

Eighteenth meeting and Tenth teleconference of the Bureau of the International Conference on Chemicals Management for its fifth session
Wednesday, 6 October 2021, from 14:00 – 16:30 CET

REPORT OF THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE ICCM5 BUREAU

1) Opening and welcome

The President of the Fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) Ms. Anita Breyer welcomed all participants to the eighteenth meeting and tenth teleconference of the ICCM5 Bureau. First, she gave the floor to Mr. Pierre Quiblier who will act as Officer in Charge of the SAICM Secretariat for the time being to present himself. Ms. Breyer then handed over the word to the new Director of UNEP's Economy Division Ms. Sheila Aggarwal-Khan who explained that she joins as an observer and invited the Bureau members to reach out to her for bilateral conversations if desired.

Next the President expressed her hopes that many of the Bureau members had the opportunity to attend the Regional Briefings on 7 and 8 September. She highlighted the importance and value in hearing regional voices on the way forward in the Intersessional Process. She then thanked the SAICM Secretariat for successfully organizing these briefings, as well as the IP Co-Chair Ms. Judith Torres for her participation and involvement in all four briefings.

Ms. Breyer noted that the primary focus of this teleconference is firstly to seek approval for the revised Programme of Work and Budget 2021 to 2023, including its related draft decision; and secondly to consider the results of the survey on stakeholders' experiences of the virtual working group process, as well as the Regional Briefings held on 7 and 8 September 2021 and to discuss the way forward.

2) Adoption of the agenda

The ICCM5 President Ms. Breyer noted that the agenda for this meeting had been circulated to the Bureau in advance on 22 September 2021. She sought confirmation from the Bureau to switch agenda item 4 and 5 to first consider the Programme of Work and Budget 2021-2023 as well as its related Draft Decision; and afterwards look at the results of the survey on stakeholders' experiences of the virtual working group process, and the regional Briefings, followed by a discussion on the way forward in the Intersessional Process.

The Bureau agreed to the proposal and the revised agenda was adopted without any further requests.

3) Adoption of seventeenth meeting report of the ICCM5 Bureau, held on 21 July 2021

The ICCM5 Bureau adopted the report of its seventeenth meeting and ninth teleconference, held on 21 July 2021, without additional comments.

4) Revised Programme of Work and Budget 2021-2023, including its related Draft Decision

Ms. Breyer introduced this agenda item outlining the preceding process which led to this revised draft of the Programme of Work and Budget 2021 to 2023 (SAICM/ICCM.5/Bureau.TC.10/4) for the SAICM Secretariat, which is accompanied by a Draft Decision as presented in document TC.10/5. She proposed that following the approval by the Bureau at this meeting, these documents will be circulated among SAICM stakeholders for

adoption through the silent procedure. She gave the floor to Ms. Marijana Todorovic from the SAICM Secretariat to present the changes made in the revised draft in response to the comments received.

Following the presentation, a number of Bureau members expressed satisfaction with this revised draft of the Programme of Work (POW) and thanked the Secretariat for the drafting and incorporating the comments made. Mr. Bob Diderich (IOMC) took the floor to clarify that the reporting on Emerging Policy Issues (EPIs) as mentioned under (b) 'Report to the Conference on implementation of the Strategic Approach by stakeholders' (p. 4) should be aligned with meetings to provide the opportunity to discuss the findings of the reports. While currently no face-to-face meetings are taking place, the IOMC will take advantage of the SAICM Knowledge Management Platform to disseminate work done in the context of EPI implementation, as described in the POW under (d) 'Facilitate the development and dissemination of guidance materials' (p. 4).

Mr. Szymon Domagalski (CEE), supported by the representative of Industry and the representative of the Health sector, asked the Secretariat for further details regarding the plans on capacity building, specifically what the mechanism would look like to 'support national level projects to implement the Overall Orientation and Guidance' (p. 6) and if enough resources will be available. The Secretariat replied that it will gather the necessary information and come back to the Bureau members in writing. Mr. Domagalski further brought to the Bureau's attention that during the CEE Regional Briefing it was discussed to allocate additional financial resources to provide an online transmission of IP4 in Romania in order to allow stakeholders to participate electronically, i.e. conduct a hybrid meeting. The Secretariat took note of the request and proposed to consider it in the future, in case IP4 will be held in a hybrid form, and in case the livestreaming of meetings is accepted. In this case, legal aspects regarding livestream will need to be clarified.

