

ICCM4 HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT | 1 - 2 OCTOBER 2015

Commitment To A Chemical Safe Future for Health, Environment and Economic Growth

This paper provides details on the objective, outcome and context for inspiring debate. The paper also includes detailed information on the flow of the high-level segment combined with information about SAICM in Action (annex).

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the high-level segment is to provide a platform for high-level interaction between Strategic Approach stakeholders that inspires broadened stakeholder engagement and renewed commitment to implement the Strategic Approach, making best use of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) model.

During the high-level segment Ministers, Heads of Agencies and Organizations, Chief Executive Officers, high-level Heads of Delegation, Major Groups and Stakeholders are invited to exchange views and experiences on chemical management issues and ways of making best use of the unique SAICM model in this critical period leading to 2020. They are also invited to share their views on achieving success in the core areas of SAICM implementation by 2020.

OUTCOME

ICCM4 will adopt decisions to support the international community in achieving the 2020 goal set by the World Summit on Sustainable Development to minimize health and environment damage from chemicals and waste mismanagement. Enhanced responsibility of stakeholders, promoting and reinforcing commitment and multi-sectoral engagement will be important elements in achieving this goal. The high-level segment will inspire wider stakeholder engagement and renewed commitment to implementing the Strategic Approach, maximizing SAICM's unique mix and ways of working across sectors and stakeholders.

The outcomes of the high-level segment are to be reflected in the ICCM4 meeting report.

CONTEXT

The World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002 defined as the goal for sound management of chemicals that, by 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment. In response to the Johannesburg declaration, **the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)** was established in 2006 as a voluntary policy framework to achieve the 2020 goal.

Chemicals are part of our daily life, they contribute to sustainable development by tackling global challenges, such as food security, energy access and storage, sustainable transport and many more related to economic growth and to poverty and disease eradication. Around 100,000 chemical substances are on the market, and it is estimated that by 2020, developing countries will produce 31 percent and use 33 percent of global chemicals.

As chemicals are used in almost every area of the world economy, chemical safety is an urgent issue that affects us all. If improperly managed, chemicals and the pollution linked with their manufacture, use, and disposal come at a cost to the economy, society and the environment. It is therefore impossible to decouple the future of sustainable development - with its emphasis on healthy livelihoods, well-functioning ecosystems and preservation of natural resources - from a sound approach to managing the way we use chemicals from their design to production, use and disposal.

Since its adoption in 2006, SAICM has been a pro-active, inclusive and overarching platform for engagement and commitment of multiple stakeholders including governments, key inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and industry. SAICM is the only global approach which covers all agricultural and industrial chemicals throughout their life cycle and reflects environmental, economic, social, health and labour aspects of chemical safety.

Addressing sound management of chemicals and waste is at the core of addressing the sustainable development issues of today, including the improvement of human health and the environment, the eradication of poverty and disease, and therefore the elevation and maintenance of the standard of living in countries at all levels of development. In particular, the future global development agenda, set in 2015, or post-2015 Development Agenda, will embrace all aspects of sustainable development and be guided by a set of Sustainable Development Goals. Current and future social, economic, and environmental challenges are interlinked and must be addressed through an integrated approach. Given the strong linkage between management of chemicals and waste, on the one hand, and sustainability challenges, on the other hand, SAICM stakeholders are well placed to support implementation of the sustainable development agenda.

The high-level segment will include discussions on the linkages and opportunities for SAICM to contribute directly to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), through a multi-sectoral and partnership-driven approach. The unique character of SAICM is its inherent flexibility. Being a voluntary, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder platform to achieve a common and global goal, its model has opened up a range of possibilities. Indeed during the past 10 years, SAICM has enabled actions beyond legal requirements, brought attention to, and catalysed actions on emerging policy issues, supported projects worth more than \$110 million in more than 100 developing countries, and built networks among multiple sectors (e.g. environment, health and labour) and different stakeholders facilitating cooperation.

It is urgent that all stakeholders involved in the sound management of chemicals and waste commit to a chemical-safe future for health, environment and economic growth. Much progress has been made since 2006, but time is ticking and 2020 is almost upon us. We urgently need to ensure a chemical-safe future. It is about a future where people lead healthy lives and the natural environment flourishes, where business makes its profit, and the costs to society of inappropriate chemicals management decrease. It is therefore essential to make full use of the possibilities offered by the SAICM model.

