



**Strategic Approach  
to International  
Chemicals Management**

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**Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference  
on Chemicals Management**

**Third meeting**

Montevideo, 2–4 April 2019

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda\*

**Progress towards the achievement of the 2020  
goal of sound chemicals management: 2014–2016  
progress report**

**Summary report on progress in the implementation of the  
Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management  
for the period 2014–2016**

**Note by the secretariat**

1. In accordance with paragraph 24 of the Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management,<sup>1</sup> the International Conference on Chemicals Management undertakes periodic reviews of the Strategic Approach. Two of the functions of the Conference in that regard are to receive reports from all relevant stakeholders on progress in the implementation of the Strategic Approach and to disseminate information as appropriate, and to evaluate the implementation of the Strategic Approach with a view to reviewing progress against the 2020 target and taking strategic decisions, programming, prioritizing and updating the approach as necessary.
2. In paragraph 18 of its resolution IV/1, the International Conference on Chemicals Management requested the secretariat to develop a progress report on the implementation of the Strategic Approach for the period 2014–2016 and an analysis of the 20 indicators of progress, for consideration by the Open-ended Working Group at its third meeting. The Conference also directed the Open-ended Working Group to consider the need for a report for the period 2017–2019 for consideration by the Conference at its fifth session, in 2020.
3. A summary report on progress in the implementation of the Strategic Approach for the period 2014–2016 is set out in the annex to the present document, and the full report is available as an information document (SAICM/OEWG.3/INF/4).
4. The Working Group may wish to welcome the progress report for the period 2014–2016 as prepared by the secretariat and consider the results. The Working Group may also wish to request the secretariat to develop a fourth progress report, for the period 2017–2019, and to consider arrangements for the preparation of such a report, including approaches to increase reporting.

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\* SAICM/OEWG.3/1.

<sup>1</sup> Available from [www.saicm.org/Resources/Publications/tabid/5507/language/en-US/Default.aspx](http://www.saicm.org/Resources/Publications/tabid/5507/language/en-US/Default.aspx).

## Annex

# Summary report on progress in the implementation of the Strategic Approach for the period 2014–2016

## I. Background

1. The present report is drawn from the full report prepared by the secretariat on progress in the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management for the period 2014–2016 (SAICM/OEWG.3/INF/4). The full report contains a complete analysis of progress reports submitted by Strategic Approach stakeholders and provides a comparison of the 2014–2016 results with the results of the progress reports for the periods 2009–2010 and 2011–2013, as well as a general comparison with the baseline report for the period 2006–2008, under the relevant indicators.<sup>1</sup>
2. Submissions were received from 54 Governments, 5 intergovernmental organizations, 3 non-governmental organizations and 1 civil society and 2 private sector bodies (see list in appendix I). For the 2014–2016 reporting period, the overall rate for government responses was 28 per cent. The regional variation in submissions was quite large, with those from the Central and Eastern Europe region accounting for 31 per cent of progress reporting but only 12 per cent of countries, while the Western European and other States region was highly represented, accounting for 37 per cent of progress reporting but only 16 per cent of all countries. The Africa region was significantly under-represented in this reporting period, making up only 6 per cent of the reporting while accounting for 28 per cent of all countries.
3. The data on the Overall Policy Strategy objectives and 20 indicators of progress was extracted from the online questionnaire made available to the Strategic Approach stakeholders as a reporting tool. The questionnaire has been updated since the previous progress report. The online questionnaire for the 2014–2016 reporting period was open from 16 June to 15 September 2017. Following this and on the basis of guidance from the Bureau of the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, the secretariat extended that period until 1 December 2017. The Strategic Approach regional focal points played a role in encouraging all Strategic Approach stakeholders to complete the online questionnaire.
4. In addition, the analysis report includes data collected by participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals on the eight indicators of progress on the sound management of chemicals,<sup>2</sup> which complemented the data from the Strategic Approach questionnaire and provided a more comprehensive picture.
5. The present report highlights the considerable progress towards implementation of activities under multiple indicators, as well as those indicators that have shown slower-than-average progress over the years. The report compares the regional data with that of previous reporting periods, points out the focus and number of Quick Start Programme trust fund projects during the reporting period and discusses the regional strengths and advancements. The uneven implementation of activities under the Overall Policy Strategy objectives across the regions points to the priorities set by countries in implementing the Strategic Approach.
6. The report provides a summary of the analysis of the 20 Strategic Approach indicators of progress and links those indicators to the relevant “basic elements” identified in the overall orientation and guidance for achieving the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management (SAICM/ICCM.4/6).

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<sup>1</sup> The numbering of indicators in the present report reflects the updated numbering that was set out in the online questionnaire made available to Strategic Approach stakeholders for the 2014–2016 reporting period.

<sup>2</sup> The eight indicators of Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals are as follows: Indicator A: Number of countries with national profiles (UNITAR); Indicator B: Number of countries with a pollutant release and transfer register (UNITAR); Indicator C: Number of countries with poisons centres (WHO); Indicator D: Countries with controls for lead in decorative paint (WHO and UNEP); Indicator E: Countries which have implemented pesticide legislation on the basis of the FAO/WHO International Code of Conduct (FAO); Indicator F: Number of countries that have achieved core capacities for chemicals under the International Health Regulations (WHO); Indicator G: Number of parties to the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata conventions (secretariats); Indicator H: Implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (UNITAR/Economic Commission for Europe).

## II. Global overview

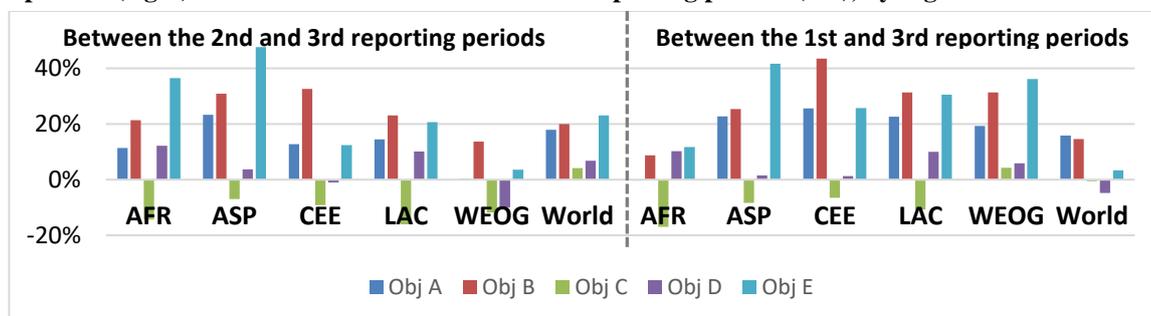
7. For the third reporting period, 2014–2016, the overall level of activity reported by all respondents across all indicators was 0.59,<sup>3</sup> which was 10 per cent higher than in the previous reporting period of 2011–2013 (0.47). Figure I shows the average progress in the level of activities for the third reporting period compared with the two previous reports, by region and by Overarching Policy Strategy objective.

