
**Seventh meeting of the Quick Start Programme
Executive Board**
Geneva
7-8 May 2012
Adoption of the report of the seventh meeting of the Board

Provisional report of the seventh meeting of the Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

Introduction

1. In resolution I/4 adopted at its first session, the International Conference on Chemicals Management decided to establish a Quick Start Programme (QSP) to support initial enabling capacity-building and implementation activities for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was requested to establish a voluntary, time-limited trust fund to provide seed money to support QSP objectives in accordance with resolution I/4.
2. Resolution I/4 also established the QSP Executive Board, consisting of two Government representatives of each of the United Nations regions and all the bilateral and multilateral donors and other contributors to the Programme. The Board reviews progress under the QSP on the basis of reports from the Trust Fund Implementation Committee* and other QSP participants, and provides operational guidance on the implementation of the strategic priorities of the QSP. The first meeting of the Executive Board was held on 26 and 27 April 2006 in Geneva. The second meeting of the Board was held on 23 and 24 April 2007, the third meeting took place on 6 and 7 May 2008, the fourth meeting was held on 23 and 24 April 2009, the fifth meeting took place on 19 and 20 June 2010 and the sixth meeting took place on 13 and 14 September 2011.
3. Rules of procedure of the Executive Board establish the Quick Start Programme Executive Board Committee composed of donor countries and the representatives of the five United Nations regions. Since 2009, the Board introduced a practice to hold a separate meeting of the Committee prior to the meeting of the Executive Board. Accordingly, the Committee held its current meeting on the

* The QSP Trust Fund Implementation Committee comprises representatives of the participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC). The participating organizations of IOMC are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank.

morning of Tuesday 13 September. The outcome of the Committee's deliberations is included under section III below.

I. Opening of the meeting

4. The seventh meeting of the Executive Board was held at the International Environment House II in Geneva, Switzerland, on 7 and 8 May 2012. The meeting was opened by the representative of the secretariat, who welcomed the participants and spoke of the importance of the meeting for the future of the Quick Start Programme. The representative of the secretariat also spoke of the successes of the Programme as highlighted in the revised Report of the QSP Mid-term Review and commended all those Governments and other stakeholders that have contributed to the Programme and its Trust Fund for their continuous commitment.

II. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

5. The participants agreed that Mr. Nassereddin Heidari (Islamic Republic of Iran) would serve as the co-chair from the group of Government representatives of the five United Nations regions and Mr. Gordo Jain (Germany) would serve as the co-chair from the group of donors.

B. Organization of work

6. The Board agreed to meet from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Monday, 7 May 2012 and from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 8, 2012. As per in previous years, a separate meeting of the Executive Board's Committee on the QSP Trust Fund was held from 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. on 7 May 2012 as indicated in the annotated agenda SAICM/EB.7/1/Add.1.

C. Attendance

7. The meeting was attended by the following regional representatives or their designated replacements: Ms. Anahit Aleksandryan (Armenia), Mr. Jeffrey A. Headley (Barbados), Ms. Antoinette Macumi (Burundi), Mr. Antti Rytövuori (Finland), Mr. Nassereddin Heidari (Islamic Republic of Iran), Ms. Aisha U. Mahmood (Nigeria), Ms. Sunee Piyapanpong (Thailand), and Mr. Fabio Di Cera Paternostro (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela).

8. The meeting was attended by the following donor representatives: Ms. Jill Hanna and Mr. Ian Dalton (European Commission), Mr. Philippe Chemin (France), Mr. Gordo Jain and Mr. Frank Fetcher (Germany), Ms. Young-Hee Kim (Republic of Korea), Mr. Henrik H. Eriksen (Norway), Mr. Reginald Hernaus (the Netherlands), Ms. Marta Ciraj (Slovenia), Mr. Teboho Sebege (South Africa), Ms. Luminita Liliana Tirchila (Romania), Ms. Sara Stenhammar and Ms. Johanna Lissinger-Peitz (Sweden) and Ms. Sezaneh Seymour (United States of America).

