechanisms such as the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and relevant provisions of international agreements;
- c. To ensure that, in making information available in accordance with paragraph 15 (b), confidential commercial and industrial information and knowledge are protected in accordance with national laws or regulations or, in the absence of such laws or and regulations, are protected in accordance with international provisions. In the context of this paragraph, information on chemicals relating to the health and safety of humans and the environment should not be regarded as confidential;
- d. To make objective scientific information available for appropriate integration into risk assessments and associated decision-making relating to chemicals policy, including in relation to assessment of chemical hazards and risks to human health, especially vulnerable sub-populations such as children, and to the environment, particularly vulnerable ecosystems;

- e. To ensure that science-based standards, risk assessment and management procedures and the results of hazard and risk assessments are available to all actors;
- f. To make objective scientific methods and information available to assess the effects of chemicals on people and the environment, particularly through the development and use of indicators;
- g. To accelerate the pace of scientific research on identifying and assessing the effects of chemicals on human beings and the environment, including emerging issues, and to ensure that research and development are undertaken in relation to chemical control technologies, development of safer chemicals and cleaner technologies and non-chemical alternatives and technologies;
- h. To promote implementation of the common definitions and criteria contained in the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;
- i. To make widely available, for consideration and implementation, the range of existing risk reduction and other tools from various participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC)<sup>4</sup> such as the Mutual Acceptance of Data system of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) database on chemical safety information from intergovernmental organizations (INCHEM), in order to promote best practices in chemicals management, harmonization and burden-sharing;
- j. To develop knowledge and information on the estimated current and projected financial and other impacts on sustainable development associated with the unsound management of chemicals of concern on a global basis.

## C. Governance

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<sup>4</sup> The participating organizations of IOMC are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the World Health Organization.

16. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to governance are:
- a. To achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle by means of appropriate national, regional and international mechanisms, as needed, that are multi-sectoral, comprehensive, effective, efficient, transparent, coherent and inclusive and ensure accountability, taking into account the circumstances and needs of countries, especially developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
  - b. To promote the sound management of chemicals within each relevant sector and integrated programmes for sound chemicals management across all sectors;
  - c. To provide guidance to stakeholders in identifying priorities for chemicals management activities;
  - d. To strengthen enforcement and encourage the implementation of national laws and regulations regarding chemicals management, including those that serve to implement international agreements;
  - e. To promote relevant codes of conduct, including those relating to corporate environmental and social responsibility;
  - f. To promote close international cooperation among concerned institutions, including among customs services, in different countries for the exchange of relevant information aimed at preventing all illegal international traffic in dangerous chemical products;
  - g. To promote and support meaningful and active participation by all sectors of civil society, particularly women, workers and indigenous communities, in regulatory and other decision-making processes that relate to chemical safety;
  - h. To ensure equal participation of women in decision-making on chemicals policy and management;
  - i. To ensure that national institutional frameworks address the prevention of illegal international traffic in chemicals;

- j. To support coordinated assistance activities at the international level in accordance with the implementation of the Strategic Approach;
- k. To promote mutual supportiveness between trade and environmental policies;
- l. To provide and support enabling frameworks for businesses to develop and improve products that advance the objectives of the Strategic Approach;
- m. To enhance synergies between the activities of Governments, international institutions, multilateral organization secretariats and development agencies in pursuit of the sound management of chemicals;
- n. To enhance cooperation on the sound management of chemicals between Governments, the private sector and civil society at the national, regional and global levels.

#### **D. Capacity-building and technical cooperation**

17. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to capacity-building and technical cooperation are:

- a. To increase the capacity for the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle in all countries as needed, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- b. To narrow the widening gap in capacities between developed countries on the one hand and developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the other hand;
- c. To establish or strengthen partnerships and mechanisms for technical cooperation and the provision of appropriate and clean technology to and among developing countries and countries with economies in transition, maximizing synergies with the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building;
- d. To develop and implement sustainable capacity-building strategies in developing countries and countries with economies in transition and to promote cooperation among all countries;

- e. To promote coordination of and access to information on capacity-building for the sound management of chemicals and to enhance transparency and accountability;
- f. To include capacity-building for the sound management of chemicals as a priority in social and economic development strategies, including national sustainable development strategies, poverty reduction strategy papers and country assistance strategies, and to make chemicals an important part of national policy;
- g. To encourage stakeholders to develop and promote programmes on chemical safety and scientific research and analysis and to assist with capacity-building programmes in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- h. To encourage and facilitate appropriate use by developing countries and countries with economies in transition of work already done and chemicals management models already established by other countries and international organizations;
- i. To promote the awareness of donors, multilateral organizations and other relevant actors of the relevance of chemical safety for poverty reduction and sustainable development.

