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**International Conference on Chemicals Management**

**Third session**

Nairobi, 17–21 September 2012

Agenda item 4 (c)

**Implementation of the Strategic Approach to International  
Chemicals Management: Strengthening of national  
chemicals management capacities**

**Information note on the high-level dialogue**

**Note by the secretariat**

1. The International Conference on Chemicals Management provides a high-level international forum for multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral discussion and exchange of experience on chemicals management issues. In line with this function, an interactive high-level dialogue will be held during the Conference as part of agenda item 4(c): Strengthening of national chemicals management capacities, on Thursday, 20 September 2012.
2. The secretariat has the honour to circulate, for the information of participants, in the annex to the present note an information note on the high-level dialogue.
3. The information is presented as submitted and has not formally been edited.

## Annex

### High-Level Dialogue – Information Note

#### A. Introduction and objective of the High-level Dialogue

##### Introduction

1. The sound management of chemicals was once again recognized as crucial for the protection of human health and the environment by Heads of State, Governments and high-level representatives having met at Rio de Janeiro for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held on 20-22 June 2012. The outcome document entitled, *The future we want*, further recognizes that growing global production and use of chemicals and prevalence in the environment and calls for effective implementation and strengthening of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management as part of a robust, coherent, effective and efficient system for the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle, including to respond to emerging challenges.
2. By reaffirming their commitment to achieve the 2020 goal as set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and calling for the effective implementation and strengthening of the Strategic Approach, Heads of State, Governments and high-level representatives have provided a high-level policy direction for the third session of the Conference.
3. With only eight years remaining to reach the 2020 goal, there is an increased sense of urgency for concrete collaborative actions to further increase efforts towards achieving the sound management of chemicals. This was also highlighted by other events in the run up to Rio+20, such as at the dialogue on sound chemicals management convened during the Stockholm +40 celebrations.
4. The work recently completed by the United Nations Environment Programme on the Global Chemicals Outlook and the Costs of Inaction further stresses the increase of chemicals production and consumption, the shift from highly industrialized to developing countries, and the economic implications of this increase under unsound chemicals management. The Global Chemical Outlook identifies a number of approaches to mitigate the risks of unsound chemicals management while enjoying the benefits that chemicals bring to our daily lives.
5. The third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management therefore presents an ideal forum to discuss the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20), and the recommendations of the Global Chemicals Outlook.

##### Objective of the High-level dialogue

6. The International Conference on Chemicals Management provides a high-level international forum for multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral discussion and exchange of experience on chemicals management issues. In line with this function, an interactive high-level dialogue will be held during the Conference as part of agenda item 4(c): Strengthening of national chemicals management capacities, on Thursday, 20 September 2012.
7. The objective of the high-level dialogue is to provide a platform for high-level interaction between Strategic Approach stakeholders on strengthening the Strategic Approach for its more effective implementation towards the 2020 goal and identify further guidance for its achievement.

## **B. Organization of High-level Dialogue**

8. The high-level dialogue will begin with a panel discussion of eight high-level Strategic Approach stakeholders to help identify issues for an interactive dialogue with the plenary and set the stage for additional interventions.
9. The panel discussion will be composed of ministers and other high-level representatives from industry, civil society and from the IOMC organizations.
10. The high-level panel is planned to take place during the morning session of Thursday, 20 September in the main conference room of the conference, immediately following any morning announcements and reporting as relevant and appropriate by co-chairs of small groups. The Chair of the Conference will moderate the panel
11. The session is expected to proceed along the following outline:
  - i) The Chair will make a short introduction.
  - ii) Panel members will be asked by the Chair to make short statements (3 min maximum) to reflect on the status of SAICM implementation both retrospectively and prospectively, with the latter specifically focusing on advancing the 2020 goal.
  - iii) Following a round of dialogue amongst the panellists and Chair, the Chair will open the floor to statements/questions from the plenary.
  - iv) The Chair will summarize and bring the panel to conclusion with a recommendation for the Conference.

## **C. Expected outcomes**

12. Consideration of strengthening the Strategic Approach should be prospective and retrospective, taking into account accomplishments and lessons learned as well as the importance of the regional dimension and multistakeholder nature of the Strategic Approach. The high-level dialogue should contribute to a possible resolution which will provide overall orientation and guidance on areas of focus, including some concrete elements, leading up to the 2020 goal.