9. The meeting was attended by the following contributors: Mr. Mark Davis (FAO), Mr. Yusuke Honda and Mr. Tsutomu Mizutani (Japan), Mr. Michael Gribble (International Council for Chemical Associations), Ms. Anna Hitschler (ICCA/BASF), Mr. David Azoulay and Mr. Bjorn Beeler (International POPs Elimination Network), Mr. Robert Diderich (OECD), Mr. Kaj Madsen, Mr. Timothy Kasten (United Nations Environment Programme), Mr. Klaus Tyrkko (UNDP), Mr. Heinz Leuenberger (UNIDO), Mr. Jonathan Krueger (UNITAR), and Ms. Carolyn Vickers (World Health Organization).

D. Adoption of the agenda

10. The representatives adopted the following agenda for the meeting on the basis of the provisional agenda set out in document SAICM/EB.7/1b.Rev.1 and SAICM/EB.7/1/Add.1. The Chair proposed a change of the agenda by adding item 3b, a report on the consultative process for an integrated approach to finance the chemicals and waste cluster presented by Mr. Jacob Duer, following the introductory remarks to the Executive Board by a representative of the secretariat. In addition, one participant suggested that a report on the outcome of the Stockholm +40 be added under item 9 on other matters.

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Election of officers;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Organization of work.
3. Reporting
 - (a) Report of the Executive Board's Committee on the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund
 - (b) Update on the consultative process for an integrated approach to finance the chemicals and waste cluster.
4. Final outcome of the Mid-term review of the Quick Start Programme
5. Review of implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund
 - (a) Status of the Quick Start Programme;
 - (b) Implementation of the Quick Start Programme Business Plan;
 - (c) Status of projects under the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund.
 - (d) Non-Trust Fund contributions to the Quick Start Programme
6. Further development of operational guidance on the implementation of the strategic priorities of the Quick Start Programme
7. Other matters
 - (a) Outcome of the Stockholm +40
8. Adoption of the report
9. Next meeting
10. Closure of the meeting.

III. Report of the Executive Board's Committee

- A. 11. Mr. Gordo Jain (Germany), chair of the Committee, made a summary presentation of the outcome of discussions during the meeting of the Executive Board Committee on the QSP Trust Fund that had taken place during the morning of Monday, 7 May. He noted the documents which had been reviewed as well as the comments addressed by the secretariat. Requests for further information were received, but it was concluded that decisions could be taken once the full Executive Board was present.

12. At the meeting of the Committee, a representative of the SAICM secretariat welcomed participants and discussed other UNEP related chemicals management activities such as the Rio +20 discussions and Stockholm +40 Conference. Discussions from the morning focused on the status of the QSP, including its financial situation by reviewing Trust Fund contributions, non-trust fund and in-kind contributions. It was noted that the QSP was able to leverage funding from other sources such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), for the amount of \$25 million. Discussions also focused on the status of the implementation of the QSP Business Plan as well as the status of projects funded under the QSP Trust Fund.

13. In the ensuing discussion the following was noted:

- Clarification was requested on in-kind contributions to the programme and the system for determining country eligibility

- Clarification was also requested on total funds raised (Trust Fund, In-Kind, Non-trust Fund) as mentioned in document SAICM/EB.7/2.Rev.1. It was recommended that it may be better to highlight the total, including funds leveraged from Global Environment Facility (GEF).
- The status of projects funded under the QSP Trust Fund (SAICM EB.7/3) was discussed, one of the participants requested clarification on the costs of independent monitoring and evaluation and the reason for the secretariat receiving few reports.
- It was noted by one of the participants that the discussion on non-trust fund contributions should be postponed until the afternoon meeting with the full Executive Board present.
- Points were raised by participants on issues such as challenges in developing countries, where more information from the perspective of the countries and a final evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme once it has ended was deemed necessary.
- Participants noted that draft recommendations based on the discussions should be prepared.
- One participant noted that non-chemical alternatives should be highlighted in the meeting report.
- Participants welcomed the participation of the World Bank in the Trust Fund Implementation Committee.
- The decision on amending the time for completion of projects and disbursement of funds beyond 2013 was raised as a point needing to be addressed.
- Concern was raised on the limited evidence from only thirty-three completed projects provided in the report on the Final Outcome of the Mid Term review of the Quick Start Programme (SAICM/EB.7.6/Rev.1), although appreciation for the richness of the field visits component was expressed.
- A question was raised on whether there should be more rounds of applications to the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund and whether this was a decision of the Executive Board. It was explained that the rounds of application were set out in the QSP Executive Board Business Plan and as such could be amended by the Executive Board as necessary.