## **E. Illegal international traffic**

18. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to illegal international traffic are:

- a. To prevent illegal international traffic in toxic, hazardous, banned and severely restricted chemicals, including products incorporating these chemicals, mixtures and compounds and wastes;
- b. To strengthen mechanisms and domestic and regional implementation supporting existing multilateral agreements that contain provisions relating to the prevention of illegal international traffic;
- c. To promote information sharing and to strengthen the capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition at the national and regional levels for the prevention and control of illegal international traffic.

## V. Financial considerations

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19. The Strategic Approach should reflect national, regional and global efforts to advance the sound management of chemicals recognizing Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. The Strategic Approach should call upon existing and new sources of financial support to provide additional resources and should build upon, among other things, the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building. It should also include the mobilization of additional national and international financial resources, including through the Quick Start Programme and other measures set out in this paragraph, to accelerate the strengthening of capabilities and capacities for the implementation of the Strategic Approach objectives. The extent to which developing countries, particularly least developed countries and small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition can make progress towards reaching the 2020 goal depends, in part, on the availability of financial resources provided by the private sector and bilateral, multilateral and global agencies or donors. Financial arrangements for the Strategic Approach include, among other things:

- a. Actions at the national or sub-national levels to support financing of Strategic Approach objectives, including by:
  - i. Integrating Strategic Approach objectives in relevant programmes, plans and/or strategies at various levels;
  - ii. Assessing current laws, policies and regulations to identify changes that may be needed to advance implementation of the Strategic Approach objectives, including an assessment of funding needs where appropriate;
  - iii. Assessing and where necessary adopting appropriate policies at the national and sub-national levels, which could include economic instruments, that can help to cover the cost of sound chemicals management;
  - iv. Where appropriate, assessing and adopting at the national and sub-national levels economic instruments intended to internalize the external costs of chemicals, bearing in mind that such instruments need careful design, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

- v. Governments and other stakeholders exchanging information on experience and studies in the national use of economic instruments and submitting such information to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to make it broadly available;
- b. Enhancing industry partnerships and financial and technical participation in the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives, including by inviting industry:
  - i. To review and strengthen current voluntary industry initiatives to address the considerable challenges associated with the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives;
  - ii. To develop new initiatives, including in partnership with foundations, academia and non-governmental organizations, for the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives;
  - iii. To provide resources, including in-kind contributions, for the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives, continuing and building upon its initiatives on good corporate social and environmental responsibility;
- c. Integration of the Strategic Approach objectives into multilateral and bilateral development assistance cooperation, including by:
  - i. Developing countries and countries with economies in transition, where necessary with the technical support of donors, considering the integration of Strategic Approach objectives into relevant national documents that influence development assistance cooperation;
  - ii. Donors responding to requests by, and working in partnership with, developing countries and countries with economies in transition by recognizing Strategic Approach objectives as an important element of bilateral aid agency cooperation in support of sustainable development;
  - iii. Inviting United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes and other intergovernmental organizations to include Strategic Approach objectives within their activities, as appropriate;

- d. Making more effective use of and building upon existing sources of relevant global funding, including by inviting the Global Environment Facility and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol within their mandates to consider whether and how they might support implementation of appropriate and relevant Strategic Approach objectives and to report;
- e. Supporting initial capacity-building activities for the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives by establishing a programme to be called the Quick Start Programme. The Programme will contain a voluntary, time-limited trust fund and may include multilateral, bilateral and other forms of cooperation. The trust fund will be administered by UNEP;
- f. Inviting Governments and other stakeholders to provide resources to enable the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to fulfil the tasks set out in paragraph 28, including by:
  - i. Inviting UNEP to arrange for the adaptation and reinforcement of the existing voluntary trust fund to support these tasks;
  - ii. Inviting all countries and regional economic integration organizations to contribute;
  - iii. Inviting the private sector, including industry, foundations and other non-governmental organizations, to also contribute.