8. The greatest progress since the first progress report was recorded for objective B on knowledge and information and for objective E on illegal international traffic, across all regions. Notably, there has been consistent progress under almost all the objectives except objective C on governance. One reason for this might be the changes made to the wording of the activities in the reporting tool for indicator 11 (on the number of countries and organizations with multi-stakeholder coordinating mechanisms) and indicator 12 (on the number of countries and organizations with mechanisms to implement key international chemicals priorities) under objective C. In the 2014–2016 reporting period, for indicator 12, information was requested on input on significant changes to the implementation of the chemical instruments, whereas for the second reporting period of 2011–2013 the questionnaire asked about the presence of a mechanism to implement the instruments. The majority of the respondents left that activity blank, which consequently reduced the overall score. The indicator 11 request for information about the type of stakeholders in the non-governmental and government (only) committee was also left blank by multiple respondents, resulting in a lower level of activity under that indicator as compared to the previous progress report. The lower score for objective C may therefore not be comparable to the scores from previous reports owing to the updates to the questionnaire.

9. Among the Overall Policy Strategy objectives and across regions, the greatest progress was made under objective E, by the Asia-Pacific and Africa regions. Overall, the Asia-Pacific and Africa regions showed an increase in the level of activity since the previous reporting period of 2011–2013 under all the objectives except objective C. However, the limited number of respondents in the Africa region made comparison of the results for the 2014–2016 reporting period and the previous periods complicated and not quite representative of the status of progress of that region.

Figure I

**Comparison of progress made against the objectives between the first and third reporting periods (right) and between the second and third reporting periods (left), by region<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup> The regions are: Africa (AFR), Asia-Pacific (ASP), Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and Western European and other States (WEOG). The “World” grouping represents international organizations that submitted a full report, including the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), UNDP, UNEP and UNITAR.

10. By examining the average percentage of possible options selected by all respondents for each indicator, it can be seen that the largest increase in level of activity as compared to the previous reporting period, nearly 36 per cent, was for indicator 9 (on the number of countries and organizations with websites that provide information to stakeholders). Indicator 18 (on the number of countries and organizations engaged in regional cooperation on issues relating to the sound management of chemicals) is next, with a 34 per cent increase, while indicator 19 (on the number of countries having mechanisms to prevent illegal traffic in toxic, hazardous and severely restricted chemicals individually), increased by 32 per cent and indicator 7 (on the number of countries and organizations that have specific strategies in place for communicating information on the risks associated with

<sup>3</sup> The number of activities selected by each respondent is expressed as a percentage of the total activities available under each question in the online questionnaire: a score of 0 would correspond to no activities being selected by any respondents, while a score of 1 would correspond to all the respondents selecting all the activities available under each question.

chemicals to vulnerable groups) showed a 28 per cent increase as compared to 2011–2013. The largest reduction in level of activity was seen in indicator 12, indicator 13 (on the number of countries and organizations providing resources (financial and in kind) to assist capacity-building and technical cooperation with other countries) and indicator 15 (on the number of countries where development assistance programmes include the sound management of chemicals), which was probably due to the rephrasing of the activities in the questionnaire, making it difficult to draw conclusions for these three indicators.

11. A review of the data in relation to different development categories (as determined by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)) showed that there has been a considerable improvement in the level of activity reported by the least-developed countries and upper-middle-income countries under a majority of the objectives, whereas lower-middle-income countries and non-Development Assistance Committee countries have seen a decline under objectives C and D since 2011–2013. Only three of the lower-middle-income countries (out of 36 countries) made submissions for the present progress report, two of which also made submissions for the 2011–2013 progress report. The number of submissions was too small (8 per cent) to be able to reliably compare it with the previous reports. The same was true for the least-developed countries, three of which submitted a report for the 2014–2016 reporting period. Lower-middle-income and least-developed countries account for more than 43 per cent of States Members of the United Nations, and greater participation by these countries is needed to measure global progress.

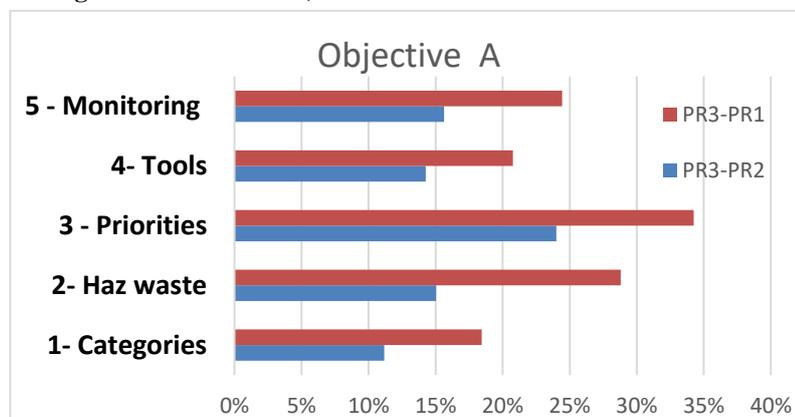
### III. Analysis by Strategic Approach Overarching Policy Strategy objective

#### A. Objective A: risk reduction

12. Objective A of the Overarching Policy Strategy has five indicators. There has been considerable progress under all indicators compared with the first and second progress reports, as can be seen in figure II. The Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia-Pacific and Central and Eastern Europe regions reported the greatest progress under this objective.

Figure II

**Progress since the first reporting period against the five indicators of objective A (based on the average of all submissions)**



Note: “PR3” is the third reporting period (2014–2016), “PR2” is the second reporting period (2011–2013) and “PR1” is the first reporting period (2009–2010).

