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Fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020

Bucharest, Romania, 23-27 March 2020

Item 4 of the provisional agenda¹

Development of a high-level declaration for consideration by the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management

Submission from Sweden and Uruguay- Report of the Meeting of the High Ambition Alliance on Chemicals and Waste, Madrid, Spain, 9 December 2019

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat has the honour to circulate, in the annex to the present note, the report of the meeting of the High Ambition Alliance on Chemicals and Waste, Madrid, Spain, 9 December 2019. The document presented in the annex has been developed and submitted by from Sweden and Uruguay on behalf of the High Ambition Alliance on Chemicals and Waste and has not been formally edited.

¹ SAICM/IP.4/1

Annex

Meeting of the High Ambition Alliance on Chemicals and Waste at the Climate Change Conference (COP 25) in Madrid, 9 December 2019

Upon invitation by the Minister of Housing, Environment and Land planning of Uruguay, Ms. Eneida de León and the Minister of Environment and Climate and deputy Prime Minister of Sweden, Ms. Isabella Lövin, the High Ambition Alliance on Chemicals and Waste met in Madrid on 9 December 2019 in the margins of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), COP 25. The meeting included key note remarks and an open exchange of views around two issues. The Minister of Sweden issued from the COP25 a press release to highlight the meeting and continued ambition of the Alliance.

Context

The High Ambition Alliance on chemicals and waste was established in July 2018 as a platform for dialogue and solution-oriented cooperation, jointly facilitated by Uruguay and Sweden. The objective is to enhance awareness, ensure commitments and promote ambitious, sound management of chemicals and waste action at all levels. Its membership is comprised of committed, leading ministers as well as senior representatives from intergovernmental organisations, industry and civil society.

As such, its work supports the 'Beyond 2020 inter-sessional process' mandated in 2015 by the 4th International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM4), and the adoption of an ambitious renewed global chemicals and waste agenda at the fifth ICCM in October 2020, in Bonn. At its meeting in March 2019 a Joint ambition paper was developed as the basis for the Alliance continued work.

This meeting of the Alliance in the margins of the 25th International Climate Change Conference discussed two themes; the interlinkages between sound chemicals and waste management and combating climate change and set the direction for work towards a UN General Assembly resolution to adopt the new framework. (Annex List of Participants) The next meeting of the Alliance is to be planned to be held in connection with another ministerial meeting, tentatively in June 2020 and the Ocean Conference.

Discussion

The meeting was opened by Ministers Lövin and De León and participants were most welcomed. The ministers reminded about the aim of the Alliance and that the sound management of chemicals and waste is key to achieve sustainable development. They also underlined the importance of broad legitimacy and ownership of the framework. Participants were encouraged to spread the word so that more leaders can join us in this effort.

The two themes for discussion were presented. After introductory remarks the participants engaged actively in the discussion and shared their views. The discussion was moderated by Izabella Teixeira, International Resource Panel Co-Chair.

The discussion is summarized with the following conclusions and remarks:

- We need to use chemicals as we must have chemicals to prosper but we need to do so safely.

- Circular economy is based on using recycled materials of known quality. This is linked both to combating climate change and to sound management of chemicals and waste. It is a current and future important issue for companies as well as for countries.
- Besides the linkages of chemicals and waste to action in combating climate change, it was expressed that concerted action is needed in many sectors i.e. environment, health, labour, agriculture
- We need a strong High level declaration from Bonn on a strengthened SAICM after 2020 with more action by more stakeholders.
- The members of the Alliance need to be ambassadors for ensuring a successful outcome in Bonn, in October 2020.
- The chemicals and waste regimes have delivered a lot but can be enhanced to deliver even more. The Alliance is important to advocate such high ambition.
- The ICCA announced about its decision to join the Alliance and their willingness to contribute in further productive dialogue.
- There were diverging views regarding working for a UNGA resolution but several expressed support for this in order to ensure legitimacy and broad ownership.
- Important to recognize that the current 2020-goal and the SDG goal (12.4) were both adopted at the highest UN level (by WSSD in Johannesburg 2002 and by UNGA in 2015).

Annex. List of participants

Governments

Canada
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
Germany
Luxembourg
Indonesia
Norway
Sweden
Switzerland
Uruguay
USA

Inter-governmental Organizations-, Regional economic integration organization

FAO
GEF
OECD
UNDP
UN Environment Programme

Civil society organizations

IPEN

Industry

International Council of Chemicals Association, ICCA
IKEA
