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Strategic Approach
to International
Chemicals Management

English only

**Second meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach
and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020**
Stockholm, Sweden, 13-15 March 2018

Summary perspectives on SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020

1. The secretariat has the honor to provide, in the annex to the present note, the '*Summary perspectives on SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020*' from the sixth SAICM Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Meeting that was held in Panama City, Panama, 29-31 January 2018.
2. The document is presented as received by the secretariat, without formal editing.

Annex

Fifth SAICM Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Meeting Panama City, Panama. 29-31 January 2018

Summary perspectives on SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020

Introduction

This document provides an overview of the Latin American and Caribbean views on the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. It is developed based on the discussion groups that took place at the regional meeting held in Panama City, Panama from 29-31 January 2018.

(I) Vision

In looking for a vision for “Beyond 2020”, participants acknowledged and reaffirmed the “2020 goal” of the sound management of chemicals and waste throughout their life cycle to prevent or minimize adverse effects on human health and the environment.

Additionally, it was suggested to develop a simple, clear, concise and ambitious vision that would have impact on the general population. Examples suggested were: A pollution-free world, a toxic-free world, a future-detoxified and a pollution-free planet. The vision should incorporate the aspect of the right to a healthy environment and the right to human health, and further that the chemicals and waste agenda be internalized with parliamentarians, politicians and decision makers. The vision should not necessarily be limited by the current links to 2030 agenda and should add new issues while maintaining existing emerging policy issues.

(II) Policy principles

The future approach should reaffirm some of the principles from Rio and other core Strategic Approach documents, such as the Dubai Declaration. Some suggested possible principles include:

- Polluter-pays
- Precautionary approach
- Circular economy
- Zero waste
- Substitution/ Access to information replacement and environmentally appropriate alternatives to hazardous substances
- Sustainable consumption and production/integrated life cycle approach
- Extended producer responsibility
- Good governance
- Right to know
- Science-policy interface
- Full participation of women, vulnerable groups, and stakeholders/inclusivity
- Protection of children, workers/inclusivity
- Intergenerational equity
- Agroecology
- Liability and compensation
- Proximity (waste)
- The right to a healthy environment
- Workplace right to know

(III) Priorities, objectives and milestones

Priorities for the Latin America and the Caribbean region

Participants at the meeting noted the following as priority issues:

- Nanotechnology

- Biotechnology
- Lead in paint
- Chemicals in products
- Hazardous substances in electronics
- Plastics
- Highly hazardous pesticides
- Endocrine disruptors
- Environmentally persistent pollutants
- The development of science-based studies to inform political decisions
- Strengthened communication at all levels, including on risks and hazards

Participants further prioritized the establishment of a common goal and simple framework and promoted the development of a generic model with guidelines and a template that could be adapted by individual countries. In addition, demonstrating costs of inaction and benefits of action would be valuable tools for supporting work on chemicals and waste in the region.

While applauding the success of the Quick Start Programme, participants said any similar mechanism in the future should prioritize continuity and sustainable funding. Additionally, SAICM should develop its own mechanism regionally and nationally.

It was recommended that the priorities of SAICM and beyond be installed at national government level.

Objective and milestones

Participants at the meeting suggested that the objectives and milestones reflect those of the Sustainable Development Goals as laid out in Table 1 of document SAICM/IP.2/8 entitled Proposal on objectives in support of the 2030 Agenda and related milestones.

It was also suggested that there be qualitative and quantitative indicators to measure progress.

(IV) Implementation arrangements, governance and financing

Facilitating implementation

- The current multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder relationships should be maintained, thereby ensuring representation from all relevant entities
- Transparent mechanisms for the selection of projects to be implemented including systems for follow-up
- Priority themes in projects such as in management programmes should be institutionalized and included in national action plans

Target governance groups and individuals to enhance implementation.

- Representation must be included from health, labour, agriculture, fisheries, environment and natural resources sectors as well as NGOs, IGOs, local government, communities, industry and academia.
- Interest should be raised in the youth community to impress upon them the importance of knowledge of sound chemicals and waste management, thereby impacting change on future behavior and development processes
- Youth, academia and NGO projects at community level should be integrated
- Industry should implement concrete actions regarding environmental and social responsibility at the sites of their facilities and ensure that those actions meet SAICM priorities

Suggestions for financing.

Participants emphasized that adequate, sustainable and predictable funding was crucial to address chemicals and waste management and that access to funding must be improved pointing to the need for a flexible funding system. Further suggestions for financing include:

- A strengthened financing system such as that used for the Quick Start Programme
- Access to funds based on priorities identified by the country/region
- Designing and implementing economic instruments that apply principles such as the polluter pays, extended responsibility of the producer, development of legislation, and taxation.
- In-country sustainable financing mechanisms such as tariffs
- Greater focus on non-traditional funding sources such as foundations, wealthy individuals or big companies located in the region
- Establishment of a small regional secretariat or task force focused on seeking funding on behalf of the region and from the region, and to process project proposals, perhaps through a selection committee based on SAICM members in the region that will ensure transparency on the selection process
- Establishment of a set mechanism for countries to access funds and where project proposals are signed off by governments
- The creation of a specific fund with mechanism to deal with the issues of chemicals and waste, of the type of the green climate fund

Additionally, participants noted that funding should not be bound by the Special Programme criteria for development aid regarding access to financing on environmental issues in the region. Similarly, funding also needs to take into account the situations in each country, and the fact that national processes can take a long time; overly strict project timelines/deadlines can impede implementation.