13. With nearly 35 per cent progress since the first reporting period of 2009–2010, the greatest percentage of progress occurred in respect of setting priorities for risk reduction, under indicator 3 (on the number of countries and organizations having mechanisms in place for setting priorities for risk reduction). In fact, the greatest progress since both previous progress reports has been for that indicator. Two approved Quick Start Programme trust fund projects, one in the Africa region (in Ghana) and one in the Central and Eastern Europe region (in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia), sought to address that indicator. Indicator 3 is closely related to basic element VIII<sup>4</sup> (on chemicals risk assessment and risk reduction through the use of best

<sup>4</sup> Consistent with the online questionnaire, the basic elements are referred to in the present report using roman numerals I to XI so as to distinguish the indicators of the Strategic Approach to Chemicals Management from those of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals.

practices) of the 11 basic elements in the Strategic Approach document on overall orientation and guidance. The risks associated with “pesticides” were indicated as the most common risk among the four groups of chemicals, with an 88 per cent response rate for 2014–2016 as compared to 77 per cent for 2011–2013. “Environmental risks” were identified by 94 per cent of the respondents as the most common exposure risk, up from 65 per cent in the previous progress report. Progress in the Asia-Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean regions stood highest, with at least 20 per cent progress, as can be seen in figure VII (b), (c) and (d) below.

14. For indicator 1 (on the number of countries and organizations with mechanisms to address key categories of chemicals), a majority of respondents indicated that they had at least three mechanisms in place to address key categories of chemicals: “programmes” (94 per cent), “legislation or regulation” (91 per cent) and “standards” (82 per cent). The key categories of chemicals were identified under this indicator; more than 90 per cent of respondents selected pesticides, mercury and persistent organic pollutants as the top three chemicals or groups of chemicals that they had addressed in this reporting period. The Africa and the Asia-Pacific regions reported the most progress, improving by more than 20 per cent since the previous reporting period of 2011–2013.

15. Under indicator 2 (on the number of countries and organizations with hazardous waste management arrangements), hazardous waste management arrangements saw substantial growth since the previous reporting periods. This indicator is related to basic element I (on the legal frameworks that address the life cycle of chemicals and wastes). The “prevention or reduction in generation of hazardous waste” received the greatest attention, with a 98 per cent response rate, up from 75 per cent in the previous reporting period. More than 90 per cent of all respondents addressed the “disposal of hazardous waste” and “collection and interim storage of hazardous waste” in this reporting period. The Asia-Pacific region showed the most progress (16 per cent) in addressing hazardous waste (figure VII (b), below).

16. For indicator 4 (on the number of countries and organizations implementing agreed chemicals management tools), the testing of chemicals by OECD and the OECD eChem portal were the top two tools selected by respondents for this reporting period. The top two tools in the previous reporting period of 2011–2013 were the World Health Organization (WHO) drinking water guidelines and the International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and WHO. The higher percentage of respondents from the Western European and other States and the Central and Eastern European States could be one reason for the high rate of selection of OECD tools. As was noted in the previous progress report, the Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean regions selected the FAO/WHO International Code of Conduct and the WHO drinking water guidelines as the tools most commonly used to address chemicals. This indicator is closely related to basic element VIII.

17. According to FAO data, as at 2017,<sup>5</sup> 89 per cent of countries (174 countries) had implemented the FAO/WHO International Code of Conduct.

18. Forty-two government respondents to the Strategic Approach questionnaire reported having a pollutant release and transfer register. According to the data collected by the International Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers Coordinating Group (provided by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)), 49 countries had a pollutant release and transfer register in 2016, up from 39 in 2010.

19. Environmental monitoring was reported by 92 per cent of respondents in this reporting period, up 15 per cent and 10 per cent from 2009–2010 and 2011–2013 reporting periods, respectively. All the respondents from the Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean regions selected environmental monitoring. Monitoring of chemicals-related incidents was selected by 80 per cent of stakeholders, showing growth in reported activity of 25 per cent since 2011–2013 and 48 per cent since the first progress report for 2009–2010. This indicator is closely tied to basic element X (on monitoring and assessing the impacts of chemicals on health and the environment).

20. With respect to the risk reduction associated with chemicals and waste, several indicators of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals are closely connected with Strategic Approach indicator 4 and indicator 5 (on the number of countries and organizations engaged in activities that result in monitoring data on selected environmental and human health priority substances), including for countries with a pollutant release and transfer register, countries with poison

<sup>5</sup> No data before 2017 is available for the FAO/WHO International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management (formerly the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides).

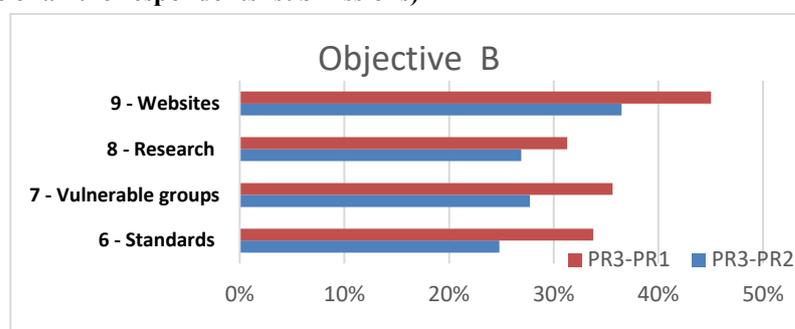
centres, countries with controls for lead in decorative paint and, finally, countries that have implemented the FAO/WHO International Code of Conduct.

## B. Objective B: knowledge and information

21. Objective B of the Overarching Policy Strategy, with four indicators, showed greater progress on average than objective A since the first reporting period. As seen in figure III, there has been progress under all the indicators as compared to the two previous reporting periods. Basic element V of the overall orientation and guidance of the Strategic Approach is on collection and systems for the transparent sharing of relevant data and information among all relevant stakeholders using a life cycle approach, such as the implementation of the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. This element is closely related to indicator 6 (on the number of countries and organizations providing information according to internationally harmonized standards), indicator 7 and indicator 9 under objective B. The Central and Eastern Europe region reported the greatest improvement under objective B since the first progress report, at 43 per cent. The Latin America and the Caribbean and Western European and other States regions came next, both reporting a 31 per cent increase, then the Asia-Pacific region, with a 25 per cent increase. The Africa region demonstrated the smallest advance, at 9 per cent since 2009–2010.

