



Distr.: General
10 February 2008



Original: English

International Conference on Chemicals Management

Second session

Geneva, 11–15 May 2009

Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Implementation of the Strategic Approach to
International Chemicals Management**

Regional meetings on the Strategic Approach, 2006-2008

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its first session, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 4 to 6 February 2006, the International Conference on Chemicals Management recommended in its resolution I/1 that intersessional work should be promoted through, among other things, holding regional meetings. The Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach states in paragraph 26 that “it will be essential that implementation of the Strategic Approach continue effectively between sessions of the Conference, building on its open, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral methods”. The Strategy recognizes that regional meetings played a significant role in the development of the Strategic Approach, and that it will be important to build on this commitment and expertise, taking into account the needs of developing countries, in particular the least developed among them, countries with economies in transition and developed countries. The Strategy envisages that regional meetings will facilitate input on Strategic Approach activities, preparation for future meetings of the Conference and exchange of regional expertise and exchange of information. Functions of the regional meeting anticipated by the Strategy are to review progress on implementation of the Strategic Approach within the regions; to provide guidance on implementation to all stakeholders at a regional level; and to enable technical and strategic discussions and exchange of information to take place.
2. During the first intersessional period, the following regional meetings on the Strategic Approach were organized:
 - (a) First African meeting, Cairo, 11–14 September 2006 (report: SAICM/RM/Afr.1/6);
 - (b) First meeting of European Union and JUSSCANNZ¹ countries, Barcelona, Spain, 20–22 November 2006 (report: SAICM/RM/EUJ.1/5);

* SAICM/ICCM.2/1.

¹ The core members of the “JUSSCANNZ” group are the Governments of Japan, the United States, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, Norway and New Zealand.

(c) First Central and Eastern European meeting, Riga, 4–6 December 2006 (report: SAICM/RM/CEE.1/3);

(d) First Asian and Pacific meeting, Bangkok, 21–23 May 2007 (report: SAICM/RM/AP.1/3);

(e) Second European Union-JUSSCANNZ meeting, Paris, 12 June 2007 (report: SAICM/RM/EUJ.2);

(f) Third European Union-JUSSCANNZ meeting, Paris, 12 February 2008 (report: SAICM/RM/EUJ.3/6);

(g) First Latin American and Caribbean meeting, Panama City, 14–16 February 2008 (report: SAICM/RM/LAC.1/5);

(h) Second African meeting, Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, 16 and 17 July 2008 (report: SAICM/RM/Afr.2/9);

(i) Second Central and Eastern European meeting, Bucharest, 8 and 9 September 2008 (report: SAICM/RM/CEE.2/9).

3. In addition, Arab countries met in Cairo on 1 and 2 April 2007 and a workshop was organized for Pacific island countries in Apia on 8 and 9 November 2007. The African core group met in Cairo from 13 to 15 June 2006 and on 10 September 2006, and again in Dar es Salaam on 13 July 2008. The Latin American and Caribbean regional coordinating committee met in Port of Spain from 11 to 13 June 2008. A Latin American and Caribbean regional consultation on the Strategic Approach and current chemicals issues was held in Viña del Mar, Chile, from 17 to 19 December 2008. A workshop for Caribbean countries is scheduled for 10 to 13 March 2009 in Bridgetown.

4. The regional meetings during this first intersessional period have focused on agreeing upon arrangements for regional coordination, establishing regional priorities and plans for Strategic Approach implementation and preparing for the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management. All regions except the Western European and others group (which met as European Union and JUSSCANNZ countries) adopted terms of reference for their regional focal points and representatives on the Quick Start Programme Executive Board. In the case of Africa, Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, regional coordination committees were established. Africa adopted a regional action plan, while Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean made first steps in that regard. Africa and Central and Eastern Europe adopted regional positions on Strategic Approach financial considerations and agreed upon lists of priorities for regional action, for example through Quick Start Programme projects. Africa also agreed upon a series of other regional positions in relation to matters such as modalities for reporting on Strategic Approach implementation and emerging issues. All regions gave preliminary consideration to issues requiring the attention of the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its second session, including the development of rules of procedure.

5. The Secretariat would like to express its appreciation to the following Governments and organizations whose financial and in kind contributions made the regional meetings possible: the Governments of Australia, Barbados, Chile, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Norway, Panama, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America; the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, the League of Arab States, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Organization of American States, the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization. The Secretariat would also like to acknowledge the leadership of the Strategic Approach regional focal points in organizing and ensuring the success of the regional meetings.

6. A feature of the more recent regional meetings, commencing with the Asian and Pacific regional meeting in May 2007, was that they were scheduled back-to-back with technical workshops and consultations on current policy issues relating to, for example, mercury and the Stockholm Convention. These associated events included a series of regional workshops on strengthening chemicals management infrastructures, which were organized by the United Nations Environment Programme under the sponsorship of the Government of Sweden. In addition, numerous side events were organized during the regional meetings by organizations such as the Basel Convention regional coordinating

centre for Africa, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the World Health Organization and members of the International POPs Elimination Network. The combination of the regional meetings with workshops, policy consultations and side events was designed to maximize the benefits from the resources invested in the regional meetings.

7. The reports of the regional meetings listed in paragraph 2 above are available on the Strategic Approach website, www.saicm.org.
