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**International Conference on Chemicals Management**

**Fourth session**

Geneva, 28 September–2 October 2015

Item 2 of the provisional agenda\*

**Organizational matters**

## **Scenario note for the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management**

### **Note by the President**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The present scenario note, which I have prepared in consultation with the Bureau of the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, sets out the plan and general expectations for the fourth session of the Conference.
2. The purpose of the present note is to assist Strategic Approach stakeholders in preparing for the session in such a way as to enable us to reach a successful conclusion, with the necessary work completed in a timely manner. Further guidance for the session can be found in the annotations to the provisional agenda (SAICM/ICCM.4/1/Add.1).
3. The fourth session of the Conference marks the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Strategic Approach in 2006 and consequently represents a crucial milestone in international efforts to take action on the sound management of chemicals and waste towards 2020 and beyond. The session will be an interactive and multi-stakeholder platform for the exchange of experience, including a high-level segment.
4. The deadline for the goal of the Strategic Approach of ensuring, by 2020, that chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize adverse impacts on the environment and human health, first agreed upon at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, is only five years away. It is therefore of fundamental importance that we take strategic decisions, programming and prioritizing as necessary. The actions and decisions that we take at this pivotal session will have a far-reaching effect on our success in meeting our long-standing and critical goals for 2020. The Overarching Policy Strategy specifies that the fifth and final session of the Conference is to be held in 2020, unless otherwise decided by the Conference.
5. At its second meeting, held in Geneva from 15 to 17 December 2014, the Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference on Chemicals Management was able to make good progress on the matters before it for consideration and, as a result, we are well positioned to act on a number of key issues at the fourth session of the Conference.
6. The overall orientation and guidance towards facilitating the achievement of the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management (see SAICM/ICCM.4/6) is expected to be the strategic policy outcome of the fourth session of the Conference, setting the stage for action by all Strategic Approach stakeholders to 2020.

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\* SAICM/ICCM.4/1

7. Participants at the United Nations summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda, to be held in New York from 25 to 27 September 2015, are expected to agree on a new global development agenda. The International Conference on Chemicals Management should be ready and willing to serve this development agenda through the multisectoral and multi-stakeholder platform of the Strategic Approach, emphasizing that the sound management of chemicals and waste is an essential and cross-cutting element of sustainable development and of great relevance to the sustainable development agenda.
8. In addition, the Conference is expected to review implementation aspects of emerging policy issues and other issues of concern, discuss the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, review the proposed activities and approve the budget of the secretariat as well as decide on the date for the final closure of the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund.
9. I would also like to bring to your attention that, at its fourth session, the Conference will be renewing its leadership by electing new officers to serve as members of the Bureau of the Conference for the fifth session together with regional representatives to serve as members of the Quick Start Programme Executive Board until the fifth session or until the end of the Quick Start Programme should it end prior to the fifth session. In addition, regional focal points and sectoral representatives are to be nominated at the fourth session. Representatives should arrive at the session prepared to nominate such officers for endorsement by the Conference by the end of the week.
10. The present scenario note provides guidance on how the Conference at its fourth session can help to deliver the vision for the future as described in the Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management in 2006 and reaffirmed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012. I hope that this scenario note will assist stakeholders to set the stage for achieving significant progress towards the 2020 goal.

