

14 June 2013

English only

**Fifteenth meeting of the Quick Start Programme
Trust Fund Implementation Committee**
Geneva, Switzerland
29 May 2013

Provisional report of the fifteenth meeting of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee 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 (ICCM) decided to establish a Quick Start Programme (QSP) to support initial enabling capacity building and implementation activities 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. Representatives of the participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC)¹ were invited to form a Trust Fund Implementation Committee to review progress in the implementation of projects funded under the QSP trust fund and to review existing project management arrangements with a view to enhance the operational aspects of the Quick Start Programme and its trust fund.

I. Opening of the meeting

3. The fifteenth meeting of the Committee was held at the WHO Headquarters building in Geneva on Wednesday May 29 2013. The representative of the secretariat opened the meeting at 2:25 p.m. on Wednesday 29 May 2013.

* The report of the meeting is issued on a provisional basis and will be considered for adoption by the Implementation Committee at its sixteenth meeting.

¹ 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 Bank and the World Health Organization (WHO).

II. Organizational matters**A. Election of officers**

4. In accordance with the rules of procedure, Mr. Mark Davis, Senior Officer, Pesticide Management Plant Production and Protection Division of FAO, was re-elected to chair the meeting.

B. Adoption of the agenda

5. The representatives adopted the following agenda for the meeting on the basis of the provisional agenda set out in document SAICM/TF.15/1:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Election of a chairperson;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Organization of work.
3. Adoption of the report of the fourteenth meeting of the Committee
4. Summary of the outcomes of the 8th Executive Board meeting.
5. Status of the QSP trust fund and outstanding project agreements.
6. Status of projects funded under the Quick Start Programme.
7. Further development of application procedures and project management arrangements for the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund.
8. QSP Fundraising Strategy.
9. Other matters
10. Next meeting.
11. Adoption of the report.
12. Closure of the meeting.

C. Organization of work

6. The Implementation Committee agreed to meet from 2:25 until all of the agenda items were completed on Wednesday 29 May 2013.

D. Attendance

7. The following organizations were represented: FAO, ILO, OECD, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO, UNITAR, the World Bank² and WHO.

² The representative from the World Bank who participated in the meeting through teleconference.

III. Adoption of the report of the fourteenth meeting of the Committee

8. The Committee had before it the provisional report of the Committee's fourteenth meeting which took place in New York on 28-29 November 2012, as set out in document SAICM/TF.15/2.
9. The Committee adopted the meeting report of its fourteenth meeting as presented.

IV. Update on the outcomes of the 8th Executive Board meeting.

10. The Committee took note of the information provided by the secretariat regarding the outcomes of the eighth meeting of the Quick Start Programme Executive Board. The Committee noted the following items from the meeting: the Board re-iterated that the extension of the QSP Trust Fund involved a commitment to continue to finance the trust fund; there will be only one application round per year, depending on the availability of funds; the last application round will close soon after the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (2015); maximum funding to NGO-implemented projects has increased to 20% of available funds; the secretariat is permitted to accept requested budget changes up to 10% of total direct project costs; the meetings of the Executive Board and of its Committee will be merged, as a one day meeting; and the Board discussed the need to conduct a second impact based evaluation of the QSP, with funds available from the Government of Sweden. The committee took note of the \$70,000 currently available to undertake the evaluation.

11. In the ensuing discussion, the Committee debated over the implications of these decisions, including a process for providing input to terms of reference for the impact based evaluation, which will be developed by the Secretariat and presented to the Executive Board for approval at its ninth meeting in 2014. The Committee noted that the scope and methodology of the evaluation needs to be designed considering the large amount of countries involved in the QSP, the complexity of an impact evaluation and the availability of funds to conduct it.

12. The Committee also recommended that the scope of the evaluation should be carefully considered given the number of projects involved and the limited resources available, an impact assessment should focus primarily on a comprehensive desk study to assess what was the impact at the country level, and limit dependence on assessments to be carried out at the country level. Assessing failure is also important for lessons learned and should be documented appropriately.

13. The Committee suggested that the secretariat prepare a draft methodology based on existing methodologies, such as the one used by the Global Environment Fund small grants programme. UNIDO offered to provide early feedback to the draft through its evaluation team before it is presented to the Committee for comment at its next meeting.

V. Status of the QSP trust fund and outstanding project agreements.

14. At its thirteenth meeting, the QSP Trust Fund Implementation Committee, following the appraisal of 28 complete and eligible applications for funding, decided on a procedure to allocate funds to a number of projects, based on the assumption of future availability of resources in the run up to ICCM3. The Committee had before it document SAICM/TF.15/4 outlining the status of donor contributions to the Quick Start Programme and the implementation of decisions of the thirteenth meeting of the Committee with regards to the allocation of funds to a specific number of projects as these became available between May 2012 and May 2013. The secretariat provided an update to the Committee on the funds available for the projects that were approved or conditionally approved and placed in the priority-funding list. The Committee took note that the current available funding is earmarked and that no projects in the funding priority match with the funding criteria of the earmarked funds.