## VI. Principles and approaches

20. In developing and implementing the Strategic Approach and the Global Plan of Action, Governments and other stakeholders should be guided by:

- a. Principles and approaches in the following:
  - i. Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment, in particular Principle 22;
  - ii. Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;

- iii. Agenda 21, in particular chapters 6, 8, 19 and 20;
  - iv. United Nations Millennium Declaration;
  - v. Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety;
  - vi. Johannesburg Plan of Implementation; and
- b. The following agreements, where applicable to them:
- i. Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer;
  - ii. Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal;
  - iii. Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade;
  - iv. Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants;
  - v. ILO Convention No. 170 concerning safety in the use of chemicals at work.

## VII. Implementation and taking stock of progress

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21. Institutional arrangements to support implementation and taking stock of progress on the Strategic Approach will include national coordination and, as appropriate, regional processes and, at the international level, a periodic review process facilitated by a secretariat.

22. Implementation of the Strategic Approach could begin with an enabling phase to build necessary capacity, as appropriate, to develop, with relevant stakeholder participation, a national Strategic Approach implementation plan, taking into consideration, as appropriate, existing elements such as legislation, national profiles, action plans, stakeholder initiatives and gaps, priorities, needs and circumstances. Strategic Approach regional implementation plans may be developed, as appropriate, in a similar fashion. Subsequent implementation phases should focus on implementing specific action plans. In parallel, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions and private actors are encouraged to support these activities and to consider the development of their own action

plans as appropriate. Partnerships among stakeholders should be pursued in support of implementation.

23. To sustain an integrated approach to managing chemicals, each Government should establish arrangements for implementing the Strategic Approach on an inter-ministerial or inter-institutional basis so that all concerned national departmental and stakeholder interests are represented and all relevant substantive areas are addressed. To facilitate communication, nationally and internationally, each Government should designate a Strategic Approach national focal point to act as an effective conduit for communication on Strategic Approach matters, including invitations to participate in meetings and information dissemination. The Strategic Approach national focal point should be a representative of the country's inter-ministerial or inter-institutional arrangements, where such arrangements exist.

24. The International Conference on Chemicals Management (hereafter referred to as the Conference) will undertake periodic reviews of the Strategic Approach. The functions of the Conference will be:

- a. To receive reports from all relevant stakeholders on progress in implementation of the Strategic Approach and to disseminate information as appropriate;
- b. To evaluate the implementation of the Strategic Approach with a view to reviewing progress against the 2020 target and taking strategic decisions, programming, prioritizing and updating the approach as necessary;
- c. To provide guidance on implementation of the Strategic Approach to stakeholders;
- d. To report on progress in implementation of the Strategic Approach to stakeholders;
- e. To promote implementation of existing international instruments and programmes;
- f. To promote coherence among chemicals management instruments at the international level;
- g. To promote the strengthening of national chemicals management capacities;

- h. To work to ensure that the necessary financial and technical resources are available for implementation;
- i. To evaluate the performance of the financing of the Strategic Approach;
- j. To focus attention and call for appropriate action on emerging policy issues as they arise and to forge consensus on priorities for cooperative action;
- k. To promote information exchange and scientific and technical cooperation;
- l. To provide a high-level international forum for multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral discussion and exchange of experience on chemicals management issues with the participation of non-governmental organizations in accordance with applicable rules of procedure;
- m. To promote the participation of all stakeholders in the implementation of the Strategic Approach.

25. Where appropriate, sessions of the Conference should be held back-to-back with meetings of the governing bodies of relevant intergovernmental organizations in order to enhance synergies and cost-effectiveness and to promote the Strategic Approach's multi-sectoral nature. Sessions of the Conference should be held in 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2020, unless otherwise decided by the Conference.

26. It will be essential that implementation of the Strategic Approach continue effectively between meetings of the Conference, building on its open, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral methods. There will be a number of elements for achieving this:

- a. Regional meetings have played a significant role in the development of the Strategic Approach and it will be important to build on this commitment and expertise, taking into account the needs of developing countries, in particular the least developed among them, countries with economies in transition and developed countries. Regional meetings will facilitate input on Strategic Approach activities, preparation for future meetings of the Conference and exchange of regional expertise and exchange of information. As with the Conference itself, such meetings could be held back-to-back with relevant regional or

global intergovernmental organization meetings, subject to extrabudgetary funding;

- b. The functions of the regional meetings will include:
  - i. To review progress on implementation of the Strategic Approach within the regions;
  - ii. To provide guidance on implementation to all stakeholders at a regional level;
  - iii. To enable technical and strategic discussions and exchange of information to take place;
- c. The implementation of the Strategic Approach will depend in significant part on the activities of relevant intergovernmental organizations. In order to help ensure that these activities are coordinated properly, IOMC should continue to perform a coordinating function for intergovernmental organization activities and work programmes.

