

SECOND MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT: 15-17 DECEMBER 2014

The second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG2) of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) opens today at the International Conference Centre in Geneva, Switzerland. OEWG2 will consider the implementation, development and enhancement of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals (SAICM). ICCM4 is tentatively scheduled to be held from 28 September to 2 October 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland.

OEWG2 will review progress and gaps towards the achievement of the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, particularly: regional achievements, strengths and challenges in the context of working towards the 2020 goal of the Strategic Approach; progress in achieving the objectives of the Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach; implementation of the health sector strategy; and the overall Orientation and Guidance on the 2020 goal prepared by the SAICM Secretariat.

OEWG2 will also review work on emerging policy issues and other issues of concern, including: lead in paint, chemicals in products, hazardous substances within the life cycle of electrical and electronic products, nanotechnologies and manufactured nanomaterials; endocrine-disrupting chemicals; environmentally persistent pharmaceutical pollutants; and perfluorinated chemicals and the transition to safer alternatives. Additionally, the OEWG2 will consider the sound management of chemicals and waste in the context of the sustainable development goals, planned activities and draft budget of the Secretariat for the period 2016-2020, and other preparations for ICCM4.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SAICM

The issue of chemicals management and the idea of a SAICM have been discussed by the UN Environment Programme Governing Council (UNEP GC) and reflected in various forms since the mid-1990s.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE

DEVELOPMENT: The Summit was convened from 26 August-4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa, and delegates adopted the Johannesburg Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). The JPOI's chemicals-related targets include:

- the aim to achieve, by 2020, the use and production of chemicals in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment;
- the development, by 2005, of a SAICM based on the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) Bahia Declaration, and Priorities for Action Beyond 2000; and

• the national implementation of the new Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008.

IFCS FORUM IV: The fourth session of the IFCS (Forum IV) took place from 1-7 November 2003, in Bangkok, Thailand, under the theme "Chemical Safety in a Vulnerable World." In response to UNEP GC decisions SS.VII/3 and 22/4, Forum IV discussed the further development of a SAICM and forwarded a non-negotiated compilation report on its work to SAICM PrepCom-1, addressing, *inter alia*: life-cycle management of chemicals since Agenda 21; new and ongoing challenges; gaps in life-cycle chemicals management; and resources for capacity building and implementation.

PREPCOM-1: SAICM PrepCom-1 took place from 9-13 November 2003, in Bangkok, Thailand. Participants provided initial comments on potential issues to be addressed during the development of SAICM, examined ways to structure discussions, and considered possible outcomes of the SAICM process.

There was also broad support for a three-tiered approach for SAICM, which would comprise: a global programme of action with targets and timetables; an overarching policy strategy; and a high-level or ministerial declaration.

PREPCOM-2: SAICM PrepCom-2 was held from 4-8 October 2004, in Nairobi, Kenya. Delegates discussed elements for an overarching policy strategy for international chemicals management, made progress in developing a matrix of possible concrete measures to include in the global plan of action, and provided comments on an initial list of elements for a high-level political declaration.

2005 WORLD SUMMIT: The 2005 World Summit was held at UN headquarters in New York, US from 14-16 September. Regarding chemicals management, delegates resolved to promote the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle, including hazardous wastes, with the aim that, by 2020, chemicals are "used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment." They resolved to implement a voluntary strategic approach to international management of chemicals, and to support developing countries in strengthening their capacity for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes.

PREPCOM-3: SAICM PrepCom-3 was held from 19-24 September 2005, in Vienna, Austria. Delegates discussed the SAICM high-level declaration, overarching policy strategy, and global plan of action, but did not reach agreement on several elements, including: principles and approaches; the description of SAICM as "voluntary"; financial considerations; and the timing and frequency of future ICCM sessions.



ICCM1: The first International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM1) was held from 4-6 February 2006, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Delegates adopted SAICM, a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral policy framework made up of the Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management, an overarching policy strategy, and global plan of action. The multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral ICCM was tasked with undertaking periodic reviews of SAICM. In the Declaration, participants committed to strengthening the capacities of all concerned in order to achieve the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes at all levels, and mobilizing national and international financing from public and private sources. They also reaffirmed the goal to minimize the significant adverse effects on human health and the environment by 2020. A Quick Start Programme (QSP) was launched with a trust fund to support enabling activities for the sound management of chemicals in developing countries, least developed countries, small island developing states and countries with economies in transition through 2012.

IFCS FORUM V: This meeting was held in Budapest, Hungary, from 25-29 September 2006. The main agenda item at Forum V was consideration of the future of IFCS in light of the final agreements on SAICM. Agreement was reached to establish a working group to draft a decision on the future of IFCS to be presented at IFCS VI.