15. The secretariat sought clarification on four projects conditionally approved but not funded at the 13th meeting of the Committee, specifically on whether these projects would receive funds after the projects in the priority list, once resources are available. The Committee reiterated that these projects will be automatically re-considered in the next application round, at which time the Committee will decide, subject to funds availability, which projects will be granted funds. The Committee asked the secretariat to issue a revised version of the document SAICM/TF.15/4 and to draft letters to the applicants of these four projects to clarify the status of their proposals.

16. In addition, the secretariat proposed that the Committee consider funding a conditionally approved project not included in the funding priority list that meets the funding criteria on non-chemical alternatives, document SAICM/TF.15/INF/2, given that funds are currently available for this area of work, and that conditions for approval have already been met. The Committee agreed to fund the project *Promotion of the regulation on Pesticide Control and Management Development Project* led by the Sustainable Agriculture and Environment Development Association (SAEDA) to be undertaken in Lao PDR.

VI. Status of projects funded under the Quick Start Programme

17. The representative of the secretariat updated participants on the status of the projects funded under the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund in the first twelve rounds. The Committee noted the following highlights from the report: 154 projects have been approved since the establishment of the QSP, with eight receiving suspensions; 69 projects have fully completed or have finished their activities and are in the process of completion; 77 projects to date have requested extensions (slightly over 50%); all projects in the first to ninth rounds have initiated activities; and there are currently four new projects awaiting to sign agreements by all parties. In regards to the reporting, 69% of expected narrative reports were received for the period of 1 August 2012 to 31 January 2013, a drop from 81% in the previous reporting period, while 50% of expected M&E reports were received, remaining at the same rate than the previous period.

18. The secretariat presented four projects facing serious issues to the Committee for its guidance. The Committee consulted with the representative from UNITAR, who indicated that communications channels with the local UNDP office had been re-established and that as a result, the conditions for project implementation were now in place. Accordingly, the Committee decided to grant more time to the project for re-starting activities before making any other decisions. The secretariat would report back at the Committee's next meeting.

19. Regarding a project with CILLS³ as the executing agency in Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Mauritania and Niger, the SAICM Secretariat advised that a letter would be sent to the executing agency indicating that the project has expired and that funds need to be returned to UNEP⁴. This letter should also indicate that if project activities are to continue, that they should contact the secretariat to discuss new arrangements. The involved agency, in this case FAO, should be copied in the letter. The Committee indicated that copying the relevant agencies should be standard practice for all communications with project implementers that are experiencing problems.

20. Regarding the project in Ethiopia and Mozambique where the Basel Convention Regional Center in South Africa is the executing agency, the Committee advised the secretariat to send a letter to the BCRC on behalf of the Committee requesting the progress reports of the implementation of the projects in Ethiopia and Mozambique.

³ Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel

⁴ This letter is now part of a standard procedure implemented by the secretariat to avoid having long periods of time when contracts have expired and no formal arrangements have been completed to extend the project.

21. Regarding the project in Malaysia, where the Government requested UNDP country office to act as an executing agency, the Committee approved the request. Given that a long period of consultation process has already passed, the Committee requested the secretariat to draft a letter informing the implementer that a period of no more than three months will be given to set all conditions for agreement signature.

VII. Further development of application procedures and project management arrangements for the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund

22. The representative of the secretariat presented for the information of the Committee the revised guidance document developed to assist project implementers in the reporting of project progress as well as general implementation. The Committee welcomed the revised *Guidelines for the implementation of Quick Start Programme projects*, understanding that this is an ever green document and amendments may be made in the future as required.

VIII. Fundraising Strategy

23. Following the decisions of the Executive Board regarding QSP fundraising and targets, the secretariat was working on a draft Fundraising Strategy for the QSP. The secretariat communicated the current state of its fundraising strategy development, which provisionally includes three work areas: the increase of donor base, the maintenance and increase of contributions from traditional donors and the improvement of the QSP visibility in the different regions. The Committee advised that the strategy should target potential donors that would be in the position to provide resources. The Committee agreed that targeting institutions involved with international cooperation in the different regions was appropriate. The Committee also advised to develop information highlighting the achieved outcomes of QSP projects, as well as the expected outcomes of project proposals not yet funded to raise the interest of the donor community.

24. The Committee provided initial input to help guide the secretariat in developing the Fundraising Strategy and in fulfilling its fundraising role. Some elements for discussion included: the current QSP funding model and its gaps, other applicable fundraising models, increasing contributions as well as broadening the donor base and improving overall programme visibility.

IX. Other matters

25. The Committee did not discuss any other items.

X. Next meeting

26. The date to hold the sixteenth meeting of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee will be agreed during the IOMC meeting to be held from 30 to 31 May 2013⁵. (proposed week of 25 November, 2013 in Vienna)

XI. Adoption of the report

27. The Committee requested the secretariat to circulate the draft version of the report as soon as possible to the Committee in order to receive comments and a provisional approval before the next meeting of the Committee.

XII. Closure of the meeting

28. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 5.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 29 May 2013.

⁵ Following the meeting of the IOMC, the next meeting of the QSP TFIC was scheduled for 25-26 November 2013 in the headquarters of UNIDO in Vienna, immediately following the meeting of the IOMC.