

## Issues of Global Concern

### *ICCA Input to the SAICM Intersessional Process Co-Chairs*

One outcome from the SAICM OEWG-3 was the invitation for stakeholders to provide input to the co-chairs of the intersessional process on Objective C, “Issues of concern [that warrant [global] [and] [joint] action] are identified, prioritized and addressed.”

ICCA encourages the focus of SAICM’s capacity and financial resources continue to focus on building basic chemicals management capacity of every country to ensure the sound management of chemicals and waste. ICCA recognizes that there is significant stakeholder support to identify and take action on issues of global concern.

**Issues of Global Concern:** ICCA recommends that identification of emerging issues of global concern be limited to issues that warrant global action and are not already being considered by another IOMC organization or chemical convention. This will help ensure that limited SAICM and stakeholder resources are not diluted by issues that are already being addressed in other venues.

Issues should be limited to those that meet the following criteria:

- **Global in Nature:** Issues that affect a minimum of three SAICM regions. While regional issues, particularly those in developing regions, are important, those issues should be addressed through a separate regional process that could include support from developed countries.
- **Of Significant Concern:** Issues that demonstrate/are:
  - significant risk to human health and/or the environment based on weight of evidence of clear cause-effect (in humans for human health effects) from authoritative sources.
  - significant impact on human health, environment, or the economy.
  - resolvable with human intervention within the existing paradigm for action.
- **Unique to SAICM:** Issues that are not already addressed by an MEA, or an existing global work group on environmental and/or chemical issues, etc.

**Process for Identifying Issues of Global Concern:** Under the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy, ICCM is charged with focusing attention and calling for appropriate action on emerging policy issues as they arise and to forge consensus on priorities for cooperative action. ICCA recommends that in a new post-2020 framework, stakeholders create a clear process that:

- Requires notification of a potential issue of global concern a minimum of six months ahead of an ICCM or a similar conference structured in the post-2020 framework, and requires that notification to include how the nominated issue meets the criteria. This would allow for adequate information gathering on the proposed issue and allow time to engage relevant stakeholders for participation during the discussion at the ICCM.
- Requires agreement from stakeholders for a mandate for the new framework to consider an issue of global concern. Identification of issues could take into account: *a) Technical advances opening up the prospect of new products and/or processes and/or raising concerns about waste*

*treatment safety b) Outcomes of robust research c) A consequence of changes in the natural environment d) Changes resulting from alterations in supply of materials and commodities e) Changes due to alterations in legislation or public welfare measures f) A change in the use or operational conditions of a known stressor leading to a different exposure pattern g) Other socio-cultural or demographic elements h) Large scale illegal activities i) significant public/political concern.*

- Identification of risk should include the weight of evidence approach, based on available good quality data.
- Requires articulation of a clear, achievable goal to show progress on the issue with appropriate consideration to cost-benefit, timing, and technical feasibility.
- Ensures participation and action on issues of global concern is voluntary. Country, stakeholder, and SAICM resources are limited and many countries may not be able to devote resources both to developing their domestic chemical capacity and participate fully in the work process on issues of global concern.

**Work Under Post-2020 Framework on Issues of Global Concern:** Work on issues of global concern under the post-2020 framework should include:

- Clearly articulated objectives and actions for achieving progress,
- Creation of timelines for measuring progress,
- Opportunities for participation from all stakeholders, including academia, industry, and civil society,
- Clear guidelines for consideration of scientific data and incorporation of risk-based principles, and
- Consideration of the needs and capacity of developing countries.

**Completion of Work on Issues of Global Concern:** Once the identified goal has been met on an issue of global concern, there should be review of a final report within ICCM (or similar body in the post-2020 framework) and an automatic sunset of work on that issue. ICCA does not support an automatic mechanism to take a completed issue or an issue that failed to meet its goal to a legally binding framework. ICCA encourages, in instances where progress to a goal is insufficient, an evaluation by the Secretariat to understand why progress has not been achieved, identify barriers to progress, and make recommendations for improvements in the process.