

## **Co-chairs' summary of the discussions during the first meeting in the intersessional process to consider the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020**

*As an output of the first meeting in the intersessional process to consider the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, the co-chairs of the meeting prepared the present summary, which sets out their views of the contributions of the participants. The summary incorporates factual additions and clarifications received from participants during the initial comment period following the meeting.*

*Based on the co-chairs' summary a further elaborated document will be prepared over the course of 2017 to support the preparations for and discussions at the second meeting in the intersessional process. All Strategic Approach stakeholders will have the opportunity, on several occasions, to provide input for that document through an open and transparent online consultative process.*

*The co-chairs', with the support of the Strategic Approach secretariat, will consolidate the input received as part of the process for the development of the document.*

### **Call for input**

All Strategic Approach stakeholders are invited and encouraged to submit input and suggestions on areas and issues that they feel are not sufficiently covered in the co-chairs' summary.

The deadline for input is 7 July 2017. Input should be sent directly to the Strategic Approach secretariat at [saicm.chemicals@unep.org](mailto:saicm.chemicals@unep.org).

## **Introduction**

At its fourth session the International Conference on Chemicals Management, through its resolution IV/4, launched an intersessional process for providing recommendations, for consideration at its fifth session, on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

Resolution IV/4 specifies that the work of the intersessional process is to be informed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, resolution 1/5 of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme and the outcome document from the first session of the Environment Assembly entitled "Strengthening the sound management of chemicals and wastes in the long term".

The present summary sets out the co-chairs' views of the contributions of the participants at the first meeting in the intersessional process on the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, which was held in Brasilia from 7 to 9 February 2017. The summary should be read in conjunction with the official report of the meeting.

While the co-chairs' summary is not intended to present a consensus view, in some areas there was a common understanding. The summary, however, is solely the product of the co-chairs and was not negotiated.

It is important to note that the discussions at the first meeting in the intersessional process and the Co-Chairs' summary of the meeting are not intended to limit any additional ideas and views to be considered in further discussions on the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

The Co-Chairs' summary will be submitted to all Strategic Approach stakeholders for further input and comments so that it may further inform the discussions during the intersessional process on the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

## Why a future platform for sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020?

The present section describes why a future platform for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 is being considered. Among other things, that subject encompasses the vision for such a future platform.

### Vision

- A future platform for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 should be built on the vision set out in resolution 1/5 of the United Nations Environment Assembly and referred to in resolution IV/4 of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, namely, “to achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and of hazardous wastes in ways that lead to the prevention or minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, as an essential contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development.”<sup>1</sup>
- It is essential to enhance political awareness and commitment, at the highest levels, in order to achieve this vision.
- Furthermore, the following elements may be considered:
  - The vision should take into account the Strategic Approach Overall Policy Strategy and the Overall Orientation and Guidance for achieving the 2020 goal of sound management of chemicals, including the 11 basic elements
  - All stakeholders need to prioritize efforts to ensure that the 11 basic elements of the sound management of chemicals, as set out in the Overall Orientation and Guidance, exist in all countries.
  - The vision may be timeless (not limited to 2030) and aspirational and linked to measurable objectives and practical targeted actions, including qualitative and quantitative elements.
  - The vision should take into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its entirety and in particular goals 3, 6 and 12, recognizing that the sound management of chemicals and waste is an essential prerequisite for sustainable development while respecting the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The greatest opportunities to foster change and to have impact.
  - The vision should be complementary to and foster coordination with the work of other multilateral environmental agreements or frameworks, whether legally binding or voluntary, while avoiding duplication and overlap and should promote policy coherence at all relevant levels.
  - Momentum should build upon strengthening the linkages of chemicals to policy areas of high priority such as climate change and gender, among others.

## What could a future platform for sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 cover?

The present section describes the possible scope of a future platform for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, i.e., what it could cover. Making progress on the scope of the future platform is a priority for the second meeting of the intersessional process.

In considering scope, the following elements may be considered:

### Scope

- The scope should consider the 11 basic elements and 6 core activity areas set out in the Overall Orientation and Guidance, as well as the World Health Organization’s health sector roadmap, as a practical way to reflect on scope beyond 2020. A roadmap for chemicals and waste could be considered.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme on the work of its first session (A/69/25), annex I, resolution 1/5, para. 7.

- The scope should include and address the elements on strengthening the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long-term incorporated in Environment Assembly resolution 1/5.
- The scope of a platform for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 could be broader than the current Strategic Approach, including waste, sectors and prevention.
- The basics of chemicals and waste management systems must remain a priority in those countries - largely in the developing world - that still face basic regulatory challenges, while the question of how to be responsive to emerging issues of concern must also be considered.
- There are several Sustainable Development Goals to which clear connections can be made and for which measurable objectives and milestones and supplementary indicators could be developed in support of the 2030 Agenda.
- At the global, regional and national levels, scope could take into consideration, inter alia, linkages to prevention policies; new emerging issues; climate change; a broadened health agenda; institutional strengthening; the life cycle approach; the potential contribution of sustainable chemistry; sustainability; gender; and vulnerable populations, in particular indigenous peoples, women, children and, through them, future generations.
- Collaborative actions should be fostered on new and emerging issues, in particular issues not currently covered under existing policy frameworks and agreements.
- The Aichi Biodiversity Targets were referred to as a potential model approach.
- Work should be based on relevant scientific data and information and consider key elements of chemicals management systems.
- At the meeting there was no discussion regarding what type of waste issues should be considered in the beyond 2020 context.

### **How could the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 be realized?**

The present section describes how a future platform for the sound management of chemicals and waste could be realized. It encompasses governance, new and emerging issues, the science-policy interface, financing, sustainable and green chemistry and national implementation.