IFCS FORUM VI: This meeting took place from 15-19 September 2008 in Dakar, Senegal. After debating the future of IFCS and whether to maintain its institutional independence, delegates agreed to invite the ICCM to integrate the Forum into the ICCM as an advisory body.

ICCM2: ICCM2 took place from 11-15 May 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. It considered new emerging policy issues, rules of procedure, the need for an intersessional body, and matters related to finance. Delegates adopted nine resolutions and reached agreement on, *inter alia*: rules of procedure; emerging issues such as nanotechnology and chemicals in products; a process for considering emerging issues; the establishment of an open-ended working group (OEWG); and financial resources. ICCM2 took the decision not to integrate IFCS as a subsidiary body of the ICCM, and left IFCS to determine its own future.

OEWG1: OEWG1 was held from 15-18 November 2011, in Belgrade, Serbia. The OEWG considered the implementation, development and enhancement of SAICM and decided to forward four draft resolutions for consideration by ICCM3 on nanotechnologies and manufactured materials, amending the time limit of fund disbursements under the QSP, emerging policy issues, and new emerging policy issues.

ICCM3: ICCM3 convened from 17-21 September 2012 in Nairobi, Kenya. ICCM3 agreed to extend the QSP Trust Fund until 2015 and adopted resolutions on, *inter alia*: hazardous substances within the life cycle of electrical and electronic products; information on chemicals in products; endocrine disrupting chemicals; lead in paint; nanotechnology and manufactured nanomaterials; and engagement of the health-care sector in SAICM implementation. The Conference also convened a high-level dialogue to discuss ways to strengthen SAICM for more effective implementation.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

ORDINARY AND EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCES OF THE PARTIES TO THE BASEL, ROTTERDAM AND STOCKHOLM CONVENTIONS:

The eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous

Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and the second set of simultaneous extraordinary meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the three conventions convened from 28 April – 10 May 2013 in Geneva, Switzerland.

Negotiations focused on key elements of the synergies process, including: joint activities among the conventions; progress on enhancing cooperation and coordination among the three conventions; and identifying new concrete areas where synergies could be achieved. Parties also considered convention-specific issues, notably: the listing of hexabromocyclododecane (HBCD) and a compliance mechanism, under the Stockholm Convention; e-waste guidelines and follow-up to the Indonesian-Swiss country-led initiative to improve effectiveness, under the Basel Convention; and the listing of five new chemicals and a compliance mechanism under the Rotterdam Convention.

DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE OF PLENIPOTENTIARIES ON THE MINAMATA CONVENTION ON MERCURY:

The Minamata Convention on Mercury was adopted on Thursday, 10 October 2013 in Kumamoto, Japan. The week started with a two-day open-ended intergovernmental preparatory meeting on 7-8 October, during which participants negotiated resolutions on elements of the Final Act, including: promoting and preparing for the early implementation of the mercury instrument; arrangements for the interim period between the signing of the instrument and its entry into force, such as arrangements for financial and technical assistance during that period; and secretariat arrangements. This was followed by the Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on 10-11 October. The Convention was signed by 91 countries and the European Union. The Convention aims to protect human health and the environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds.

THE FIRST ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF THE UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEA):

UNEA1 was held in Nairobi, Kenya from 23-27 June 2014. In Decision 1/5 on chemicals and waste, the UNEA recognizes the continued relevance of the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. On the integrated approach to financing the sound management of chemicals and waste, the UNEA, *inter alia*: adopted the terms of reference for a Special Programme to be funded by voluntary contributions, to support institutional strengthening at the national level to enhance implementation of the chemicals and wastes conventions, the Minamata Convention, and SAICM; requested the Executive Director to establish and administer the Special Programme trust fund and to provide a secretariat to deliver administrative support; requested the Executive Director to submit for information the terms of reference for the Special Programme to, *inter alia*, the OEWG of SAICM; and encouraged governments in a position to do so, as well as the private sector, to mobilize financial resources for the effective establishment and quick start implementation of the Special Programme.

On SAICM, the UNEA, *inter alia*: emphasized the need for continued and strengthened multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder involvement; emphasized the need for the continued strengthening of SAICM; invited OEWG2 to consider ways to improve the involvement and participation of all relevant stakeholders and thereby enable efficient and effective responses to emerging issues and challenges; invited the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) to assume a leading role in SAICM and provide appropriate staff and other resources to its Secretariat; and invited members of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals to consider ways to support the SAICM Secretariat, including possible staffing support.