Figure III

**Progress since the first reporting period against the four indicators of objective B (based on the average of all the respondents' submissions)**



22. Of all the indicators, stakeholders reported the highest level of activity for indicator 9. The respondents reported the existence or development of websites on 6.7 out of 9 topics on average (except “other”), up from 4.8 in the previous progress report. Central and Eastern Europe was the most active region, with more than 70 per cent selecting the websites on all 9 topics. Five projects funded by the Quick Start Programme trust fund in the Africa (1), Asia-Pacific (1) and Central and Eastern Europe (3) regions were aimed at developing websites or other channels of sharing information with stakeholders.

23. For indicator 6, the percentage of Strategic Approach stakeholders selecting labelling conformity with the Globally Harmonized System for the key categories of chemicals has grown significantly since the previous progress report. Eighty-six per cent of respondents reported conformity with the Globally Harmonized System for industrial chemicals, which shows 27 per cent and 48 per cent increases from the second and first progress reports, respectively. This indicator is closely linked with indicators of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals on countries that have implemented the Globally Harmonized System. According to the data from the Stockholm Environment Institute and Wageningen University and Research,<sup>6</sup> the number of countries that have fully or partially implemented the Globally Harmonized System reached 60 in 2016, up from the baseline of 41 countries in 2010.

24. For indicator 7, communicating information on the risks associated with chemicals to vulnerable groups has grown by more than 30 per cent since 2009–2010. Workers, the general public, children, consumers and women were the five vulnerable groups most frequently selected in this reporting period, with response rates of 82 to 94 per cent. The Africa region indicated the largest progress among the regions, of 38 per cent since 2011–2013. With above-average activity worldwide, this indicator received substantial attention from the Quick Start Programme trust fund in this

<sup>6</sup> Linn Persson and others, “The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals—Explaining the Legal Implementation Gap”, *Sustainability*, vol. 9, No. 12 (December 2017). p. 2176. Available at [www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/9/12/2176](http://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/9/12/2176).

reporting period, with a total of five approved projects in the Africa (1), Asia-Pacific (1) and Central and Eastern Europe (3) regions.

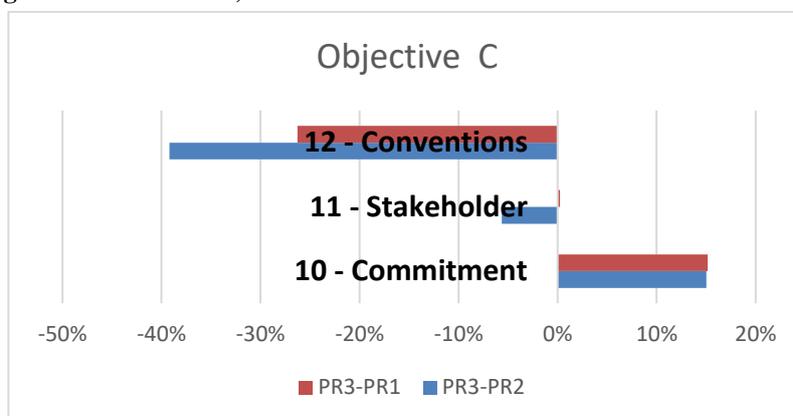
25. For indicator 8 (on the number of countries and organizations with research programmes), at least 75 per cent of respondents selected research programmes among the identified research categories. Human effects were the most frequently selected, with a 78 per cent response rate, up 39 per cent from the previous reporting period. Safer alternatives, environmental effects and cleaner production technologies were all selected by 75 per cent of respondents, up from 39 per cent, 56 per cent and 36 per cent, respectively. Basic element X, on monitoring and assessing the impacts of chemicals on health and the environment, is closely related to indicator 8.

### C. Objective C: governance

26. Objective C of the Overarching Policy Strategy is the one objective that overall has not shown much progress across all regions since the first reporting period, as can be observed in figure IV. The decline in the level of activity reported by respondents could be due to a considerable reduction in the number of submitted reports as compared to submissions for the second progress report or to changes in the phrasing of activities related to multi-stakeholder mechanisms and significant changes in the phrasing regarding the implementation of the key international instruments.

Figure IV

**Progress since the first reporting period against the three indicators of objective C (based on the average of all submissions)**



27. Indicator 10 (on the number of countries and organizations that have committed themselves to implementation of the Strategic Approach), was the only indicator under this objective with positive growth since the two previous reporting periods, growing by 15 per cent. Nevertheless, this indicator had an overall below-average level of activity worldwide. Six projects funded by the Quick Start Programme trust fund were evenly distributed among the Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean regions, mostly focusing on the development of a publication on the Strategic Approach implementation plan and the introduction or renewal of a chemicals safety programme. Certain activities under indicator 10 have enjoyed significant growth since 2011–2013; the “ministerial or other official public statements expressing support for SAICM” activity has seen 53 per cent progress, and a 68 per cent increase in response rate was observed for “resolutions of governing bodies that refer to SAICM”. The majority of Strategic Approach stakeholders selected “attendance at SAICM-related meetings” (95 per cent) and “active engagement in ongoing SAICM activities” (82 per cent).

28. The top two international instruments, the Minamata Convention (78 per cent response rate) and the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) (52 per cent) had the highest response rates under indicator 12. As at 2016, the number of parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants were 183, 160 and 180, respectively. The data show steady growth in the number of parties since 2010, by 4, 5 and 10 per cent for the Stockholm, Basel and Rotterdam conventions, respectively. The number of ratifications of the Minamata Convention was 35 as at 2016 (34 during the period 2014–2016); it is worth noting that the Convention did not enter into force until 16 August 2017 (101 parties as at 7 January 2019). Furthermore, according to data provided by WHO, there were 196 States parties to the International Health Regulations (2005).

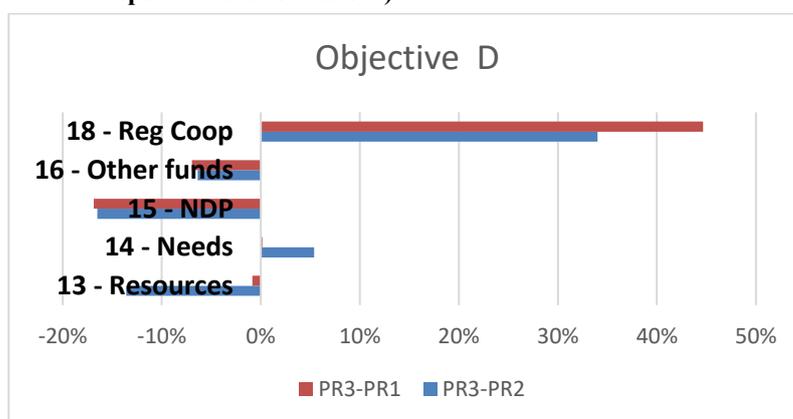
29. Indicators 10 and 11 are closely tied to element IV, on strong institutional frameworks and coordination mechanisms among relevant stakeholders. Indicator 12 is related to basic element III (on implementation of chemicals and waste-related multilateral environmental agreements, as well as health, labour and other relevant conventions and voluntary mechanisms). Furthermore, indicator 12 has links to the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals indicators on countries with controls for lead in decorative paint and the number of parties to the Minamata, Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the International Health Regulations (2005).

