



UNEP

SAICM/OEWG.3/2

Distr.: General
23 January 2019

Original: English



Strategic Approach
to International
Chemicals Management

**Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference
on Chemicals Management**

Third meeting

Montevideo, 2–4 April 2019

Scenario note for the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference on Chemicals Management

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat has the honour to provide, in the annex to the present note, a scenario note for the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, prepared by the President of the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, Ms. Gertrud Sahler.

Annex

Scenario note prepared by the President of the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management

I. Introduction

1. The third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference on Chemicals Management is being convened pursuant to resolution II/6, by which the International Conference established the Working Group as a subsidiary body that would meet prior to sessions of the Conference. The first and second meetings of the Working Group were held in Belgrade in November 2011 and in Geneva in December 2014, respectively. By its resolution IV/5, the Conference decided to hold a third meeting of the Working Group in advance of the fifth session of the Conference, to be held in 2018 or early 2019. Accordingly, the third meeting will be held in Montevideo from 2 to 4 April 2019 at the invitation of the Government of Uruguay.
2. The present scenario note, which I have prepared in consultation with the Bureau, sets out the plan and general expectations for the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group. The purpose of the note is to assist stakeholders in the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management in preparing for the meeting in such a way as to enable participants to reach a successful conclusion, with the necessary work completed in a timely manner as we move forward towards the fifth and final session of the Conference. Further guidance for the Working Group can be found in the annotations to the provisional agenda for the third meeting (SAICM/OEWG.3/1/Add.1).
3. The deadline for achieving the objective of the Strategic Approach (to ensure, by 2020, that chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize their adverse impacts on the environment and human health), first agreed upon at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, is only one year away.
4. The Working Group will focus on two key areas: (i) progress made since the fourth session of the International Conference, including on emerging policy issues and other issues of concern; and (ii) issues related to the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. The Working Group will also consider the activities and the budget of the secretariat until the end of 2020 as well as the arrangements for the fifth session of the Conference, scheduled to be held from 5 to 9 October 2020.

II. Timing and format of the third meeting

5. The third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group will open at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 2 April, and close at 6 p.m. on Thursday, 4 April 2019. Two plenary meetings, with simultaneous interpretation, will be held per day, which should allow sufficient time for discussions. There is no provision for evening meetings of the plenary.
6. Technical briefings will be held on Monday, 1 April 2019, and time on that day will be allotted for regional and other group meetings. The technical briefings programme includes discussions related to the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, including details on the independent evaluation of the Strategic Approach for the period 2006–2015 and the second edition of the *Global Chemicals Outlook*.
7. Given the brief duration of the meeting, I prefer that opening remarks of a general nature be delivered on a regional basis or by umbrella organizations rather than by individual Governments or organizations. Opening statements should be delivered immediately following the discussion of agenda item 2, “Organizational matters”. I encourage you to prepare in writing any complementary information that you would like to share on relevant Strategic Approach implementation activities and aspects of the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 and submit it to the secretariat for posting on the Strategic Approach website.
8. In structuring our discussions, I intend to take up the issues in the order in which they are presented in the provisional agenda (SAICM/OEWG.3/1). I would like us to undertake a complete initial review of the issues in plenary meetings, where the views of all can be heard.
9. I expect that delegates will want to spend significant time in the plenary and in smaller groups discussing the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. As we identify areas that prove challenging to discuss in plenary meetings, it may be beneficial to

establish small groups to discuss such issues in detail. The results of such discussions would, of course, be presented for consideration in plenary meetings.

III. Preparation for the third meeting

10. Given that the documents for the meeting have been made available to all participants well in advance, it is expected that stakeholders will come well prepared for discussions at the meeting.

11. At the second meeting of the intersessional process, in Stockholm, we reviewed the draft version of the independent evaluation of the Strategic Approach for the period 2006–2015. Pursuant to resolution IV/4 of the Conference, the Working Group should consider the conclusions of the independent evaluation that have been prepared for consideration by the Open-ended Working Group (see SAICM/OEWG.3/3 and SAICM/OEWG.3/INF/1). Stakeholders may also wish to consider the findings presented in the second edition of the *Global Chemicals Outlook* (SAICM/OEWG.3/INF/3).

12. You may recall that, in its resolution IV/4, the Conference initiated the intersessional process to prepare recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. The Conference decided, among other things, that the intersessional process should consider the need for and develop recommendations regarding measurable objectives in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Conference also decided that the participants in the first meeting of the intersessional process should elect two Co-Chairs from among the governmental participants present at that meeting. At the first meeting of the intersessional process, participants elected Ms. Leticia Reis de Carvalho (Brazil) and Mr. David Morin (Canada) to serve as Co-Chairs of the intersessional process. On 23 January 2019, the Government of Brazil informed the secretariat that Ms. Carvalho has ceased her duties with the Strategic Approach, both as a Bureau member and as a Co-Chair of the intersessional process. Therefore, the Working Group is asked to elect a new Co-Chair for the intersessional process from among the governmental participants present at the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group.

