

Fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (IP4)

Bucharest, Romania, 29 August – 2 September 2022

Nairobi, Kenya, 27 February – 3 March 2023*

Proposed Text for: Section on “Children, Youth and Intergenerational Protection” And Targets and Indicators Focused on Children and Youth

Submission by Chemicals and Waste Youth Platform – Major Group for Children and Youth

Note by the secretariat

The attached to the present note contains a submission by Chemicals and Waste Youth Platform – Major Group for Children and Youth.

It is reproduced as received by the secretariat, without formal editing.

* The fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (IP4) was held from 29 August to 2 September 2022 in Bucharest, Romania. The meeting was adjourned on 2 September 2022 and will be resumed from 27 February to 3 March 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya.



Chemicals & Waste Youth Platform

SUBMISSION BY CHEMICALS AND WASTE YOUTH PLATFORM – MAJOR GROUP FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

*Proposed Text for:
Section on “Children, Youth and Intergenerational Protection”
and
Targets and Indicators Focused on Children and Youth*

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND INTERGENERATIONAL PROTECTION

- Recognize that children and youth are agents of change and rights-holders.
- Promote meaningful engagement and balanced representation of children, youth and all rights-holders in decision-making processes related to the sound management of chemicals and waste, including at the local, national, regional and international levels.
- Ensure that the heightened and unique vulnerabilities of children and youth to adverse impacts from chemicals and waste, including intergenerational risks, are identified and considered in the implementation of the new policy framework.
- Identify the science-policy priorities to prevent harm to children and youth across the life cycle of chemicals through, *inter alia*, the development and implementation of an action plan on children and youth impacts.
- Ensure that children and youth have awareness, access to education and capacity building measures regarding future-proof topics such as Sustainable Chemistry, circular economy, and environmental and health protection in order to prepare them for a just and green transition.

Comments:

We suggest putting the above text under “Operating Principles” and before the section on Gender.

During IP4.1, a limited reference to youth was included in the document under “Participation,” paragraph 9. However, due to children and youth widely being recognized as the stakeholder group most severely impacted by environmental hazards including chemicals and waste, it is critically important that the instrument includes children and youth concerns in a dedicated section. This submission builds upon the previous IP4.1 text referencing youth, incorporating more specific, detailed language into a “Children, Youth and Intergenerational Protection” section.



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TARGETS FOCUSED ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Include children and youth within existing targets. Mandate the collection and use of age-disaggregated data and incorporation of children, youth and intergenerational toxicity in risk assessments.

Additions to Existing Targets (in **bold type**)

Target A1 - By 2030, governments have adopted, implemented, and enforce legal frameworks and established appropriate institutional capacities to prevent or where not feasible, minimize adverse effects from chemicals and waste **to protect human health, prioritizing that of workers, women, children and youth, and the environment.**

Target B1 - By 20xx, comprehensive data and information on chemicals, throughout their lifecycle are generated, **disaggregated by age, gender, region, and income** and made available and accessible.

Comments:

The special vulnerability of children and youth to adverse impacts from chemicals and waste requires special policies to protect their health and rights. For the overarching objective of the new framework, “prevent or where not feasible minimize harm,” to be effective, action and policies must be targeted to the population groups who – through biological, social, economic and other factors – are most severely impacted by chemicals and waste hazards. While the text explicitly addresses the role of industry and actions within value chains, we believe the framework should incorporate more language on human rights and impacted communities (especially children and youth). The instrument would then more comprehensively address the “full life cycle of chemicals” by equally responding to the production/manufacturing side (the “cause” of unsound chemicals and waste management) and the impacts on human health and rights side (the “effect” of unsound chemicals and waste management).

Resources/References

Children’s Environmental Health Network (1995) *Preventing Child Exposures to Environmental Hazards: Research and Policy Issues*. California, United States of America, Children’s Environmental Health Network.

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Bazzanella, C. Blum, C. Cinquemani, under:
<https://isc3.org/page/sustainable-chemistry/key-characteristics-of-sustainable-chemistry>

Green and Sustainable Chemistry: Framework Manual (2020), under:
<https://www.unep.org/resources/toolkits-manuals-and-guides/green-and-sustainable-chemistry-framework-manual>

UN Human Rights Council (2016) *A/HRC/33/41: Report on the rights of the child and hazardous substances and wastes.*

World Health Organization (2010) *Children's Environmental Health Units.* Geneva, Switzerland, World Health Organization.

World Health Organization (2006) *Principles for Evaluating Health Risks in Children Associated with Exposure to Chemicals.* Geneva, Switzerland, World Health Organization.