

## ICCA views on the SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020

*Moving towards the third Open Ended Working Group meeting in April 2019, the co-chairs of the Intersessional Process for Considering the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste (SMCW) beyond 2020 have drafted a “zero-draft” paper, including “what” vision, principles and objectives should form the future SAICM framework and “how” these should be governed and implemented. This ICCA paper provides the views of the global chemical industry on the above mentioned “what” and “how” and is intended to feed into the intersessional process meetings on sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.*

ICCA remains committed to achieve the SMCW globally. We believe that SAICM is the appropriate forum in which to discuss the many challenges in dealing with waste, including emerging technology, infrastructure and regulatory approaches. ICCA supports the broad consensus among the SAICM stakeholders on the benefits of **continuing with the voluntary, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral** approach of SAICM beyond 2020. For example, SAICM has successfully facilitated cooperation between UN Environment and the global chemical industry, related to SMCW with a particular focus on developing countries and countries in transition. Moreover, one key outcome of such cooperation was signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Brazilian and Argentinian governments on designing public policies, developing regulations and regulatory instruments needed to achieve an environmentally SMCW.

SAICM has made important progress, but we acknowledge there is still a long way to go. Therefore, we support the development of tangible indicators for measuring progress on sound chemicals management. ICCA appreciates the efforts by certain member states to determine **measurable targets and objectives** that are based on the **Overall Orientation and Guidance (OOG)** elements to define progress towards implementation of the SDG’s 2030 Agenda. We strongly encourage SAICM to target its resources to those activities where it can achieve the biggest impact on the sound management of chemicals and waste. Those are for example, 100% country coverage in implementation of the U.N. Globally Harmonized System for Classification and Labeling (GHS) and for all nations to have in place and enforce basic policies and legislation to manage chemicals and waste throughout the life-cycle.

Furthermore, we recommend the inclusion of **concrete actions by key stakeholders** linked to the objectives and targets as defined by the co-chairs’ paper<sup>1</sup>. Identifying potential actions by various stakeholders for each objective will help structure the current - somewhat complex - set of milestones (i.e. 11 OOG basic elements, 6 core activity area’s, 20 SAICM indicators). When determining targets for the implementation of sound management of chemicals and waste, ICCA would favor a flexible and realistic phased approach that considers the individual development levels of the countries and their societal framework. A timetable could be set by each country in a bottom-up approach, including a mechanism to report on progress.

---

<sup>1</sup> Co-chairs’ paper “Draft for consideration of the ICCM5 Bureau of 10 December 2018

Regarding the scope of the international process and in order not to derail the ongoing negotiations, ICCA supports the Co-Chairs proposal in their paper<sup>2</sup> to split the remaining intersessional meetings into two tracks, track one being the continuation of SAICM as a voluntary framework and track two focusing on a potential broader approach. Governance is a means to an end and what is needed in SAICM is to improve the impact on the ground and to foster effective collaboration among SAICM stakeholders.

ICCA agrees that the SAICM framework is complemented and supported by the existing suite of international treaties (Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel). We encourage governments to take the necessary steps to adopt the rights and responsibilities of Parties to these conventions and fully implement them in national law, as a priority step toward mitigating any harmful impacts of poorly managed chemicals.

As mentioned above, under the auspices of SAICM, ICCA and UN Environment have worked together on several **capacity building initiatives related to the sound management of chemicals** and the global chemical industry is committed to supporting a significant number of capacity building workshops worldwide to enhance SMCW. ICCA recommends basic chemicals management schemes to be adapted to each country level of legislative and regulatory system. To support local governments in their efforts to improve the legislative chemicals management framework, ICCA developed a regulatory toolbox based on the fundamental principles derived from industry's Responsible Care (RC) program and Global Product Strategy (GPS).

We consider **data-sharing**, and implementation of the **Globally Harmonized System (GHS)** and **Safety Data Sheets (SDS)**<sup>3</sup> to constitute key elements of such basic schemes, with such schemes to be voluntary at the initial stage and the option to becoming mandatory in a next step, in order to allow assimilation and trial of basic chemical management concepts in practice. We strongly encourage governments to consider further measures to achieve greater harmonization and convergence in the GHS program. Furthermore, a **mentoring program** on the above referred key elements of basic chemicals schemes, including GHS implementation, between developed and developing countries could be considered.

On the topic of **waste** and **Circular Economy**, it is important to note that achieving the SAICM SMCW objective would benefit from a discussion of **basic waste management schemes** – including proper waste collection, re-cycling, re-use and disposal schemes – in order to enable moving towards a more circular and more sustainable economy. As measures to promote circular economy increase, the versatile system for extracting intrinsic value from waste should be developed, recognizing that material recovery and re-use will become more important. Specific needs by some countries should be taken into account, for example, countries without chemical production that have trading partners that already have systems in place that would be relevant for their use.

The joint UN Environment and ICCA Symposium on Circular Economy recently held in China is a step towards developing a set of the essential enabling policy conditions that may be implemented to facilitate the transition to a more circular economy. Life cycle analysis of products can identify appropriate sustainable waste management and disposal approaches and can have a significant impact on product design and production. New sustainable products will progressively replace products that no longer fit the current standards. Beyond optimal recycling on chemical production sites, it is also important to consider solutions along the value chain and to place end of life products back into the cycle. Collaboration is crucial and one example<sup>i</sup> is the Niaga carpet (a joint venture between DSM and Niaga) that uses technology to allow for full recovery after use and require 90% less energy and no water during manufacturing.