#### D. Objective D: capacity-building and technical cooperation

30. Stakeholders reported on five indicators under Objective D of the Overarching Policy Strategy.<sup>7</sup> The Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean regions have reported only 10 per cent positive growth under this objective since the first reporting period, even though prioritization of capacity-building needs was the focus of six projects funded by the Quick Start Programme trust fund in this reporting period in the Africa (2), Asia-Pacific (1), Central and Eastern Europe (2) and Latin America and the Caribbean (1) regions.

Figure V

**Progress since the first reporting period against the four indicators of objective D (based on the average of all the respondents' submissions)**



31. The largest growth was in regional cooperation on issues relating to the sound management of chemicals under indicator 18, as can be seen in figure V. The Asia-Pacific and Central and Eastern Europe regions reported the largest growth, at more than 25 per cent since the previous progress report (figure VII (b) and (c) below). Furthermore, the Latin America and the Caribbean and Western European and other States regions reported growth of above 20 per cent (figure VII (d) and (e) below).

32. Overall, availability of resources to assist capacity-building and technical cooperation with other countries under indicator 13, identifying and prioritizing the capacity-building needs under indicator 14 (on the number of countries and organizations that have identified and prioritized their capacity-building needs for the sound management of chemicals) and the national development plan under indicator 15 showed a below-average level of activity. The activity under indicator 14 in the questionnaire was addressed to recipient countries and thus donor countries did not provide a response, which may explain the low overall level of activity. This activity is covered under basic element IX (on strengthened capacity to deal with chemicals accidents, including institutional strengthening for poison centres) and was included in the Strategic Approach questionnaire under indicator 14 for the first time.

33. In addition, indicator 14 has links to the indicators of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals on countries with national profiles and countries with poison centres. According to the data collected by UNITAR, 116 countries have prepared a national profile, which is one of the priorities for the capacity-building needs of the countries under indicator 14, up from the baseline of 106 in 2010. According to WHO data, by the end of 2016, 90 countries had functional poison centres, down from 91 countries in 2010. It is worth noting that the poison centres can be shut down as well as opened.

<sup>7</sup> A total of six indicators are associated with Objective D. However, indicator 17 (on the number of countries and organizations with projects supported by the Strategic Approach's Quick Start Programme Trust Fund) is not addressed in the present report since no information was solicited on that indicator as part of the online questionnaire. The full report includes information on indicator 17, drawn from data compiled by the Trust Fund.

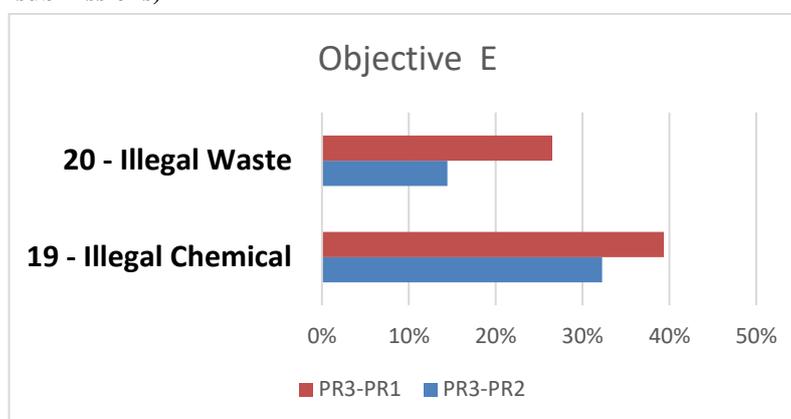
34. Similarly, a comparison of reported activity levels with the levels reported in previous reports shows that little to no positive growth has been recorded for indicator 16 (on the number of countries and organizations with sound management of chemicals projects supported by other sources of funding (not Quick Start Programme funding)). This indicator is closely related to basic element VI (on industry participation and defined responsibility across the life cycle, including cost recovery policies and systems, as well as the incorporation of sound chemicals management into corporate policies and practices).

## E. Objective E: illegal international traffic

35. Objective E of the Overarching Policy Strategy consists of indicator 19 and indicator 20 (on the number of countries having mechanisms to prevent illegal traffic of waste). There has been significant overall progress, similar to objective B. A comparison with the first reporting period of 2009–2010 shows that the Africa region had the smallest growth (12 per cent) and the Asia-Pacific region had the largest growth (42 per cent) in activities related to controlling illegal traffic. The Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean regions also showed significant overall progress towards implementation under this objective as compared with 2009–2010, up by 26 per cent and 31 per cent, respectively.

Figure VI

**Progress since the first reporting period against the two indicators of objective E (based on the average of all submissions)**