The how will be informed by the independent evaluation of the Strategic Approach and should focus on gaps in reaching the 2020 goal.

Drawing on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, linkages should be made to other agendas such as biodiversity, oceans and climate change, food and agriculture, health, gender and labour.

In considering the how, the following elements should be taken into account:

#### **Governance**

- The voluntary, flexible, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach that has been integral to the nature of the Strategic Approach should continue. Voluntary standards, common objectives of protection and codes of practice, to which relevant stakeholders may voluntarily commit for some issues, should also be considered.
- Some participants advocated the exploration of more elements, as well as potential elements, that would be legally binding. Potential legally binding elements could also be explored.
- Functionally, the design should promote broader participation in general and encourage wider sectoral participation at all levels (national, regional and global), along with a targeted approach, as an essential means of promoting impact, involvement, ownership and commitment.
- There is a need to increase industry engagement by, for example, promoting partnership approaches in the future platform and by including the waste and downstream sectors.
- Partnerships should focus on public needs and be in line with agreed principles and values. They should be transparent and accountable; ensure multi-stakeholder involvement; provide added value; and complement rather than substitute commitments made by Governments.

- The future platform needs to link sectors and promote synergies, fill gaps and coordinate with decision-making bodies of the participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) and other relevant agencies and organizations. This could include augmenting the current stakeholder-based arrangements for the International Conference on Chemicals Management (i.e. Governments, non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations) so that sectors (e.g. agriculture, environment, health and labour) can play a more formal role. There are opportunities to link sectors in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Measuring progress, including through objectives and milestones, and supplementary indicators, in addition to the Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators, as well as related plans of action, including at the national level, should be considered. The 11 basic elements and six core activity areas set out in the Overall Orientation and Guidance are a useful starting point.
- Measurable objectives, as noted in paragraph 10 of resolution IV/4, should be considered, including with regard to means of implementation in order to ensure effectiveness.
- Clear milestones would support the capacity to evaluate progress and would ensure transparency.

#### **New and emerging issues/Issues of concern**

- Ensure an information and knowledge base on chemicals and waste, including early warning systems, that can inform work on new and emerging issues.
- Focus on scientific and technical capacity-building facing new and emerging issues that require global action on specific chemicals and groups of chemicals, taking into account various needs at the regional level.
- Maintain the basics of chemicals management systems as a priority in those countries - largely in the developing world - that still face basic regulatory challenges, while also considering how to be responsive to issues of concern.
- Build on existing efforts by stakeholders and sectors and focus on prevention and minimization.
- Develop a concept for a process of nomination, prioritization and evaluation that is robust and relevant. Future activities on emerging issues should be focused where there is added value.
- Monitor already identified emerging issues.
- Reflection on and consider the implementation of a life cycle approach.
- Give priority to the identification of hazardous chemicals in products and throughout their life cycles.
- Actions should be categorized to facilitate work planning, for example regarding:
  - Areas where scientific information exists and there is a need to increase the knowledge base.
  - New emerging issues about which there is a need to promote understanding and awareness.
  - Development of national or regional chemicals and waste management systems, including the refinement of existing systems.
  - Issues that need global or coordinated action.

#### **Science-policy interface**

- Explore how to strengthen the link between science, public health and policy in global chemicals and waste governance.
- Recognize the existing mechanisms for provision of science advice on chemicals and waste by intergovernmental and international bodies such as UNEP, WHO and the chemicals and wastes conventions secretariats.

- Consider the social interface and the full range of scientific and public health disciplines.
- Explore approaches on the use of science to inform policy-making and action, including existing mechanisms in other clusters such as climate change and biodiversity.
- There were also comments regarding the need to focus on scientific capacity-building and caution about diverting resources from implementation.

#### **Financing**

- The integrated approach to financing of the sound management of chemicals and waste is composed of mainstreaming, enhanced industry involvement and dedicated external financing (UNEP/GC 27/12 and resolution 1/5). The implementation of the integrated approach is essential for financing the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long term.
- Provide sustainable, adequate, comprehensive and predictable financing in the long term with an emphasis on the role of developed countries.
- A broader range of contributions that are predictable, sustainable and adequate should be considered.
- Mainstream in national budgets and sectoral policies.
- Provide effective capacity-building in relevant areas and focus on the importance of building and strengthening institutional capacity and the need to engage industry in solutions.
- Broaden the donor base for the sound management of chemicals and waste, including by exploring untapped resources linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Build on existing funding structures at all levels, including lessons learned from existing funding mechanisms.
- Promote enhanced funding for the sound management of chemicals and waste under the Global Environment Facility trust fund, the Green Climate Fund and others with access for all eligible countries and relevant stakeholders in accordance with applicable rules.

#### **Sustainable and green chemistry**

- There was some debate concerning the definition of sustainable versus green chemistry. There was agreement, however, that there were useful aspects of these concepts that should be followed up at the next intersessional process meeting.

#### **National implementation**

- National action plans were mentioned as a possible tool for addressing the sound management of chemicals and waste, focusing in particular on building in-country capacity for basic chemicals and waste management with the support of international cooperation.
- Additional elements such as institutional strengthening and information sharing were highlighted for making progress at the national level.

#### **Next steps following the current stakeholder comment period**

1. From July to September 2017, the co-chairs will further develop the work, incorporating the input received.
2. The next document will be posted on the Strategic Approach website for further stakeholder comment during October and November 2017.
3. The co-chairs will produce a final document in December 2017 that will be made available for discussion during regional meetings held in January and February 2018 in preparation for the second meeting in the intersessional process scheduled for March 2018.