## **II. Timing and organization of the fourth session**

11. The fourth session will open at 3 p.m. on Monday, 28 September 2015, and will close on Friday, 2 October 2015, by 6 p.m. Since the fourth session will take place over four and a half days, it is critical for delegates to remain focused in the time available. There will be an opportunity for regional and sectoral group meetings on Monday, 28 September, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. as well as daily from Tuesday, 29 September, to Friday, 2 October, from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.
12. On Thursday, 1 October, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., and Friday, 2 October, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., a high-level segment will be held, the aim of which is to inspire broader participation and engagement in the Strategic Approach and emphasize the urgency of acting now for environmental, health and economic reasons. The high-level segment will provide a platform for inspiring wider stakeholder engagement and renewed commitment to implement the Strategic Approach, including discussions on the linkages between the Strategic Approach and the proposed sustainable development goals and opportunities arising from their implementation.
13. The high-level segment will begin on Thursday afternoon with two keynote speeches addressing the sound management of chemicals from an industry and a sustainable development and health perspective, followed by three interactive panel dialogues, run in parallel. The themes of the three interactive panel dialogues are: (a) making chemicals management more efficient through collaboration between policy sectors; (b) the benefits of the multi-stakeholder approach of the Strategic Approach for the implementation of the sustainable development goals; and (c) partnerships between different stakeholders are key to success. On Friday morning the overall high-level panel dialogue will take place in plenary, providing an opportunity for delegations to participate in the interactive discussions. The dialogue will be aimed at confirming the commitment of Strategic Approach stakeholders to achieving the 2020 goal while recognizing the need to address the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.
14. Ministers, heads of agencies and organizations, chief executive officers, high-level heads of delegation, participants from major groups and stakeholders are invited to exchange views and experiences on chemical management issues and on the most effective means of using the Strategic Approach platform towards the achievement of the 2020 goal.
15. The substantive work of the fourth session is expected to have concluded by the time the high-level segment starts on Thursday afternoon.

16. A series of side events based on the topics covered in the agenda for the session have been organized. I encourage you, where possible, to participate in these side events for further in-depth information on the key issues before the Conference and other matters relevant to the achievement of the 2020 goal. There will also be an exhibition area.

17. The work of the Conference will be conducted in plenary meetings with detailed discussions and negotiations taking place in smaller groups that will be established if so decided by the Conference. Representatives who are interested in a particular agenda item for which the President deems it necessary to establish a smaller group, as opposed to a formal contact group, are encouraged to participate in the smaller groups, addressing the issues raised with a view to reaching consensus. Draft decisions approved by participants in the smaller groups will be presented to the Conference in plenary meeting for any further clarifications and possible adoption. The requirements for smaller groups and arrangements for their meetings will be based on a plan developed in consultation with the Bureau, but will ultimately be determined on a running basis during the session. All efforts will be made to ensure that no more than two smaller groups meet at the same time.

### **III. Issues of key importance at the fourth session**

#### **A. Overall orientation and guidance for achieving the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management**

18. The overall orientation and guidance towards facilitating the achievement of the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management (see SAICM/ICCM.4/6) has been developed by the secretariat with the guidance of the Bureau, as requested by the Conference at its third session. It has been developed on the basis of information provided through stakeholder consultation processes, regional meetings, the second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group and other sources.

19. The aim of the overall orientation and guidance is to provide direction and identify approaches for all Strategic Approach stakeholders towards the achievement of the overall objective by 2020, including some concrete elements required at the national level to achieve sound chemicals management to support the implementation of the Overarching Policy Strategy. These include a set of 11 basic elements which have been recognized as critical at the national and regional levels to the attainment of sound chemicals management.

20. Six core activity areas are identified in the overall orientation and guidance for implementing the objectives set out in the Overarching Policy Strategy towards the achievement of the overall 2020 goal:

- (a) Enhancing the responsibility of stakeholders: promoting and reinforcing commitment and multisectoral engagement;
- (b) Establishing and strengthening national legislative and regulatory frameworks for chemicals and waste: improving capacity to address the basic elements of the sound management of chemicals and waste and encouraging regional cooperation;
- (c) Mainstreaming the sound management of chemicals and waste in the sustainable development agenda: advancing risk reduction and enhancing the link between the sound management of chemicals and waste and health, labour, social and economic development planning, processes and budgets;
- (d) Increasing risk reduction and information-sharing efforts on emerging policy issues: continuing to promote actions on issues not currently addressed in existing agreements, complementing initiatives taken by other bodies;
- (e) Promoting information access: increasing the accessibility of relevant information and making it understandable for all levels of society;
- (f) Assessing progress towards the 2020 goal of minimizing the adverse effects of chemicals on human health and the environment: identifying achievements, understanding the gaps in implementation and prioritizing actions for achievement by 2020.

21. The Bureau and I have concluded, in line with the Open-ended Working Group at its second meeting, that it would not be an appropriate use of the time available at the fourth session to negotiate the text of the overall orientation and guidance. Following the introduction of the overall orientation and guidance by the secretariat, we encourage representatives to consider and adopt a related resolution, to which the overall orientation and guidance will be annexed, to operationalize and

strengthen the overall orientation and guidance and support the implementation of the Strategic Approach towards the 2020 goal.

