

Inputs of INDIA on High-Level Declaration of ICCM-5

Being a signatory to various chemical and waste management related Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) viz. the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions, INDIA firmly believes that there is a need to intensify and prioritize efforts w.r.t. environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste, which can help countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production by 2030.

2. All countries vary in their national capabilities in terms of availability of technology and finances, and priorities to deal with the issues related to sound management of chemicals and waste taking into account their national circumstances. To cater to this diversity, the concept of 'Common But Differentiated Responsibilities-respective capabilities' (CBDR-RC) is vital, and INDIA is confident that keeping the CBDR approach central to the 'Beyond SAICM 2020' deliberations, a collective vision, rationale objective and agreed targets can be worked out under proposed instrument. Therefore, it is important that the new instrument essentially captures the essence of the CBDR concept, takes care of the national contexts, capabilities, and priorities at the core, and strengthens the technical and financial capabilities of developing countries, and the countries with economies in transition. This will ensure whole hearted on boarding of all the countries to achieve the objectives of the final SAICM instrument.

3. It is also important that while remaining mindful of the responsibilities towards sound management of chemicals and waste, there is a need to remain equally attentive and responsive towards the evolving needs of those countries who are taking efforts to achieve ambitious developmental goals. Accordingly, the Targets and Indicators under the proposed instrument should be guiding in nature, are not overambitious and avoid any strict timelines. We have to be careful that objectives of the instrument are not too wide so as to avoid any overlapping with the existing MEA's on chemicals and wastes.

4. The 'Beyond 2020 instrument' is expected to affect the functioning of the chemical manufacturing sector across the board comprising agro-chemicals, basic chemicals, specialty chemicals, fine chemicals, polymers & plastics, bio-chemicals, and industrial gases. The functioning of the chemical sector impacts national issues like food security, employment (in the chemical industry and dependent sectors), trade restrictions, innovation advancement etc. Hence, the proposed instrument must have the flexibility to accommodate, and align with the national decision-making process so that it may not appear

as a burden vis-à-vis national priorities.

5. Considering the need to conserve and judiciously use resources, the idea to align the approach of the 'Beyond 2020 instrument' with that of Resource Efficiency (RE) and Circular Economy (CE) is a welcome step. The ongoing negotiations already cover this in the form of including life-cycle approaches, chemicals-product-waste interface, and minimization/ prevention of hazardous substances in material lifecycles. However, this would require elaboration on ways and means to achieve the objective like standardized technical guidance, software tools, and adequate process-related domain expertise to find out the alternative process steps/ input materials/ products, which may lead to reduced waste footprint, low hazard potential, and efficient resource utilization. In that case, the industry has to play a key role. Apropos above, INDIA supports the idea of integration of the life cycle approach in the sound management of chemicals and waste, and its further alignment with RE and CE.

6. The cooperation on technical and financial assistance should be in such a manner that it does not effect adversely the industries, employment and overall investment potential of the developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The developed countries may take lead to provide such assistance pro actively which will prevent additional burden on developing countries.

With the above broad understanding, INDIA looks forward to negotiations proposed at IP-4.3 and ICCM-5.
