

**Ninth Teleconference of the Bureau of the
International Conference on Chemicals Management for its fifth session**
21 July 2021 from 14:00 – 16:30 CET

**Considerations for the Fourth meeting of the intersessional process
considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of
chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (IP4) and a Fourth Open-ended
Working Group (OEWG4)**

Note by the Secretariat

1. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions the fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (IP4) and the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) have been postponed indefinitely.
2. At its 15th meeting, the ICCM5 Bureau initiated a discussion on the option to convene a fourth Open-ended Working Group meeting (OEWG4). While there were differing views, a Bureau member requested the SAICM Secretariat to provide a rationale on the proposal to convene an OEWG4 prior to ICCM5. The Bureau at their 16th meeting continued the exchange of views resulting in a request to the Secretariat to prepare a document providing further reflections regarding these meetings, including considerations for an additional OEWG for consideration by the Bureau at its next meeting.
3. This present document outlines the considerations for an IP4 and an OEWG4, including their respective mandates and proposed purpose.

I. Mandates for the intersessional process and the Open-Ended Working Group

A. The intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020

4. ICCM4 in its Resolution IV/4 on *The Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020*, decided to initiate an intersessional process to prepare recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

5. ICCM4 also decided that the intersessional process should include, in principle, two meetings before the third meeting of the OEWG and one meeting between OEWG3 and ICCM5 and that it may also work by correspondence and/or by electronic means.

6. In addition, ICCM4 directed the OEWG to consider the need to call an additional meeting of the intersessional process before ICCM5

7. ICCM4 Resolution IV/4 has been implemented by convening an additional meeting of the intersessional process: IP3 in Bangkok in October 2019.

8. With restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of IP4 and ICCM5, and in accordance with the ICCM4 Resolution IV/4 that the intersessional process may also work by correspondence and/or by electronic means, the ICCM5 Bureau and the co-chairs of the intersessional process proposed to establish a number of Virtual Working Groups (VWGs) to support the work of the intersessional process to advance deliberations on the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. The co-facilitators [final reports](#) of the outcomes of the VWGs are available on the SAICM website.

B. Open-ended Working Group

9. It was decided that the OEWG shall consider the implementation, development and enhancement of SAICM, including by:

- (a) Reviewing and prioritizing proposals for emerging policy issues in preparation of the next session of the Conference;
- (b) Continuing discussion on work on emerging policy issues;
- (c) Considering proposals for the inclusion of new activities in the Global Plan of Action;
- (d) Considering initiatives that are being undertaken and addressing progress and gaps in achieving the goal that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment;
- (e) Considering the outcomes of regional meetings;
- (f) Identifying priority issues for consideration for inclusion in the agendas of the sessions of the Conference;
- (g) Undertaking such other activities as the Conference may direct.

10. ICCM2 also decided that the OEWG may prepare draft decisions or resolutions for possible adoption by the Conference.

11. And finally, it was further decided that the OEWG shall meet once, in the year prior to the sessions of the Conference, if possible back to back with other related meetings;

II. Considerations for IP4 and OEWG4

C. Considerations for IP4

12. The third meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 agreed that the Secretariat, under the guidance of the intersessional process co-chairs and in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference, would produce for the fourth meeting of the intersessional process:

- (a) a single draft document consisting of the collated outcomes of the four thematic groups of the third meeting of the intersessional process, incorporating them, as appropriate into the outcome document of the Open-ended Working Group contact group on the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020; and
- (b) draft language in response to other issues reported out of the thematic groups, for which specific language was not yet drafted and, as appropriate, incorporate that language into the outcome document of the third meeting of the intersessional process for consideration to include in the beyond 2020 document.

13. Accordingly, the Secretariat, in consultation with the co-chairs of the intersessional process and the ICCM5 Bureau prepared for the consideration of the participants of IP4, a compiled text responding to the request as set out in paragraph 13(a) above, as set out in document SAICM/IP4/2 *Compilation of recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020*.

14. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of IP4 and ICCM5, SAICM stakeholders continued deliberations on document SAICM/IP4/2 online, in a Virtual Working Group process as part of the intersessional process, between October 2020 and February 2021.

D. Considerations for OEWG4

15. Considering the mandate of an OEWG as stated above in paragraph 11 of ICCM2 Resolution II/6, the purpose of OEWG4 would be to provide an opportunity for regional, stakeholder and sectoral meetings in advance of the meeting (over the weekend) as well as in the margins of the meeting to develop common positions. This would be possible given that OEWG meetings have full participation of all SAICM stakeholders.

E. For Bureau discussion

16. Based on the information above, the Bureau members may wish to consider the following:
- (a) Convening both IP4 and OEWG4 when face-to-face meetings are feasible, including the timelines between each meeting, and ICCM5;
 - (b) Continuing the work of the intersessional process by correspondence and/or by electronic means, and this would be informed by the findings of the survey, amongst other considerations, and convening an additional OEWG4 meeting when face-to-face meetings are feasible;
 - (c) Using IP4 to elaborate one document for the negotiations at OEWG4 and subsequently ICCM5 taking into account all available documents, e.g. IP.4/2 *Compilation of recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020*; IP.4/3 *Proposed targets prepared by the Technical Working Group on targets, indicators and milestones for SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020*; and the outcomes of the VWGs.

- (d) As many issues seem to be contentious and many brackets remain, using both IP4 and ICCM5 to clean up the text and enable a smoother ICCM5 with an ambitious outcome.
- (e) Finally, after the long and extended time of virtual work, two face-to-face meetings prior to ICCM5 would make the process more inclusive again and create the necessary ownership. This is even more important as ICCM5 has to make far reaching decisions regarding the future of international chemicals and waste management in the long term.