B. 14. Following the introductory remarks by the secretariat and the report of the Executive Board's Committee, a summary on the process for an integrated approach to finance the chemicals and waste cluster was given by Mr. Jacob Duer, Senior Advisor Strategic Policy and Facilitation Branch, Division of Environmental Law and Conventions, UNEP. Mr. Duer explained that the consultative process launched in 2009 focused on identifying sustainable financial options which would lead to the development of a final proposal on the integration financing of the chemicals and waste clusters. Following the decision of the UNEP Governing Council at its 12th Special Session held in Nairobi on (feb), the Executive Director of UNEP was requested to develop further the proposal and submit it for consideration of the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, to be held in Nairobi, Kenya on 17-21 September 2012, and again at the Governing Council in 2013. Mr. Duer indicated that the Executive Director would seek advice on the proposal with governments and other stakeholders in order to better reflect their financial needs with regards to chemicals and waste. The new proposal would use existing processes, rather than creating new administrative mechanisms and that the integrated approach would be flexible and could integrate other conventions.

15. The Board took note of the report of the Committee and the update on the consultative process for an integrated approach to finance the chemicals and waste agenda.

IV. Final Outcome of the Mid-term Review of the Quick Start Programme

16. The Board had before it document SAICM/EB.7/6/Rev.1 Revised report of the Mid-Term review of the QSP. The Executive Board noted with regret that the consultant who produced the report on the final outcome of the Mid-term Review was not present at the meeting. A presentation was made by the secretariat on his behalf where the overall outcomes, institutional and administrative arrangements, governance of the programme and conclusions were covered.

17. It was noted during the presentation that important lessons were learned from the review process, such as the value of awareness-raising workshops as an essential means to engage stakeholders. Other lessons learned include the challenges faced by ill-conceived project designs or the lack of political commitment with regard to the sound management of chemicals. One participant remarked that the report should have highlighted the projects which focused on non-chemical alternatives to pesticides funded by the French Government, such as the NGO project in Georgia.

18. The strength of the programme as a flexible and accessible mechanism to support initial enabling activities in developing countries, small island developing states and countries with economies in transition was highlighted. Some participants noted, however, that the findings of the report were based on thirty completed projects which represented a small percentage of all projects in the QSP portfolio.

19. Concern was raised on whether the African countries included in the field visits of the report were representative of the African continent as a whole, given the geographical and political variation of the region. It was recognized that the time and resources available restricted the country selection for the field visits. The concern of regional representativeness of the countries included in the visits was also shared by the participant from the Caribbean region.

20. The Board underlined that a lack of progress indicators rendered the task of making assessments on the success or impacts of projects difficult. The Board also noted that some project outcomes do not necessarily link to the strategic priorities, thereby making it difficult to assess if they are contributing to the priority being addressed. The secretariat added that it is difficult to assess project effectiveness as there are not standard indicators developed for QSP projects and individual projects do not always report on their own indicators effectively. In addition, it was mentioned that the creation of a standard set of performance indicators would be complex as it would require a new methodology.

21. The importance of inter-sectoral cooperation was mentioned by the Board as a means to raise the profile of chemicals into national development plans.

22. Executive Board agreed to use an updated version of the Information Document 12 from the Open-ended Working Group Meeting as the Executive Board report to the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, reviewing the performance of the QSP in relation to the Business Plan targets.

23. Participants responded positively to the suggestion of discussing the conclusions presented in the Final Mid-term review report as a sound basis for a recommendation. The Board discussed the conclusions and recommendations and decided that a summary would be prepared. One participant mentioned that it would be important to draft the paper in such a way that the messages are clearly understood, even by those participants who did not attend. This document has been entitled "Summary of conclusions and recommendations from Executive Board to the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management concerning the mid-term review of the Quick Start Programme", and is included as Annex I of this report.