---

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the chemical industry is very much upstream of the value chain and provides health and safety information via SDS. In addition, ICCA supports the UN CiP program providing confidentiality is ensured.

Industry takes the view that innovation and substitution should be driven by market demand and value chain requirements and priorities, allowing for a differentiated substance by substance approach that considers elements including 1) risk assessment and consideration of hazard and exposure in specific applications/uses, 2) new available science/technology and 3) feasibility and market uptake

ICCA believes that it is the role of more developed countries' governments and stakeholders to ensure sharing of practices and knowledge, as well as capacity building engagement. ICCA is committed to support 30 capacity building workshops every year to this end. ICCA also commits to support broader industry participation to the SAICM work, in particular to the plastic resin producers value chain, including consumer brand, retail and waste management companies. The recently launched alliance<sup>4</sup> of global companies from the chemicals, plastics and consumer goods value chain is committed to advance solutions to eliminate plastic waste in the environment, including partnering with cities to design integrated waste management systems in areas where infrastructure is lacking; creating a capacity building collaboration with intergovernmental organizations to conduct joint workshops and trainings for government officials and community based leaders to help them identify and pursue the most effective solutions in the highest priority areas.

**Issues of concern** should be selected and decisions should be informed by sound science. Key elements of a possible **science-policy** body include identifying a clear objective, being cost efficient, taking into account all scientific views, even when there exist diverging views. Duplicate efforts done by various science bodies should be avoided as well as setting up a costly new system. A good example is the governance structure of GCO II, in which preparatory dedicated papers are discussed all inclusively during workshops. There are also other existing models that take into account inclusiveness for global science-policy issues (f.e. GESAMP – UN Joint Group of Expert for scientific issues related to the marine environmental protection).

### ICCA Recommendations

On knowledge and information sharing, we note that advanced safety regulations are in place in certain parts of the world, including the EU, the US, Canada and Japan, including a large repository of related publicly available information on chemicals. Considering the SAICM aspiration to act as a clearing house, ICCA recommends that national bodies and institutions (i.e. EU/ECHA) take the lead in developing an **international navigator**, including existing databases, in cooperation with OECD, UN Environment and SAICM secretariat. Such a navigator could be based on the publically available information within EU IUCLID and EUCLEF (EU Chemicals Legislation Finder), together with other databases, including those from US, Canada and Japan and the OECD eChemPortal that would contribute to the capacity building efforts. Rather than creating new capacity, we note that it is important to augment the existing OECD portal. The joint UN Environment and ICCA report called *“Knowledge management and information sharing for the sound management of industrial chemicals”* can also be a good starting point for this effort. Ensuring protection of CBI and recognition of Intellectual Property will be essential. A clear commitment by governments and industry should be developed.<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, ICCA believes the focus should be on ‘uses of concern’ rather than on ‘substances of concern’, as it is important to take into account risk management approaches. It is encouraged to make the

---

<sup>4</sup> [www.endplasticwaste.org](http://www.endplasticwaste.org)

<sup>5</sup> Such a commitment can for example be: *“By 20XX an international navigator/knowledgebase for regulations and safety information of chemical has been established as major contribution to capacity building. This information can be readily used to improve safety in the handling of chemical products and ameliorate legal compliance in all countries.”* Furthermore, ICCA believes the focus should be on ‘uses of concern’ rather than on ‘substances of concern’, as it is important to take into account risk management approaches. We encourage the information on hazards and exposure to chemicals to be publicly available, while respecting the protection of confidential data and proprietary rights.

information on hazards and exposure to chemicals publicly available, while respecting the protection of confidential data and proprietary rights.

Also, research programmes should be considered in order to explore, identify and fill the gaps in our understanding of the hazards posed by chemicals and to improve the methods available for assessing the associated risks. ICCA's Long Range Research initiative (LRI) and the efforts of OECD and ECETOC are good examples of such programmes<sup>6</sup>

To conclude, ICCA reiterates that a post 2020 SAICM should focus on ramping up in progressing the most pertinent, high-priority issues, namely enhancing basic capacity to manage chemicals and waste safely in countries that need it most (e.g., having effective chemical legislation in place with regulatory regimes and proper GHS implementation). This will become all the more important for countries lagging in SCWM that are experiencing higher levels of GDP growth, since their use of, and manufacture of, chemicals can be expected to materially increase over time. In (more) developed countries, emerging policy issues may be important to enhance the sound management of chemicals, and in all cases, EPIs should be taken up based on sound science- and risk-based approaches. Regulatory cooperation should ensure coherence between the different developing policies.

---

<sup>1</sup> Other examples include Clariant, who's Exolit OP provides for a safer and sustainable alternative to the legacy flame retardants used in a variety of applications. Also Dow's PacXpert™ packaging technology enables the transition from larger traditional rigid containers to flexible packaging. Compared to traditional rigid packaging (e.g. for detergents, soups, edible oils and other applications) it is designed to use less raw materials to make each package; to increase transportation efficiency with empty packages shipping flat, potentially lowering CO2 emissions and to offer a higher product-to-package ratio. Ultimately, it also lowers waste removal cost and occupies less receptacle space and landfill space.

---

<sup>6</sup> References are: <https://www.icca-chem.org/icca-long-range-research-initiative/> ; <http://www.ecetoc.org/> ; <http://www.oecd.org/chemicalsafety/>