## **B. Emerging policy issues and other issues of concern**

22. The Conference will consider three proposals:

(a) A proposal for a new emerging policy issue on environmentally persistent pharmaceutical pollutants prepared by the Governments of Peru and Uruguay together with the International Society of Doctors for the Environment (see SAICM/ICCM.4/7 and SAICM/ICCM.4/INF/15);

(b) As requested by the Conference at its third session, a proposal for a voluntary international programme for information on chemicals in products along the supply chain and throughout their life cycles with the aim of facilitating and guiding the exchange and availability of, and access to, relevant information on chemicals in products among all stakeholder groups by building on chemicals in products activities, results and recommendations to date (SAICM/ICCM.4/10);

(c) As requested by the Open-ended Working Group, a proposal on the next steps for highly hazardous pesticides as an issue of concern developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Health Organization (WHO) (SAICM/ICCM.4/8 and SAICM/ICCM.4/INF/25).

23. In terms of the existing policy issues and other issues of concern, increased risk reduction and sharing of knowledge and information on emerging policy issues is one of the core activity areas proposed in the overall orientation and guidance. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to consider workplans for the period leading up to 2020 that have been developed by the emerging policy issue lead organizations and may wish to propose activities to enhance cooperative and collaborative actions for inclusion in the possible resolution aimed at operationalizing the overall orientation and guidance. In addition, stakeholders will review and consider elements of the draft resolution on nanotechnology and manufactured nanomaterials that was developed by the Open-ended Working Group at its second meeting.

## **C. Sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020**

24. The continued relevance of the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 is recognized, including by the United Nations Environment Assembly in its resolution 1/5 on chemicals and waste. The Conference will have before it a note by the secretariat on the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (SAICM/ICCM.4/13), including reference to the outcome document of the country-led consultative process on enhancing cooperation and coordination within the chemicals and waste cluster entitled “Strengthening the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long term.”

25. At its second meeting, the Open-ended Working Group highlighted the contribution that the Strategic Approach has made, and continues to make, to the sound management of chemicals and waste, including its contribution towards the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, and expressed its readiness and willingness to make available its multisectoral and multi-stakeholder platform to that end, as appropriate.

26. The Conference may wish to consider the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, and its linkages with the post-2015 development agenda, and adopt a resolution, as appropriate, setting out relevant recommendations and follow-up actions.

## **D. Activities of the secretariat and budget**

27. While the Strategic Approach is a voluntary framework, the effective support of the secretariat, particularly in facilitating meetings and intersessional work and promoting information sharing among stakeholders, is vital to the achievement of our collective efforts. In this regard, the Conference will be asked to review and approve the proposed indicative budget and staffing structure of the secretariat for the coming intersessional period. The Conference will need to consider the budgetary implications of action proposed in the overall orientation and guidance.

#### **IV. Desired outcomes of the fourth session**

28. Having established how we may wish to work during the fourth session, I would like to conclude by considering what we might hope to accomplish by the end of the session. I expect that we will have fully discussed all the items on the agenda in a comprehensive manner; agreed upon the overall orientation and guidance for achieving the 2020 goal and adopted any resolutions required to implement it; agreed on collaborative actions and commitments for achieving the 2020 goal and discussed a process that may develop recommendations and follow-up actions for addressing the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020; welcomed the post-2015 development agenda and its sustainable development goals and discussed the Strategic Approach contribution to their implementation; considered the emerging policy issues and other issues of concern and adopted related resolutions as appropriate; reached agreement on the final closure of the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund; and reached agreement on the budget and staffing structure of the secretariat. More importantly, I expect that, through our discussions, we will have reached consensus on matters that need to be addressed in order to strengthen this voluntary framework and bring us closer to the achievement of the 2020 goal.

29. Commitment, cooperation, awareness and ownership among all stakeholders will be key to achieving the future we want for the sound management of chemicals. In conclusion, I urge all participants to prepare themselves to conduct our work in such a spirit. I very much look forward to working with you all at the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management.

Richard Lesiyampe  
President of the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fourth session

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