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International Conference on Chemicals Management

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

Cooperation with intergovernmental organizations

**Briefing note provided by the Division for Sustainable
Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and
Social Affairs on preparations for the United Nations
Commission on Sustainable Development's consideration of
chemicals in its 2010–2011 cycle**

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat has the honour to circulate for the information of the Conference, in the annex to the present note, a briefing note by the Division for Sustainable Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs on preparations for the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development's consideration of chemicals in its 2010–2011 cycle. The briefing note is presented as received from the Division for Sustainable Development and has not been edited by the secretariat.

* SAICM/ICCM.2/1.

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Annex

Background Paper on the

UN Commission on Sustainable Development

- Preparations for the Commission's consideration of chemicals in its 2010–2011 cycle

Prepared by UN DESA
February 2009

This paper was prepared at the request of the SAICM secretariat by the Division for Sustainable Development of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). It is intended as a short briefing paper for the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (the Conference).

The paper attempts to meet a number of objectives outlined by the SAICM secretariat, namely:

- to provide a short history of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and an explanation of the CSD work cycles and how topics are selected;
- to inform Conference participants about of the upcoming focus of the CSD on chemicals and on opportunities to participate;
- to describe previous consideration by the CSD of chemicals issues;
- to outline the planned preparatory process as well as opportunities for SAICM stakeholders to participate, engage in and contribute to the CSD work on chemicals.

I) About the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

The CSD was established by the UN General Assembly in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also known as the Earth Summit.

The Commission is responsible for reviewing progress in the implementation of [Agenda 21](#) and the [Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#); as well as providing policy guidance to follow up the [Johannesburg Plan of Implementation \(JPOI\)](#) at the local, national, regional and international levels. The JPOI reaffirmed that the CSD is the high-level forum for sustainable development within the United Nations system.

The CSD meets annually in New York, in two-year cycles, with each cycle focusing on clusters of specific thematic and cross-sectoral issues, outlined in its [multi-year programme of work \(2003-2017\)](#) (see Annex 1).

The CSD has opened its sessions to broad participation from both governmental and non-governmental actors, and it supports a number of innovative activities, such as the [Partnerships Fair](#), the Learning Centre and a series of panels, roundtables and side events. The [High-level segment](#) features dialogue among Ministers, and Ministers also hold a special dialogue session with [Major Groups](#) (see Annex 2).

As a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council, CSD has 53 member States (about one third of the members are elected on a yearly basis). Each session of the CSD elects a Bureau, comprised of a Chair and four vice-Chairs. Meetings are generally open-ended, allowing for the participation of all countries.

II) Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Commission on Sustainable Development

At its eleventh session, the CSD decided that its [multi-year programme of work](#) beyond 2003 would be organized on the basis of seven two-year cycles, with each cycle focusing on selected thematic clusters of issues (see Annex 3). The seven two-year cycles include Review and Policy Years. The Review Year will evaluate progress made in implementing sustainable development goals and identifying obstacles and constraints, while the Policy Year will decide on measures to speed up implementation and mobilize action to overcome these obstacles and constraints. In each cycle, the thematic clusters of issues will be addressed in an integrated manner, taking into account economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Linkages to other cross-cutting issues are also to be addressed in every cycle, as shown below.

The theme of chemicals will be taken up during the 2010-2011 cycle of CSD.

<i>Cycle</i>	<i>Thematic cluster</i>	<i>Cross-cutting issues</i>
2010/2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport • Chemicals • Waste Management • Mining • A 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education

Review years

The Commission's review sessions undertake an evaluation of progress in implementing Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, while focusing on identifying constraints and obstacles in the process of implementation with regard to the selected thematic cluster of issues for the cycle. The review sessions include a high-level segment, an exchange of regional experiences, dialogues with experts, including scientific experts, and sharing of best practices and lessons learned, with a view to facilitating implementation, as well as capacity-building activities, such as learning centres and partnership fairs.