Implementing sound management of chemicals at the national level requires a variety of actions that together form an enabling environment. Collaboration between different policy sectors such as environment, health, agriculture, and finance, among others, is improving chemicals management and contributing to more efficient use of resources. It is crucial, in particular, to involve the health-sector in the development of inter-agency policies and programmes to enable effective solutions for strengthening chemicals management.

SAICM is also unique because of its multi-stakeholder nature. Commitment of all stakeholders is essential for the SAICM model to reach its full potential during the critical time leading up to 2020. This includes not only efficient collaboration across policy sectors but also broader engagement of stakeholders in creative partnerships and making the best use of the flexibility of the SAICM model. As a tool for addressing existing and emerging issues, SAICM is well-positioned to address existing and emerging issues and to help close the gap in chemicals management between developed and developing countries.

The Overall Orientation and Guidance (OOG) for achieving the 2020 goal of sound management of chemicals is expected to be a key policy outcome of ICCM4. It points ways forward for stakeholders, including some concrete action points for identified core activity areas. New commitments to the core activities identified in the OOG are needed, that is, with regard to responsibility of stakeholders, national legislative frameworks, mainstreaming sound management of chemicals into other policy areas, risk reduction, access to information and priority-setting based on monitoring of progress.

ORGANIZATION OF THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT

The high-level segment will take place on Thursday, 1 October from 3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. and on Friday, 2 October from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER, 3 P.M. TO 6 P.M.

The high-level segment opens on Thursday afternoon with two keynote speeches in plenary that take a broad perspective and present the case for SAICM from a development and business angle.

Three parallel panel discussions follow the keynote speeches to elaborate on the three main features of the SAICM model, namely multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder and inclusive, and how to make best use of the unique SAICM model towards achieving the 2020 goal. Delegates are invited to ask the panellists questions and engage in the discussions.

Panel 1: *Multi-sectoral Collaboration For More Efficient Chemicals Management, will explore how collaboration among policy sectors such as environment, health, agriculture and labour result in more efficient chemicals management and better use of resources.*

Panel 2: *Multi-stakeholder Collaboration For Sustainable Development, will discuss ways in which the recently adopted SDGs and SAICM can be mutually supportive and in particular the opportunities for contributing to achieving the SDGs through SAICM's broad stakeholder participation.*

Panel 3: *The SAICM Model in Action, will give examples of creative partnerships to inspire all stakeholders to fully use the possibilities offered by the inclusive SAICM model.*

Two hours are allocated for the interactive panels and planned accordingly:

- i. *The moderator makes a short introduction*
- ii. *Each panel member will be asked a specific question providing them the opportunity to give their brief introductory remarks*
- iii. *Dialogue between the moderator and the panellists, and among panellists*
- iv. *Interactive discussion with delegates*
- v. *Panellists are invited to deliver a "take home message"*
- vi. *The moderator closes the discussion*

FRIDAY 2 OCTOBER, 10 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

Friday morning opens with a keynote speech setting out the vision of chemicals management to 2020 and beyond, inspiring all stakeholders to increase their efforts to achieve the 2020 goal in the five critical years ahead.

This will be followed by a plenary dialogue, inspired by the outcome of Thursday afternoon, on using the possibilities of the SAICM model to accelerate implementation towards the 2020 goal. The panellists will also elaborate on their vision of successful outcomes in 2020 in the six core area of activities of SAICM as identified in the Overall Orientation and Guidance (see meeting document SAICM/ICCM.4/6).

This session will also provide an opportunity to express commitment and to challenge the panel and the SAICM community. The session will allow the opportunity for delegates to express commitment or make short statements of 3 minutes.

1.5 hours are allocated to the panel discussions. It is proposed that:

- i. *The moderator makes a short introduction*
- ii. *The Thursday moderators give feedback from the interactive panels*
- iii. *Each panel member will be asked a specific question providing them the opportunity to give their introductory remarks*
- iv. *Dialogue between the moderator and the panellists and between panellists*
- v. *Questions from the floor*
- vi. *Panellists are invited to deliver a "take home message"*
- vii. *Concluding remarks by the moderator*

The President invites short statements from the floor during the remaining 1.5 hours

The President summarizes and closes the high level segment

ANNEX

SAICM IN PRACTICE

How has SAICM been implemented so far? And how can stakeholders leverage on its full potential? The nature of the SAICM model entails multi-stakeholder collaboration at different levels, for example, amongst diverse policy sectors and through formal partnerships towards the common 2020 goal. Furthermore established collaboration among SAICM stakeholders can provide a platform to broader engagement for the achievement of the SDGs. The following examples of SAICM in practice provide food for thoughts in anticipation of the interactive discussions to be held during the high level segment at ICCM4.