24. The Executive Board noted that there are additional countries which are eligible but have not benefited from the Quick Start Programme. Some participants remarked that the revised mid-term review document does not address the question on whether the Quick Start Programme should be extended. It was noted, however, that some of the projects have successfully completed initial enabling activities and that a mechanism that could address the wider mainstreaming issues could be developed. Concern was raised on the fact that, in the event that the Quick Start Programme was not extended, a funding gap could be created until a new funding mechanism is defined to support SAICM implementation, understanding that the time required to roll out a new mechanism could signify that some countries' sound chemicals management needs would not be addressed. In addition, another

participant noted that there is currently no other mechanism equivalent to the Quick Start Programme. Comparison was drawn with the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) hazardous chemicals window, but it was mentioned that it does cover initial enabling activities and it requires strict co-financing. It was also noted that the Quick Start Programme's Terms of Reference may need to be reviewed to allow it to go beyond enabling activities. The representative from the African Region indicated that the Quick Start Programme should be allowed to continue until another mechanism is put in place, given that some countries, in particular those within the African region, are still in initial stages of development.

25. The secretariat informed the Board that non-trust fund contributions were disclosed in reporting forms, but noted that not all forms declared the actual monetary investment provided. This rendered the information difficult to assess. One participant questioned whether the non-trust fund contributions to the programme would be included in a final review of the Quick Start Programme. Another participant noted that the evaluation of the QSP did not contain sufficient information about the non-trust fund component and therefore, it should be included in a final review of the Programme at its completion.

V. Review of implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund

26. The Board had before it document SAICM/EB.7/2.Rev.1, Report of the secretariat on the implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund, providing information on progress against the business plan strategies and targets and additional information on QSP trust fund applications and approved projects over eleven rounds.

27. The secretariat provided the Board with an update of the financial situation of the Trust Fund and informed the meeting participants that the document contained information previously presented in two separate documents. Participants were also informed of the current status of the funds available to be awarded to projects in the twelfth round of applications to the QSP.

28. The Board took note of the information in the report.

A. Status of the Quick Start Programme

29. The Board had before it document SAICM/EB.7/5 containing the report of the sixth meeting of the QSP Executive Board that took place in Geneva on 13 and 14 September 2011.

30. The Board adopted the report of its sixth meeting.

32. The secretariat provided the Board with a summary of the information contained in the document SAICM/EB.7/2.Rev.1. It was noted that corrections had been made to the total amounts that had previously been declared as non-trust fund contributions due to the double counting of figures provided in non-Trust fund declaration forms. In addition, the summary noted that the Trust Fund has been successful in leveraging co-financing from other sources, such as the Global Environment Facility.

33. The Board took note of the information in the reports.

B. Implementation of the Quick Start Programme Business Plan

34. The secretariat provided the Board with a review of the performance of the programme as reported in document SAICM/EB.7/2.Rev.1 (Section II) on the Implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund. The Board noted that the quota set for NGOs which can be approved in each round of applications to the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund had been met and that if additional civil society participation is to take place the quota would need to be revised.

35. It was also noted by the Board that the number of application rounds to the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund should be revised, as the available funds for the year 2012 may not be sufficient for them to be held. The secretariat suggested to defer the 13th round of application until after the third session of the Conference, given that the 12th round generated 28 proposals which would have been assessed by the QSP Trust Fund Implementation Committee on May 9. Given available funds, it was noted that a significant number of proposals would not receive funding even if qualified. Therefore, the Board agreed to defer the next application round (13th) until after the third session of the Conference, also due to the current restrictions on the length of the projects.

36. The Chair of the meeting, Mr. Gordo Jain (Germany) requested that the Executive Board take note of the progress against the Business Plan targets summarized in the report.

37. Board took note of the information provided in the report and of the comments made.

C. Status of projects funded under the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund

38. The secretariat provided the Board with an update on the projects funded under the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund as presented in document SAICM/EB.7/3.Rev.1. An overview was given by the secretariat.