The review sessions undertake the above-mentioned evaluation on the basis of:

- (i) The Secretary-General's state of implementation reports, which contain a detailed review of progress of implementation in the selected thematic cluster of issues for the cycle, and should also reflect new challenges and opportunities;
- (ii) The contributions of United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, the Global Environment Facility and international financial and trade institutions;
- (iii) The outcomes of regional and subregional meetings and activities, as appropriate;
- (iv) The contributions of major groups, including scientific experts, as well as educators.

Policy years

In the policy year, the Commission convenes an intergovernmental preparatory meeting for one week in New York in February/March to discuss policy options and possible actions to address the constraints and obstacles in the process of implementation identified during the review year. Based on those discussions, the Chair prepares a draft negotiating document for consideration at the policy session. The Commission's policy sessions take policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation in the selected thematic cluster of issues.

Preparatory Process

Preparations for CSD-18/19 will be led by the Bureau of CSD and will include preparation of Secretary-General reports, background papers by UN agencies and Major Groups, regional implementation meetings, other intersessional meetings and an intergovernmental preparatory meeting. The inputs of UN agencies and of Major Groups to the CSD sessions will be actively solicited. A workflow diagram for a policy year (CSD-17) can be seen at: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd17/workflow.pdf>.

Regional Implementation Meetings

In order to allow effective consideration of regional and subregional inputs throughout the implementation cycle, the Economic and Social Council decided in 2003 to invite the Regional Commissions to organize regional implementation meetings in order to contribute to the work of the CSD. Such meetings preferably take place before the review session of CSD, and focus on the thematic cluster of issues to be addressed in the ongoing implementation cycle. The regional meetings also provide input to the Secretary-General's reports for the review years and the sessions of CSD. Those inputs may include identification of obstacles and constraints, new challenges and opportunities, as well as sharing of lessons learned and best practices. The participation of major groups are welcome in these meetings.

III) The Commission's Previous Work on Chemicals

Subsequent to the Earth Summit in 1992, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development took up the issue of toxic chemicals at its 2nd (1994), 3rd (1995) and 5th (1997) Sessions, as well as sound chemicals management at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. A summary of the outcomes of those sessions can be found at: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/toxic_chemicals/toxicc.htm
http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/toxic_chemicals/toxicc_decisions.htm

IV) Planned work on chemicals for the CSD18/19 cycle

The Division for Sustainable Development is currently engaged in the last stages of the CSD16/17 cycle. Work on issues pertaining to the next cycle will officially start after conclusion of CSD17, which will be held on May 4-15, 2009.

Planned work by the Division for Sustainable Development on chemicals for CSD18/19 includes:

- Drafting of the Secretary-General's reports on chemicals for CSD18 and CSD19; those will be the official UN documents that will be submitted as inputs to the deliberations of the CSD. Similar reports will be produced for all the issues in the thematic cluster for CSD18/19. The reports are shared before CSD with all UN agencies and usually available in draft form on Division for Sustainable Development website some months before CSD. Given the overarching nature of SAICM and the nature of the Conference as the high-level forum on international chemicals management the CSD secretariat will liaise with the SAICM secretariat in the preparation of these reports. Information will also be sought from IOMC, UNEP, the Secretariats of the various international conventions dealing with chemicals, and other institutions as appropriate.

- Other background documents, prepared before CSD18. Those will be:

- A section of the "trends" report on transport, mining, chemicals and waste. The Trends document will probably follow the model of the report produced for CSD16: <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/trends2008/fullreport.pdf>. The purpose of the Trends report is to synthesize the main trends in the issues considered by CSD in a user-friendly manner, based on all the relevant statistical data available at the country level.
- A short compilation of best practices in management of persistent organic pollutants (and potentially other chemicals). The latter project will be undertaken jointly with the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention, and potentially with UNEP-chemicals. A compilation of best practices in sustainable development in Africa was published by the Division for Sustainable Development for CSD16: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/africa_casestudies/index.htm.

Other documentation is usually produced for CSD by a number of institutions, including UN agencies, NGOs, business associations, etc. Many of them take the form of background reports. CSD is also the occasion for such institutions to disseminate their work and network through events organized during CSD such as [learning centers](#), [side events](#), or [partnership fairs](#).