13. Two meetings of the intersessional process have taken place, the first in Brasilia in February 2017 and the second in Stockholm in March 2018. At the second meeting, we discussed and suggested options for a vision, policy principles, measurable objectives and milestones, implementation arrangements, governance and high-level political commitment and visibility beyond 2020. Meeting participants requested the Co-Chairs of the intersessional process to develop a paper based on the outcomes of the first and second intersessional meetings for submission to the Working Group. At the third meeting of the Working Group, we will discuss the proposal of the Co-Chairs, contained in document SAICM/OEWG.3/4, in detail. The proposal sets out recommendations for a voluntary multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder instrument, building on the Strategic Approach and allowing for continuity with current relevant efforts such as the identification of gaps, capacity-building and the implementation of chemicals management schemes. At the same time, participants may find it necessary to considering a possible broader platform to address the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. If desired by the participants at the meeting of the Open-ended Working Group, discussions on that broader platform could be further elaborated, including with respect to its possible scope, role, function and governance, as well as the process for its further development.

14. A third meeting of the intersessional process is scheduled to take place in September 2019. In accordance with resolution IV/4, we must consider the need to call for, and the timing of, a fourth meeting of the intersessional process before the fifth session of the Conference, as well as the timing of the regional meetings. At the third meeting of the Working Group, the Bureau will make a recommendation on the timing of future meetings for the consideration of participants. Furthermore, participants may wish to decide on the need for a fourth meeting of the intersessional process and reflect on the timing of all meetings in preparation for the fifth session of the Conference.

15. Pursuant to resolution IV/1 of the Conference, for consideration by the Working Group at its third meeting, the secretariat has developed a third progress report for the period 2014–2016, which includes an analysis of the 20 indicators of progress agreed upon by the Conference at its second session (SAICM/OEWG.3/5). The Conference also directed the Working Group to consider the need for a report for the period 2017–2019 for consideration by the Conference at its fifth session. Under agenda item 4 (a), on the progress report for the period 2014–2016, I also intend to invite the agencies of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) to provide individual status updates to the Working Group on progress towards the sound management of chemicals by their organizations.

16. In its resolution IV/2, the Conference requested the lead agencies of IOMC, Governments and other stakeholders to report through the secretariat on progress in the implementation of its resolutions on emerging policy issues to the Working Group and to the Conference at its fifth session. The

secretariat report on emerging policy issues and other issues of concern is set out in document SAICM/OEWG.3/6. It will also be critical for the Working Group to reflect on the experiences and lessons learned to date regarding emerging policy issues and other issues of concern with the aim of supporting decision-making beyond 2020.

17. With regard to the activities and the budget of the secretariat, in its resolution IV/5, the Conference directed the Working Group to consider changes in budget priorities and, if absolutely necessary, an increase in the overall size of the budget until 2020, and also delegated authority to the Working Group to take a decision on the matter. In the same resolution, the Conference requested the secretariat to report to the Conference at its fifth session on the activities, staffing and budget of the secretariat and to provide interim information in that regard to the Working Group at its third meeting. The secretariat has had to take on considerable additional obligations, both financial and human-resource-related, in meeting the demands arising from the “Beyond 2020” process and has, therefore, requested additional resources in order to meet its obligations with respect to Strategic Approach stakeholders.

IV. Planning for the fifth session of the International Conference

18. As you are all aware, paragraph 25 of the Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach provides for the fifth session of the Conference to be held in 2020 unless the Conference decides otherwise.

19. The Government of Germany has offered to host the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, from 5 to 9 October 2020 in Bonn, Germany. At the session, key decisions will be taken in respect of the Strategic Approach and the way forward for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. It will also be an opportunity for all stakeholders to celebrate the achievements of the Strategic Approach since its inception in 2006. The Working Group will have before it a note by the secretariat on preparations for the fifth session of the Conference (SAICM/OEWG.3/INF/13).

V. Desired outcome of the third meeting

20. At its third meeting the Working Group will discuss in detail the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 and begin to prepare recommendations to present to the Conference at its fifth session. In particular, it is my desire that the Working Group discuss in detail and take ownership of the paper prepared by the Co-Chairs and further develop it as an outcome of the third meeting, so that it may be used as a basis for further deliberations during the intersessional process. The Open-ended Working Group should also decide whether any other supporting information is required to support the process for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

21. As we all are aware, we also have a looming target, only one year away, of attaining the objective agreed upon at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development of ensuring that, by 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on the environment and human health. The aim of the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group is to make progress towards attaining the objective of the Strategic Approach for 2020, including to highlight the key areas for action before the fifth session of the Conference and to identify areas of achievement of the Strategic Approach to be celebrated at the fifth session of the Conference.

22. Commitment, cooperation, awareness and ownership among all stakeholders will be key to achieving the future we want for the sound management of chemicals and waste.

23. In conclusion, I urge all delegates to prepare to work in such a spirit. I very much look forward to working with you all at the third meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference on Chemicals Management.

Gertrud Sahler
President of the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management