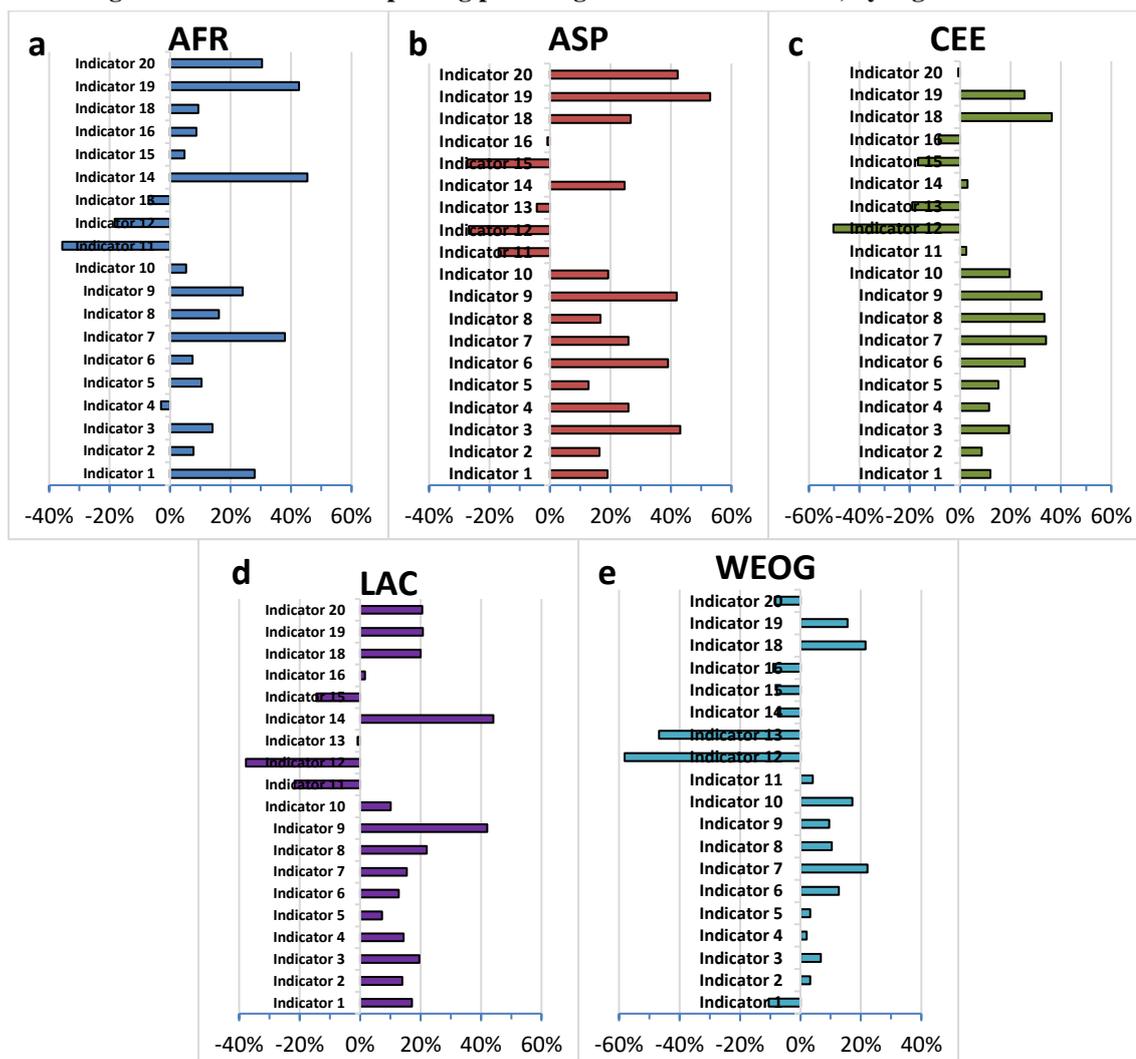


36. On average, 79 per cent of respondents selected one of the activities available to control illegal trafficking under indicator 19, which shows considerable progress, up from 37 per cent in the previous reporting period. Communication on the movement of hazardous chemicals and the implementation of national legislation preventing illegal traffic of hazardous chemicals were both selected by 86 per cent of respondents, up from 54 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively. The Asia-Pacific region reported the highest level of activity in tackling international traffic of chemicals. This indicator is also covered by basic element II (on relevant enforcement and compliance mechanisms).

37. The level of reported activity for indicator 20, is slightly less than for indicator 19. Notably, communication on transboundary movement was selected by a smaller number of respondents than in the previous reporting period, with a decrease of 21 per cent in response rate. Moreover, the response rate for the activity on training of border control agents decreased by 9 per cent from 2011–2013. Nonetheless, the majority of respondents reported the implementation of national legislation and monitoring of trafficking of hazardous waste, with response rates of 85 per cent and 80 per cent, respectively, which were 37 per cent and 16 per cent higher than in 2011–2013, respectively. Like indicator 19, indicator 20 has shown steady, significant improvement since the first progress report, increasing by 27 per cent overall.

38. The Asia-Pacific region reported the highest level of activity for indicator 20, similar to indicator 19 (see figure VII (b)), whereas the average level of activity reported by the Central and Eastern Europe and Western European and other States regions declined as compared to the previous reporting period (figure VII (c) and (e)). Indicator 20 is related to basic element I and basic element II.

Figure VII  
Progress since the second reporting period against the 20 indicators, by region <sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup> The regions are: Africa (AFR), Asia-Pacific (ASP), Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and Western European and other States (WEOG).

#### IV. Analysis of the 20 indicators

39. The Strategic Approach 20 indicators of progress were agreed in 2009 at the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management as a means of monitoring the performance of stakeholders in making progress towards the objectives in the Overarching Policy Strategy (see SAICM/ICCM.2/15, annex III). Since then, Strategic Approach indicators have been helpful in producing a baseline report (2006–2008) and three progress reports: the first, for 2009–2010; the second, for 2011–2013; and the third, the present progress report, for 2014–2016. Addressing all aspects of the sound management of chemicals and waste, the indicators have enabled the secretariat to assess global and regional progress over time and provided stakeholders with a framework to set priorities, highlight areas of success and identify gaps and room for improvement in the various stages of chemicals management.

40. Following the adoption of the indicators, the overall orientation and guidance for achieving the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management was developed and then endorsed at the fourth session of the Conference, in 2015. The overall orientation and guidance is aimed at providing direction and identifying approaches for all Strategic Approach stakeholders towards the achievement of the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management, and includes the introduction of 11 basic elements required at the national and regional levels to achieve sound chemicals management to support the implementation of the Overarching Policy Strategy. The detailed discussion in the summary report on progress in the implementation of the Strategic Approach for the period 2011–2013 (SAICM/ICCM.4/3 and SAICM/ICCM.4/3/Corr.1) included a comparison of the 11 basic elements and the 20 indicators, which showed that most of the indicators are closely related to the basic

elements identified in the overall orientation and guidance for achieving the 2020 goal of sound chemicals management (see appendix II).

41. Chemicals and waste management is embedded within many of the Sustainable Development Goals. A proposal on objectives in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related milestones, based on the 11 basic elements, was prepared for the second meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (SAICM/IP.2/8). The proposed objectives were grouped around four key areas: (a) legal and institutional frameworks, implementation and enforcement; (b) stakeholder participation and sectoral engagement; (c) knowledge and information, risk assessment/reduction and monitoring; and (d) political leadership, outreach, education and promotion. These four key areas are closely related to the Overarching Policy Strategy objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (see appendix II).

