

Essential elements for a possible ICCM5 High-level Declaration from Japan

October 22, 2020

Japan recognizes the increasing potential of chemical management to respond to long-term global challenges and to achieve sustainable development. However, Dubai Declaration seems to stress the importance of its restrictive aspects. Therefore, Japan proposes the following items as the essential elements in drafting a High Level Declaration for beyond 2020.

1. We recognize the importance of the contribution of chemicals and chemical products to building a resilient society which is capable of responding long-term global challenges, including climate change, resource conservation, population growth, and infectious diseases in countries at all level of development, and that the sound management of chemicals is essential for the appropriate use of chemicals.
2. We share the recognition that it is necessary to promote risk-based sound management of chemicals and products under regulations and voluntary management led by multi-stakeholders such as industry (Responsible Care®) with scientific evidence such as hazard and exposure assessment, and it is essential to respond to new materials and emerging issues based on scientific evidence. It is also essential to incorporate precautionary approach when it is scientifically uncertain.
3. We collectively share the importance to develop safer and environmentally sound chemical products and processes by utilizing innovative technologies such as IoT and AI, and to develop safety evaluation technology and its practical use with the consideration of animal welfare.
4. We are determined to protect children and unborn children from chemical exposure that impair their future life and health, and shall implement feasible measures based on scientific evidence on humans and their exposure to chemicals.
5. We recognize the need to make special efforts and initiatives to protect those groups of society and those regions that are particularly vulnerable to the risks from hazardous chemicals, or are highly exposed to them.
6. We will facilitate the public access to education and timely access to appropriate information and knowledge on chemicals throughout their life cycle, including the risks that they pose to human health and the environment.

7. We strengthen international cooperation to solve global challenges by accelerating capacity building in the sound management of chemicals.
8. We will ensure that, when information is made available, confidential commercial and industrial information and knowledge are protected in accordance with national laws or regulations or, in the absence of such laws and regulations, are protected in accordance with international provisions. In making information available, information on chemicals relating to the health and safety of humans and the environment should not be regarded as confidential.
9. We share the recognition that it is important to contribute the promotion of circular economy, resource circulation (including recycling) and Sustainable Chemistry by industry, to establish a management system throughout the life cycle in the world, to promote the circulation of the value inherent in each stage, and to involve management efforts by multi-stakeholder.
10. We are determined to continue promoting the management of particularly hazardous substances chemicals through the implementation of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Minamata Convention on Mercury, among others.
11. We recognize the importance of mechanisms that promote the sound life-cycle management of chemicals in partnership with the financial sector.
12. We collectively share the view that [the name of new instrument] remains a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral voluntary framework and is not a legally binding instrument.

In order to draft a declaration, we believe that it is more efficient to start the discussion using Dubai Declaration as the starting point. We could firstly review the items stated in the Dubai Declaration and evaluate what has been achieved, what has not been achieved, what is not relevant at this point of time and new perspectives to be added. Then we could discuss what should be continued, strengthened and added with the aim at drafting approximately 30 items in the same manner as stated in the Dubai Declaration.