39. The Board took note of the information provided in the report and of the comments made.

D. Non-Trust Fund contributions to the Quick Start Programme

40. The representative of the secretariat drew attention to document SAICM/EB.7/INF/6 and updated participants on the status of the non-trust fund contributions to the QSP. Additional contributions were received since the information document was made available to the Board, these were added to document number SAICM/EB.7/INF/6.Add.1 and made available on the SAICM website. The secretariat informed the Board that the figures previously produced on non-trust fund contributions led to over-estimation due to double counting of forms received. The revised figures of the non-trust fund contributions are included in the report SAICM/EB.7/2.Rev.1.

41. The Board took note of the information provided in the report and of the comments made.

VI. Further development of operational guidance on the implementation of the strategic priorities of the Quick Start Programme

42. The representative of the secretariat drew the attention of the meeting to document SAICM/EB.7/4 containing issues for possible consideration in the further development of operational guidance resulting from suggestions made at the 10th and 11th meetings of the Implementation Committee. An overview of the document was provided by a representative of the secretariat who noted the new membership of the World Bank. Participants were informed that the rules of procedure were amended following a decision of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee at its 12th meeting in Paris on the 22nd and 23rd of November 2011. The amended rule regarded the acceptance of proposals to the Trust Fund from the same country, provided that all the progress reports and Independent Monitoring and Evaluation reports from previous projects had been received by the secretariat. In addition, the Board was informed that the disbursement of funds could be made until the 30th November 2013, therefore all projects needed to be amended in order to allow the completion of activities by that date. It was noted that the request of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) to the International Conference on Chemicals Management would be to amend this requirement to improve the current situation, regardless of whether the Conference decides to extend the life of the Quick Start Programme.

43. The Board took note of the information provided in the report and of the comments made.

VII. Other matters

44. Ms. Johanna Lissinger-Peitz (Sweden) provided the Board with an update of the Stockholm +40 Conference which took place from the 23rd to the 25th of April 2012 in Stockholm, Sweden, and in particular, the international chemicals dialogue which took place on Tuesday 24 April. The International Chemicals Dialogue was an opportunity for further action to be taken to reach the 2020 goal, given that there are only 8 years left. At this meeting, 8 areas for action were presented: awareness raising, access to information, health aspects, substitution, resource efficiency, chemicals in the development agenda, capacity building and International Environmental Governance. The meeting featured 25 to 30 participants including members of industry, and a consensus was reached that the 8 areas for action need work to reach the 2020 goal and that these areas for action would be able to strengthen existing structures. The focus of the meeting was on finding ways to improve synergies between sectors to reach the common goal as well as the importance that chemicals should have on the development agenda, and

that these should be a part of the strategies for sustainable development. The importance of awareness-raising was underlined as a means to clearly communicate what action needed to be taken as well as the cost of inaction. The representative of Sweden also mentioned that additional information was available on the website (<http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/15451>).

45. One of the participants requested further information on the status of the Senior Expert Resource Group. The secretariat responded that there are no current resources dedicated specifically to the programme, but that with the new IT professional recently recruited by the secretariat, efforts will be made to create an on-line application where expressions of interest in the programme could be consulted from the SAICM website.

46. Following questions from one of the participants with a view to modify the proportion of QSP Trust Fund projects that could be awarded to Non Governmental Organizations, the Secretariat clarified the status of this percentage and specified that modifying this percentage was a competence of the Executive Board. In light of the limited time available to hold a thorough discussion on this issue, it was agreed to put the question of increasing this percentage on the agenda of the 8th Executive Board meeting.

47. A representative of the secretariat also informed the Board that an awards ceremony would be held for donors to the Quick Start Programme and other SAICM activities on Thursday September 20th in the afternoon. The Board was also informed that the current Regional Representatives would soon be at the end of their terms and that the regional groups would have to select the representatives that would be supported for the next three years.

48. The Board took note of the information provided in the report and of the comments made.

VIII. Adoption of the report

49. The meeting agreed to approve the report following its finalization by the secretariat in consultation with the co-chairs. According to customary practice, the report would be formally adopted at the next meeting of the Board.

IX. Next meeting

50. The next meeting of the Board has been tentatively scheduled for April or May 2013.

XII. Closure of the meeting

51. The co-Chair Mr. Nassereddin Heidari (Islamic Republic of Iran) closed the meeting at 6.15 p.m. on Tuesday 8 May 2012.