42. The Sustainable Development Goals, as a recent development, are contributing to an understanding of the global situation regarding the sound management of chemicals and waste. They also provide a broader framework for industry, business and consumers to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste reduction, as reflected in Goal 12, on ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, with consideration for human health, the environment, agriculture, labour and gender.

43. The indicators have proved to be user-friendly, simple and straightforward, as also noted in the draft report of the independent evaluation of the Strategic Approach for the period 2006–2015 (SAICM/IP.2/4). The data collected on these indicators were commonly sourced from the Strategic Approach online questionnaire tool, which allowed a comparative analysis across the three reporting periods.

44. The experience in using the indicators has shown the strengths of the different regions for certain indicators. It has also shown that the regions have implemented the indicators at a varying pace, according to their priorities. Furthermore, certain indicators and their respective activities in the questionnaire are more applicable to government stakeholders and less to non-government stakeholders. Other indicators better reflect greater success by non-government stakeholders; for instance, non-governmental organizations are particularly effective at reaching vulnerable groups under indicator 7. Stakeholders may wish to explore ways to adjust their activities so that they can better measure the activities and projects undertaken by the private sector and non-governmental organizations and the progress report can better reflect their contributions.

45. Concerns remain regarding the effectiveness of the indicators, as also discussed in the previous progress report. The activity-based indicators are subjective by nature and are therefore prone to interpretation by the respondents, which may result in under- or over-reporting of progress. While the online questionnaire collects comprehensive stakeholder data on the indicators, it is long and time-consuming to complete, which is likely to have contributed to the fall in submission rates over the years. Furthermore, several stakeholders started but did not finish the questionnaire. Another challenge is the inconsistency in reporting across countries.

46. In the second progress report on the implementation of the Strategic Approach, reference was made to indicators of progress that activity-based indicators were not able to quantify, such as the effect of chemicals on humans and the environment, and the supplementation of data with objectively verifiable results-based indicators was encouraged.

47. The indicators of progress in their current state do not fully capture new or emerging policy issues. According to the draft report of the independent evaluation, stakeholders have expressed concerns that extending the application of the indicators to emerging policy issues could cause further challenges.

48. In summary, the indicators of progress are comprehensive and thus necessary and useful, yet in their current state they may not be the most effective means of assessing progress toward the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. As indicated in the draft report of the independent evaluation, Strategic Approach stakeholders shared the view that there was a need to continue to monitor the indicators until 2020, stating that “retaining the existing 20 indicators of progress to 2020 is appropriate given the baseline that has been developed and useful insights are gained when comparing results over different time periods. Some regions have produced detailed reports on progress made towards the 20 indicators.”

## V. Conclusions

49. One of the functions of the International Conference on Chemicals Management is to evaluate the implementation of the Strategic Approach, with a view to reviewing progress against the 2020 target and taking strategic decisions, programming, prioritizing and updating the approach as necessary. Identifying achievements, understanding the gaps in implementation and prioritizing future actions can help to optimize progress. Stakeholders should consider the lessons learned under the current Strategic Approach when considering reporting needs and mechanisms for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

50. The most significant challenge faced in the preparation of the present report was in encouraging greater participation on the part of Governments in the reporting process, which needs to be addressed in the preparation of future reports, both for the period 2017–2019 and in the context of beyond 2020. The conclusions on progress are largely based on stakeholder responses on their achievements towards the objectives. Without sufficient data, those conclusions are neither reliable nor representative of the true status of the global progress towards the sound management of chemicals and waste. Accordingly, data provided by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals on its eight indicators were incorporated into the progress report for the first time in this reporting period, to supplement the reports submitted by the questionnaire respondents under certain Strategic Approach indicators.

51. The priorities of the various regions and Governments and the pace at which they are pursuing the Strategic Approach objectives vary. Nevertheless, looking at the overall progress under all the indicators over the years, it is clear that there is still a long way to go to achieve the 2020 goal. Thirty per cent of the indicators score below 0.5 (50 per cent of all activities were selected in the online questionnaire) and only 40 per cent score above 0.7. These numbers might be even lower if all the Strategic Approach stakeholders had submitted a report, on the assumption that those who do not report their progress are also more likely to have made fewer gains towards achieving the objectives.

52. Across all regions, the greatest overall progress since the first progress report was recorded for objective B, on knowledge and information, and for objective E, on illegal international traffic. The overall progress demonstrated here for the Africa region, however, could have been strongly influenced by the small pool of data (only three countries submitted a report) rather than being a true indication of the region's progress. The Africa and Asia-Pacific regions have reported a significantly high level of activity under objective E since the first progress report. The greatest advance in the Central and Eastern Europe region has been under objective B. The Latin America and the Caribbean and Western European and other States regions similarly reported a large increase in activity under objectives B and E as compared with the first reporting period.

53. The majority of projects funded by the Quick Start Programme trust fund addressed objectives A, B and C, on risk reduction, knowledge and information, and governance, respectively. All the indicators under objectives A and B reflect a far-above-average level of activity in this reporting period. A relatively more homogenous distribution of Quick Start Programme projects across objectives A, B, C was recorded. Although a majority of the projects (8 of 15) focused on indicator 1, a comparable number involved indicators 7, 9, 10 and 14. Six projects focused on indicator 10 (i.e., the development of Strategic Approach implementation plans), and another six addressed indicator 14.

54. A comparison of the data from the second and first reporting periods indicates that the overall gap between countries in different development categories (i.e., Development Assistance Committee status) is widening rather than narrowing, with the increases in levels of activity reported by developed and upper-middle-income countries contrasting with reductions or no change for least-developed countries. Nevertheless, conclusions regarding this trend in data cannot be drawn in this reporting period. It could be attributed to the below-average level of activity under objectives C and D by non-Development Assistance Committee countries, which has resulted in lower overall scores by those countries. In addition, there were a limited number of submissions from least-developed and lower-middle-income countries, and the least-developed countries reported a high level of activity under nearly all objectives, which overall makes it difficult to compare with previous reports and draw conclusions on the existing gaps in different development categories.

