

*First meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020
Brasilia, Brazil, 7-9 February 2017*

Statements for delivery by IOMC Chair (UNITAR)

At point 5 of the agenda – General statements/ remarks

Dear Co-Chairs,

The 2nd “Inter-agency Meeting on Sound Chemicals Management” - held on 18 October 2016 in Vienna, Austria and convened by the IOMC - reviewed and discussed possible input to this first intersessional meeting. The following is a joint statement on behalf of the IOMC, as initial input to this meeting. Additional joint views from the October meeting will be conveyed later in the meeting under the relevant agenda items.

A strength of SAICM is its broadness of scope which provides a useful framework for coordination and collaboration; however, there is also a lack of clear focus in such a broad framework with fragmentation of goals, priority-setting and funding. Future arrangements should continue institutional strengthening, develop achievable objectives with clear and measurable targets, and avoid duplication while ensuring support to legally-binding conventions.

A significant challenge in SAICM has been not enough attention on moving from awareness and problem identification to concerted action, implementation, solutions and results. This can be attributed, in part, to the lack of binding elements or other incentives for implementation and also results in challenges in relation to reporting and indicators, which should be more focussed.

Another strength of SAICM is the ability to share information, best practices, and experience and build awareness at international, regional, national, and local levels. However, there is the need for more and better communication to all sectors to explain sound chemicals management and why it is important.

At the national level, SAICM has created the impetus for collaboration between ministries in some countries, although such collaboration is not yet optimal in all countries. At the international level, however, there has been a “disconnect” between ICCM requests to international agencies for action when agencies receive their direction from and are responsible to their own governing bodies. Moving forward, there is a need to carefully consider institutional arrangements, possibly moving from the “focal point” approach to one of “networks” and engagement.

Finally, a strength of SAICM has been the actions initiated in many countries for chemicals management activities and the support provided to countries by the Quick Start Programme.

A more detailed version of the views of the organizations can be found in the report of the meeting which is available on the IOMC website: <http://www.who.int/iomc/en/>.

We hope that these observations are helpful and look forward to constructive discussions at this first session, as well as to the opportunity to contribute further to the intersessional process