27. The Conference should have a bureau with functions in accordance with the rules of procedure.

28. The functions to be performed by the secretariat will be:

- a. To facilitate meetings and intersessional work of the Conference, as well as regional meetings, with maximum multi-stakeholder participation, and to disseminate the reports and recommendations of the Conference;
- b. To report to the Conference on implementation of the Strategic Approach by all participants;
- c. To promote the establishment and maintenance of a network of Strategic Approach stakeholders at the national, regional and, in the case of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, international levels;
- d. To facilitate the development and dissemination of guidance materials to support implementation of the Strategic Approach by stakeholders;

- e. To provide guidance to stakeholders in the initiation of project proposals;
- f. To provide information clearing-house services such as provision of advice to countries on implementation of the Strategic Approach, referral of requests for information to relevant sources, and facilitation of access to information and expertise in support of specific national actions;
- g. To ensure that recommendations from the Conference are conveyed to relevant global and regional organizations and institutions;
- h. To promote the exchange of relevant scientific and technical information;
- i. To establish and maintain a working relationship with participating organizations of IOMC in order to draw upon their sectoral expertise.

29. The Executive Director of UNEP will be requested to establish the Strategic Approach secretariat. UNEP and the World Health Organization (WHO) will take lead roles in the secretariat in their respective areas of expertise in relation to the Strategic Approach, with UNEP assuming overall administrative responsibility. The Strategic Approach secretariat will be co-located with the UNEP chemicals and waste cluster in Geneva, and take full advantage of existing synergies. In order to reflect the multi-sectoral nature of the Strategic Approach, the secretariat will work in coordination and/or cooperation with the participating organizations of IOMC and UNDP, as well as with other intergovernmental organizations, as appropriate. The secretariat will report to the Conference.

### **Text of paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation**

The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation is a key political commitment underlying the Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach. In the Plan, it was agreed that “governments, relevant international organizations, the private sector and all major groups should play an active role in changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns.” This would include the actions at all levels set out in paragraph 23 of the Plan:

“23. Renew the commitment, as advanced in Agenda 21, to sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and of hazardous wastes for sustainable development as well as for the protection of human health and the environment, inter alia, aiming to achieve, by 2020, that chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, using transparent science-based risk assessment procedures and science-based risk management procedures, taking into account the precautionary approach, as set out in principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and support developing countries in strengthening their capacity for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes by providing technical and financial assistance. This would include actions at all levels to:

“(a) Promote the ratification and implementation of relevant international instruments on chemicals and hazardous waste, including the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedures for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade so that it can enter into force by 2003 and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants so that it can enter into force by 2004, and encourage and improve coordination as well as supporting developing countries in their implementation;

“(b) Further develop a strategic approach to international chemicals management based on the Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action beyond 2000 of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety by 2005, and urge that the United Nations Environment Programme, the Intergovernmental Forum, other international organizations dealing with chemical management and other relevant international organizations and actors closely cooperate in this regard, as appropriate;

“(c) Encourage countries to implement the new globally harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008;

“(d) Encourage partnerships to promote activities aimed at enhancing environmentally sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes, implementing multilateral environmental agreements, raising awareness of issues relating to chemicals and hazardous waste and encouraging the collection and use of additional scientific data;

“(e) Promote efforts to prevent international illegal trafficking of hazardous chemicals and hazardous wastes and to prevent damage resulting from the transboundary movement and disposal of hazardous wastes in a manner consistent with obligations under relevant international instruments, such as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal;

“(f) Encourage development of coherent and integrated information on chemicals, such as through national pollutant release and transfer registers;

“(g) Promote reduction of the risks posed by heavy metals that are harmful to human health and the environment, including through a review of relevant studies, such as the United Nations Environment Programme global assessment of mercury and its compounds.”