Annex 1: Side events, learning centers and partnership fairs**Side Events**

Side events can be organized on the margins of the CSD sessions. Organizations must apply to be included in the list of official side events at the CSD. Preference is given to those side event applications whose topics are aligned with the main thrust of the agenda of CSD. In order to ensure that as many organizations can be involved as possible, side event proposals should involve several organizing partners. Preference will be given to events that are organized jointly by non-governmental, governmental, and inter-governmental partners.

Partnership Fair

The Partnerships Fair is part of the official Programme of Activities for CSD. The Fair is organized to provide registered “Partnerships for Sustainable Development” with the opportunity to showcase progress, network, identify partners, create synergies between complementary initiatives and find opportunities for replicability and scaling up. A small number of information desks will be available upon request to CSD registered partnerships. Partnership representatives will be able to display and distribute information related to their partnership and be available to discuss their work with CSD delegates.

Learning Center

The Learning Centre is part of the official programme of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and runs parallel to the CSD plenary sessions. Its purpose is to provide teaching and training at a practical level on topics of relevance to the specific themes being considered by the CSD, as well as selective cross-cutting themes of sustainable development. All participants in CSD sessions are welcome to attend the courses, which are offered in three-hour sessions during regular meetings hours in the United Nations conference area. Course instructors drawn from a variety of institutions use a wide range of instructional tools and approaches. Applications to deliver Learning Center courses are accepted 3 months prior to the CSD session.

For further information, visit the website of the Division for Sustainable Development at:
<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/>

Annex 2: Major Groups and CSD

Since the creation of the CSD in 1992, [major groups](#) (MG) have been given important roles to play as partners in sustainable development. The CSD meetings have provided innovative spaces for the participation of non-governmental actors with the overall purpose of informing the Commission's decision-making processes.

Major groups continue to infuse the CSD with new ideas, information and present challenges that enrich the inter-governmental debate. Major groups participate in interactive dialogues, develop coordinated statements through thematic caucus groups, and lobby for particular initiatives that they feel should be supported. They also contribute significantly to [partnerships for sustainable development](#) and related activities.

The following sectors are used to identify Major Groups at CSD:

Business & Industry

- Children & Youth
- Farmers
- Indigenous Peoples
- Local Authorities
- NGOs
- Scientific & Technological Community
- Women
- Workers & Trade Unions

Participation by non-governmental actors in the CSD is subject to the [rules of participation of the UN Economic and Social Council](#).

For more information, visit the website of the Division for Sustainable Development at: http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd_aofw_mg/mg_index.shtml.

Annex 3: CSD Multi-year programme of work

2004/2005 to 2016/2017: Seven Two-Year Cycles

At its eleventh session, the Commission on Sustainable Development decided that its multi-year programme of work beyond 2003 would be organized on the basis of seven two-year cycles, with each cycle focusing on selected thematic clusters of issues, as set out in the table below.

Thematic Clusters of Each Cycle

In each cycle, the thematic clusters of issues will be addressed in an integrated manner, taking into account economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The Commission agreed that the implementation process should cover all these issues equally and noted that the selection of some issues for a given cycle did not diminish the importance of the commitments undertaken with respect to the issues to be considered in future cycles.

The Commission further agreed that means of implementation should be addressed in every cycle and for every relevant issue, action and commitment. Linkages to other cross-cutting issues are also to be addressed in every cycle, as shown below.

Cycle	Thematic cluster	Cross-cutting issues
2004/2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Sanitation • Human Settlements 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2006/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy for Sustainable Development • Industrial Development • Air Pollution/Atmosp here • Climate Change 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2008/2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Rural Development • Land • Drought • Desertification • Africa 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2010/2011*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport • Chemicals • Waste Management 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mining • A Ten Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns 	world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2012/2013*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forests • Biodiversity • Biotechnology • Tourism • Mountains 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2014/2015*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oceans and Seas • Marine Resources • Small Island Developing States • Disaster Management and Vulnerability 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2016/2017	Overall appraisal of implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme of Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation	
