

## MESSAGE TO STAKEHOLDERS

03/04/2020

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**Subject: Message from ICCM5 President Gertrud Sahler on the postponement of ICCM5 due to the COVID-19 crisis**

Dear SAICM stakeholders,

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the uncertainties regarding its medium- and long-term development, the German government in consultation with the ICCM5 President and IP Co-Chairs has announced the necessity to postpone the Fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5), which had been planned to take place on 5 to 9 October 2020. The Conference will now take place in Bonn on 5-9 July 2021. The decision follows the postponement of the preparatory fourth meeting of the Intersessional Process on the Strategic Approach (SAICM) and the sound management on chemicals and waste beyond 2020, which was planned to be held in Bucharest on 23-27 March 2020.

ICCM5 President Gertrud Sahler of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, said: "Today, we need 'all hands on deck' to address the COVID-19 pandemic and protect the health of citizens everywhere. This, however, does not mean forgetting about other pressing global challenges. We continue to need an enhanced framework for managing chemicals and waste internationally. According to the World Health Organization chemical pollution kills almost 1.6 million people per year. That means every day about 4,300 people die because they are exposed to hazardous chemicals. Our previous collective efforts have not been successful enough in reducing that number. We will work hard to maintain the momentum and get agreement on the future framework, building upon the unique SAICM multi-stakeholder approach and the good work done to date."

Postponing the ICCM5 from October 2020 to July 2021 will provide negotiators with more time to work on the draft text for the beyond 2020 instrument. To this end, the UN Environment Programme and the SAICM Secretariat are currently exploring options to maintain dialogue and make further progress in the meantime. Further information about the future process will be provided on the SAICM website.

Best regards,

SAICM secretariat