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55. The demonstration of credible, continuous progress will help to secure political support and financing and ultimately enhance impact over the long term. In general terms, looking beyond 2020 for the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste:

(a) Developing objectively verifiable results-based indicators that reflect the progress (or lack thereof) towards minimizing the adverse health and environmental impacts of chemicals production, use and disposal could prove to be a more effective and consistent approach;

(b) The present progress report has benefited from the indicators of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, which provided data on the sound management of chemicals from global data sets and other reporting schemes. Accordingly, a framework to track progress on multiple levels with multiple stakeholders, where a number of data sources and methods could be utilized, may help to ensure a more comprehensive review of global progress;

(c) In respect of measuring the level of commitment to the sound management of chemicals and waste, the WHO framework for monitoring progress by States parties in the implementation of International Health Regulations-related core capacities is an example of an effective and comprehensive approach to evaluating the progress made by States;

(d) The 2030 Agenda provides opportunities for Governments, industry and civil society to contribute concretely to promoting more responsible and sustainable production and consumption patterns globally. Thus, it provides a broad framework for everyone to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and prevention or reduction of waste production.

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## Appendix I

### **List of stakeholders submitting information for the report through the online questionnaire**

1. The following 54 Governments submitted a complete report: Argentina, Austria, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.
2. The following five intergovernmental organizations submitted a complete report: the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the World Health Organization (WHO).
3. Six non-governmental organizations submitted complete reports, of which four were civil society organizations (Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment, Pesticide Action Network, Society for Ecological Restoration, and Central American Institute for Studies on Toxic Substances) and two were private-sector organizations (International Council of Chemical Associations and American Petroleum Institute).

## Appendix II

### List of indicators for reporting progress in implementation of the Strategic Approach, and the links to the related basic elements of the overall orientation and guidance and the Sustainable Development Goals

| Strategic Approach Objective  | Indicator of Progress   | Links to Basic Elements  | Links to SDGs and 2030 Agenda   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>A. Risk reduction</b>  | 1. Number of countries (and organizations) with mechanisms to address key categories of chemicals   |  | SDG 1, Target 1.b<br>SDG 2, Targets 2.1, 2.4<br>SDG 3, Target 3.9<br>SDG 6, Target 6.3<br>SDG 8, Targets 8.4, 8.8<br>SDG 12, Targets 12.4, 12.5   |
|   | 2. Number of countries (and organizations) with hazardous waste management arrangements   | I: legal frameworks  |   |
|   | 3. Number of countries (and organizations) having mechanisms in place for setting priorities for risk reduction   |  |   |
|   | 4. Number of countries (and organizations) implementing agreed chemicals management tools   | VIII: risk assessment and use of best practices  | SDG 3, Targets 3.9, 3.d<br>SDG 8, Target 8.8<br>SDG 12, Targets 12.4, 12.5<br>SDG 16, Target 16.10<br>SDG 17, Target 17.14  |
|   | 5. Number of countries (and organizations) engaged in activities that result in monitoring data on selected environmental and human health priority substances              | X: monitoring health and environmental impacts   | SDG 3, Targets 3.9, 3.d<br>SDG 12, Targets 12.4, 12.5<br>SDG 16, Target 16.10<br>SDG 17, Target 17.6  |
| <b>B. Knowledge and information</b>   | 6. Number of countries (and organizations) providing information according to internationally harmonized standards  | V: Globally Harmonized System  |   |
|   | 7. Number of countries (and organizations) that have specific strategies in place for communicating information on the risks associated with chemicals to vulnerable groups | V: sharing data and information  |   |
|   | 8. Number of countries (and organizations) with research programmes   | X: monitoring health and environmental impacts<br>XI: environmentally sound and safer alternatives                                       | SDG 3, Targets 3.9, 3.d<br>SDG 8, Target 8.8<br>SDG 12, Targets 12.4, 12.5  |
|   | 9. Number of countries (and organizations) with websites that provide information to stakeholders   | V: sharing data and information<br>XI: environmentally sound and safer alternatives  | SDG 3, Targets 3.9, 3.d<br>SDG 12, Targets 12.4, 12.5<br>SDG 16, Target 16.10   |
| <b>C. Governance</b>  | 10. Number of countries (and organizations) that have committed themselves to implementation of the Strategic Approach  | IV: institutional frameworks and coordination  |   |
|   | 11. Number of countries (and organizations) with multi-stakeholder coordinating mechanism   | IV: institutional frameworks and coordination<br>VI: industry participation  | SDG 2, Target 2.4<br>SDG 12, Targets 12.4, 12.5, 12.6<br>SDG 16, Target 16.6, 16.7,   |
|   | 12. Number of countries (and organizations) with mechanisms to implement key international chemicals priorities   | III: implementation of international conventions   | SDG 2, Targets 2.1, 2.4,<br>SDG 3, Targets 3.9, 3.d<br>SDG 6, Targets 6.3, 6.6, 6.a.<br>SDG 8, Target 8.8<br>SDG 11, Targets 11.2, 11.6.<br>SDG 12, Targets 12.4, 12.5,<br>SDG 14, Target 14.1<br>SDG 16, Target 16.8 |
| <b>D. Capacity-building and technical cooperation</b>   | 13. Number of countries (and organizations) providing resources (financial and in kind) to assist capacity-building and technical cooperation with other countries          |  |   |
|   | 14. Number of countries (and organizations) that have identified and prioritized their capacity-building needs for the sound management of chemicals                        | XI: environmentally sound and safer alternatives<br>IX: Strengthened capacity to deal with chemicals accidents, including poison centers | SDG 7, Targets 7a, 7.b<br>SDG 8, Targets 8.2, 8.4<br>SDG 9, Targets 9.2, 9.4<br>SDG 11, Target 11.6   |
|   | 15. Number of countries where development assistance programmes include the sound management of chemicals   | VII: national budgeting processes  | SDG 2, Target 2.4<br>SDG 3, Target 3.d<br>SDG 6, Target 6.3   |
|   | 16. Number of countries (and organizations) with sound management of chemicals projects supported by other sources of funding (not Quick Start Programme funding)           | VI: industry participation   |   |
|   | 17. Number of countries (and organizations) with projects supported by the Strategic Approach's Quick Start Programme Trust Fund  |  |   |
| 18. Number of countries (and organizations) engaged in regional cooperation on issues relating to the sound management of chemicals |   |  |   |
| <b>E. Illegal international traffic</b>   | 19. Number of countries having mechanisms to prevent illegal traffic in toxic, hazardous and severely restricted chemicals individually                                     | I: legal frameworks<br>II: enforcement and compliance  |   |
|   | 20. Number of countries having mechanisms to prevent illegal traffic in hazardous waste   | I: legal frameworks<br>II: enforcement and compliance  |   |

Abbreviation: SDG, Sustainable Development Goal.