Annex I

Summary of conclusions and recommendations from the Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme to the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management concerning the mid-term evaluation of the Quick Start Programme

Introduction

1. The Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management met for the seventh time in Geneva on 7 and 8 May 2012 to finalize its evaluation of the Quick Start Programme of the Strategic Approach.
2. The evaluation of the Quick Start Programme had been requested by the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management in paragraph 17 of resolution II/3 on financial and technical resources for implementation. In that resolution the Conference specifically “requests the Quick Start Programme Executive Board to evaluate the Quick Start Programme, report on its effectiveness and the efficiency of its implementation and make recommendations in the light of its findings for the consideration of the Conference at its third sessions”.
3. Paragraph 19 of resolution II/3 calls upon the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its third session to review and evaluate the reports referred to (in paragraphs 17 and 18) and to consider the adequacy of financial and technical arrangements for Strategic Approach implementation for action as appropriate.
4. In carrying out its evaluation the Executive Board took into account the detailed findings of a review of the Quick Start Programme which had been commissioned by the secretariat to address the terms of reference for the evaluation which were established by the Executive Board in 2010¹ The findings of the review were based on a number of important inputs and was conducted using a participatory approach in which representatives of governments, both donors and recipients, civil society organizations, industry, executing agencies, the United Nations Environment Programme, as trustee of the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund, and the secretariat were all engaged.
5. The main inputs to the review were the following:
 - (a) **Desk study.** A desk study was made of all available documentation, including project applications, project progress reports, monitoring and evaluation reports, and final reports. The desk study was conducted between May 2011 and January 2012. The full portfolio of 145 approved projects was considered as the basis for the desk study. A sample of 30 projects from the 37 that had completed all project activities by 31 December 2012 were selected for a more in-depth analysis of the outcomes and achievements of Quick Start Programme project activities. Information routinely collected by the secretariat for the purposes of monitoring the achievement of the Quick Start Programme Business Plan² also formed a part of the desk study.
 - (b) Interviews with key stakeholders. Interviews with key stakeholders from selected organizations serving as executing agencies, representatives of the Quick Start Programme Executive Board and Trust Fund Implementation Committee, donors, contributors to the broader (non-trust fund) Quick Start Programme, project implementers and the secretariat were conducted either by telephone, Skype or face-to-face meetings.
 - (c) Questionnaire survey. A questionnaire was developed and emailed in June 2011 to all Strategic Approach stakeholders, including project implementers (Governments and non-governmental organizations) . Forty-six stakeholders responded to the survey.
 - (d) Country visits. In addition to the methods described above, a limited number (7) of country visits in both Africa³ and Latin America and Caribbean⁴ regions were carried out in March and April 2012. The main

¹ Terms of reference for the evaluation were adopted by the fifth meeting of the Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme, 29-20 June 2010, Geneva.

² The Quick Start Programme Business plan is available on the SAICM website.

³ African countries visited: Tanzania (12-13 March), Uganda (15-16 March), Zambia (19-20 March), Kenya (22-23 March 2012).

⁴ Latin America and Caribbean countries visited were Colombia (5-6 March), Guatemala (12-13 April), Costa Rica (24-25 April).

objective of these field visits was to conduct a general and qualitative assessment of project performance at the country level.

(e) Technical briefing session. A technical briefing held on the occasion of the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group enabled a focused and interactive information session with a number of Quick Start Programme project proponents. This information was combined with information obtained from other sources.

6. An initial evaluation of the findings of the mid-term review of the Quick Start Programme was made by the Executive Board at its sixth meeting held in Geneva on the 13 and 14 September 2011. The evaluation was completed by the Executive Board at its seventh meeting held on 7 and 8 May 2012 on the basis of a revised report of the mid-term review. A copy of the revised mid-term review is contained in document SAICM/ EB.7/6.

Summary conclusions of the Executive Board

7. At the time of the Executive Board's evaluation in April 2012, the Quick Start Programme of the Strategic Approach had been successful in attracting applications leading to 145 approved projects from more than 100 countries and non-governmental organizations. Following consideration of the findings of the revised Report of the mid-term review of the Quick Start Programme, the Executive Board concluded the following:

(a) On the basis of the revised Report of the Mid-term Review of the Quick Start Programme, the Executive Board now considers that it has sufficient information to carry out the mid-term evaluation of the Quick Start Programme and report on the effectiveness and the efficiency of its implementation.