(V) High-level political commitment and visibility

At the international level

- The theme for UNEA-4 could be on chemicals and waste, as this will coincide with the final stages of the process to define the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, thus giving high-level visibility to the issue
- SAICM should be promoted at existing regional political forums such as The Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED), which promotes trade and economic development of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the Forum of ministers for the environment for Latin America and the Caribbean
- International forums should serve as a platform to promote the work of SAICM

At the national level

- Promotion of a chemical safety policy
- Sensitization of decision makers – especially when there is a change of government – including through social pressure
- Including SAICM commitments in the development plans of each country
- Establishment of a national chemicals' safety commission with the participation of different stakeholders

- Comprehensive management of chemicals in an inter-institutional manner
- Involvement of national planning actors/entities
- Awareness programmes for government officials
- Engagement with communities directly impacted by pollution/contamination encouraging grass-roots mobilization to place pressure on high-level decision makers
- Development of a SAICM guide / manual for parliamentarians and decision makers that presents the chemicals and waste management agenda and demonstrates the benefits on human health and the environment
- Development of instruments that serve as a guide to countries to strengthen political commitment, to specify a National Policy on Chemicals and Waste and a that has a budget allocated for it

Generally

- Formalization of a financial mechanism
- Strengthening of regional structures and creating a network of regional technology
- Identifying a regional champion to drive the process of chemicals and waste management
- Communication campaigns on the topics of chemicals, branding of chemicals and waste, creating a communication and visibility strategy for chemicals and waste and showing the benefits on human health and the environment.
- Facilitating the empowerment of civil society on the issues of chemicals and waste
- Ensuring that the SAICM Clearing House Mechanism, or a similar process that succeeds it after 2020, is operational
- Development of tools or toolkits to determine/demonstrate the chronic effects of chemical substances, which is difficult to establish, and that such research is sustainable

Links with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- Development of a new national chemicals and waste action plan that takes into account Agenda 2030 and multilateral environmental agreements
- Integration of the chemicals and waste agenda with the sustainable development goals in national plans, thereby identifying the necessary resources which can be dedicated to addressing these issues
- Creating linkages between the topics attracting high political attention, ‘hot topics’ such as climate change and disaster risk reduction
- Collate evidence linking health and disaster issues with chemicals and waste management

(VI) Reflections on the success of SAICM

The success and effectiveness of SAICM.

Reflecting on the success of SAICM, participants highlighted the benefit of having a global work plan, which has provided an overview of what needed to be done. In addition, having a specific financing mechanism, such as for the Quick Start Programme, had facilitated implementation. One of the driving elements of SAICM was the Quick Start Programme, which was open not only to governments but also to NGOs. SAICM had been instrumental in increasing access to information and in obtaining technical support. The benefits of shared information and lessons learned have led to improved implementation.

Through SAICM, national chemicals’ management profiles had been developed. In addition, awareness of chemicals and waste issues has been raised across agencies, encouraging multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder cooperation and has promoted collaboration among stakeholders regionally and globally. SAICM has also facilitated the development of chemicals and waste management agenda across different

interest areas including the implementation of programmes to strengthen legislation. There has been a generation of areas of coordination within countries for the management of chemical substances, for example, arrangements such as a national commission of chemical substances, or the gathering of SAICM stakeholders to facilitate implementation at the national level.

As a result of work undertaken in SAICM, systems have been developed to address emerging issues. Further, there has been support for capacity building to address identified priority areas although some gaps still remain.

The SAICM integrated and multisectoral approach, as well as the voluntary approach thereof has been a success.

Improving chemicals and waste management in the future.

It was emphasized that chemicals and waste management in the future can only be ensured through commitment at the highest level. To improve chemicals and waste management the visibility of the related issues needs to be raised.

Any future system should maintain a multi-stakeholder approach, should implement projects at the regional and sub-regional level, and should develop a roadmap with measurable goals and targets. Participants emphasized the importance of the sustainability of projects and looking beyond them to focus on implementation of the lessons and concepts learned. It was suggested to improve the institutional arrangements for the implementation of SAICM not only at regional level; for that it is necessary to have technical centres for environment and health, industry, work, and other relevant sectors for a better implementation at the national level. It was also suggested to improve the operation of national bodies for the management of chemical substances, to facilitate implementation of SAICM at the national level

It was suggested that policies be established for training institutions to incorporate environmental management of chemicals and waste to effect an understanding of its importance to their lifecycle.

The importance of effective implementation mechanisms and monitoring tools was stressed as was the development of indicators of how each country was progressing in implementation and action plans.

Further suggestions included the incorporation of the elements of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals classification of highly dangerous pesticides; the involvement of WHO to promote coordination between health and the environment; that UNEP be joined by FAO, ILO and WHO when a resolution is adopted in SAICM.

(VII) Other considerations

It was suggested that work should include binding mechanisms that increase the transparency and greater access to information on carcinogenic, mutagenic and persistent organic pollutants that are currently not covered by other treaties and that may lead to their eventual prohibition.

Additionally, one suggestion was that the efforts of all existing initiatives, such as those of the multilateral environmental agreements, and sustainable development goals should be taken into consideration and not duplicated and that therefore SAICM should focus on emerging issues.