What are the key success factors for establishing efficient collaboration between different policy sectors?

“Chemical Safety for Children in Uganda” is a project financed by the Quick Start Programme (QSP) Trust Fund and implemented by UNDP in Uganda and Pro-biodiversity Conservationists in Uganda (PROBICOUG) between June 2011 and June 2013; it illustrates how broad political support for the sound management of chemicals can produce positive results on the quality of human life. The project focuses on communication for prevention of health problems related to exposure to chemicals affecting workers, in particular children, in the agricultural sector. The direct involvement of several ministerial sectors (agriculture, health, labour and environment) and non-governmental actors facilitated a closer cooperation between public authorities and the rural communities with a great uptake of activities that included: seminars and workshops on safety measures; development of a national inventory of dangerous chemicals; chemical safety education formalised in two main trade unions; further awareness activities for decision makers and leaders of civil society. An additional boost to the project was also reached thanks to mass communications: radio, TV talk shows and magazines increased the common knowledge on chemicals and pressured district leaders to take the necessary steps to improve chemical security.

How can SAICM stakeholders contribute to the achievement of the SDGs turning to advantage the broad stakeholder involvement in SAICM?

The “Recycling and disposal of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) – exploratory project” was implemented in five district of Madagascar by the WHO between 2009 and 2011. It developed an efficient logistical system to address incorrect management of ITNs at their end of life. ITNs play an important role in the fight against malaria and therefore in the achievement of the sustainable development goals. However, after a few years of use, the efficacy of these nets against mosquitos decreases and they are commonly thrown away or used for other purposes, such as fishing, with potentially dangerous impacts on health and environment. The program engaged government, IGOs, NGOs and leaders of civil society into the implementation of a pilot collection and recycling system of used treated nets. It included systematic nets replacement campaigns with the involvement of community chiefs; mass collection of used ITNs in centralized collection points; nets transportation to four recycling sites and recycle. In this way, the project increased common awareness on the management of hazardous wastes. Furthermore, the training activities for a correct disposal of ITNs improved the commitment of national decision makers and industry to limit the collateral effects of massive distribution of insecticide-treated nets.

What are the key success factors and enabling conditions for effective partnerships?

Between July 2011 and November 2013 the QSP Trust Fund project “Promoting sound chemical management through strengthening workers’ capacities” was implemented by a partnership including the International Labour Foundation for Sustainable Development (Sustainlabour) and the governments of Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Its main aim was to increase the limited involvement of workers in safe chemicals management through the collaboration of multilateral partners: from national and local governments to trade unions, labour organizations, private sector and NGOs. The program made workers that are daily managing chemicals in production aware of the hazards they face, how to use such substances with minimal risk for their health and how to reduce the likelihood of chemical accidents. This project was implemented thanks to specific seminars and workshops which reached more than 1000 beneficiaries in the three countries, divulgation of informative guidelines on the sound management of chemicals, development and implementation of an online course in order to reach a broader audience. The publication of national reports on chemicals and the establishment of National Trade Union Working Groups further facilitated exchange of knowledge on chemical safety among different stakeholders and supported the elaboration of roadmaps for national action plans.

How can the unique features of the SAICM model be more effectively used to speed up implementation towards 2020?

The project “Hazardous Waste: Muthia Village, India” is an example of how private corporations can successfully put in action SAICM principles of sound chemicals management with positive results on daily life. This particular initiative was undertaken by Concept Biotech and Naroda Industrial Association between 2006 and 2008 with the support of the Blacksmith Institute (now known as Pure Earth). The core of the project was the cleaning up of the polluted site around the village of Muthia, which was severely affected by the industrial wastes coming from the close industrial cluster. It required excavation, removal of 3000 tons of hazardous wastes (mostly composed of heavy metals) then sending to a disposal facility, and treatment of the site with vermiculture, worms that have heavy metal concentration in their bodies. The concentration of heavy metals in the treated area after the first round of decontamination decreased to 60%. This result was also reached thanks to the contribution of local industries, which covered the costs of unforeseen expenses as well. This increased social responsibility of industry in the protection of surrounding environment also benefited local communities, by enabling them to grow food crops on previously contaminated soil and to safely use the water flowing through the industrial area.