(b) The mid-term review indicates that the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund has been successful in enabling initial capacity-building activities in developing countries, small island developing states and countries with economies in transition.

(c) The preponderance of capacity-building projects funded to date have addressed strategic priorities "A" and "B"⁵ of the Quick Start Programme. Many countries see these as the initial steps in sound chemicals management. The findings of the mid-term review also reveal some of the challenges that many countries still face to mainstream sound chemicals management throughout their life-cycle into all relevant sectors, (strategic priority C)⁶. Continuing needs include: strengthening institutional capacity, promoting a multi-sectoral approach, establishing mandates for coordination mechanisms, enhancing stakeholder involvement, and increasing political will.

(d) Accessibility, flexibility, practicality, promotion of synergies between chemicals and waste conventions and multi-sector involvement are advantages of the Programme as noted in the revised mid-term review. While applications have been encouraged from a number of sectors including agriculture, health, industry, labour, and science, over half of all project applications have come from the environment sector.

(e) High quality applications from non-government organizations have consistently exceeded the available quota for their participation and therefore many of those applications have not received funding support.

(f) The governance of the Quick Start Programme adequately supports the administrative and decision-making functions for the efficient implementation of the programme.

(g) The secretariat has supported the administration of the programme effectively, but has been challenged by the workload caused by the strong interest in the programme. Considering the large number of projects remaining to be completed and the nature of the work required to administer and monitor implementation of these projects, priority should be given to maintaining an adequate staffing level of the secretariat.

⁵ Strategic priorities A and B for the Quick Start Programme are defined appendix I of resolution I/4 of the International Conference on Chemicals Management. Strategic priority A addresses "Development or updating of national chemicals profiles and the identification of capacity needs for sound chemicals management". Strategic priority B addresses "Development and strengthening of national chemicals management institutions, plans, programmes and activities to implement the Strategic Approach, building upon work conducted to implement international chemicals-related agreements".

⁶ Resolution I/4 defines strategic priority C as "Undertaking analysis, interagency coordination, and public participation activities directed at enabling the implementation of the Strategic Approach by integrating – i.e., mainstreaming the sound management of chemicals in national strategies, and thereby informing development assistance cooperation priorities.

- (h) The mid-term review found that the completed projects had met their objectives and achieved positive impacts regarding capacity-building and implementation of the Strategic Approach; however, the findings are based on data from a limited number of completed projects. Additional improvements in, and use of, performance indicators as well as more effective project reporting will support and enable a quality final evaluation of the programme.
- (i) The Executive Board recognized the importance of looking at a proposed time-limited extension in relation to the need to avoid a gap in providing support for enabling activities. The Executive Board also recognized the importance of the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and waste and its potential impact on financial considerations for the Strategic Approach.
- (j) The revised mid-term review was unable to provide findings on the effectiveness of the Quick Start Programme activities outside the Trust Fund. The Executive Board therefore decided not to make specific recommendations on these activities whilst recognizing the considerable financing which had been contributed for them.

Recommendations of the Executive Board

8. The Executive Board therefore recommends that the third session of the International Conference Chemicals Management:
- (a) Considers the further need to support additional initial enabling activities for strategic approach objectives, and consider a time-limited extension to the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund for this purpose.
 - (b) Welcomes the focus on the sound management of chemicals in the framework of the fifth Global Environment Facility (GEF) replenishment and requests countries, the GEF Implementing Agencies and the GEF Council to accelerate support to the implementation of the sound management of chemicals within GEF's mandate.
 - (c) Considers that lessons learned from the mid-term review of the Quick Start Programme be considered in the wider discussions on financing options for chemicals and wastes.
 - (d) Considers ways to promote mainstreaming of sound chemicals management throughout their life-cycle into all relevant sectors.
 - (e) Further encourages, in light of the higher proportion of applications from the environment sector, wider participation and leadership from all sectors to strengthen sustainability of project outcomes.
 - (f) Considers opportunities to increase participation of non-governmental organizations in initial enabling activities.
 - (g) Calls for a final evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund at its conclusion.
-