Ms. Susan Wilburn (Health) and Ms. Sara Brosché (IPEN) expressed concerns about the request of the WEOG Region to the Secretariat to remove all references to 'waste' from the document where the current SAICM is referred to. Ms. Victoria Tunstall (WEOG) noted that she forwarded this request from one of the region's constituents and will seek clarification on the exact reasoning before getting back to the Bureau on this subject. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that "waste" was deleted where the document refers to the current SAICM instrument, but it remained where the document refers to the SAICM Beyond 2020 process.

With regards to the proposed activities on GHS in the PoW, Ms. Judith Torres (IP Co-chair) questioned whether the development of a draft strategy on GHS (p. 6) would be the appropriate action to take in the current situation. She pointed out that projects on GHS implementation have been conducted during the last 10 years and therefore, the activities should rather focus on gathering information on the production and use of chemicals worldwide which would be crucial for policy making, and be uploaded on SAICM's Knowledge Management Platform. The Secretariat clarified that the strategy will focus on implementation, that it is a continuation of existing projects and that it will try to align activities to the Global Partnership to Implement the GHS. Both the representatives from the IOMC and Industry underlined the importance of this activity and their support to it.

Ms. Sara Brosché asked the Secretariat if there has been development under the Special Programme to allow for project applications from Civil Society. She pointed out that the PoW states under (e) 'Provide guidance to stakeholders in the initiation of project proposals' (p. 4) that lessons learned and identified best practices of the Quick Start Programme (QSP) will help to inform the review of the Special Programme project applications. Since lessons learned from the QSP included that projects conducted by the Civil Society had been very successful, she asked that this be reiterated to the Special Programme Secretariat. In this request she was supported by Ms. Servet Goren (Industry) and Ms. Susan Wilburn (Health). Regarding this question the Secretariat mentioned that it is part of the Special Programme Internal Task Team, where it ensures alignment of these project proposals with SAICM objectives as well as lessons learned from the QSP projects. For now, the incorporation of Civil Society applications into the Special Programme is not envisaged.

An additional number of minor questions of clarification on the PoW and its related budget were raised, all of which the Secretariat could respond to the satisfaction of the Bureau members.

Finally, the ICCM5 President asked the Bureau for approval of the Programme of Work and Budget for the period 2021-2023 and its related Draft Decision. Since there were no objections, the President asked the

SAICM Secretariat to initiate the silent procedure, as recognized by SAICM stakeholders to be used to adopt procedural decisions on organizational, administrative and budgetary matters during the COVID-19 pandemic in its first Decision circulated on 10 November 2020 and adopted on 30 November 2020.

5) Considerations of the results of the survey on stakeholders' experiences in the Virtual Working Group process, and the Regional Briefings held on 7 and 8 September 2021 and discussion on the way forward

Under this agenda item, the ICCM5 President Ms. Breyer first gave the floor to Mr. José de Mesa from the SAICM Secretariat to summarize the findings of the survey on stakeholders' experiences in the Virtual Working Group process held between October 2020 and February 2021. The [full report](#) including the raw data of the survey responses as well as a [summary](#) of survey responses are available on the SAICM website.

A number of Bureau members thanked the SAICM Secretariat for conducting the survey and highlighted the importance of feedback from stakeholders to design the way forward in the Intersessional Process. A vast majority of Bureau members confirmed the continuation of the virtual work, taking into account the lessons learned from the survey on the first round of VWGs process as well as from the regional briefings. Ms. Sara Brosché (IPEN) noted that it would be useful to ensure a common understanding of what "progress" means in this regard and what the "momentum" is. Mr. Bob Diedrich (IOMC) pointed out that if the virtual work stopped, momentum would be lost, and future work would be jeopardized. Ms. Victoria Tunstall (WEOG) reported that all WEOG countries that provided input felt that the VWGs considerably moved the Intersessional Process forward and that it was important the results be used, given the time and effort invested. Some countries suggested that the various IP documents should be integrated and cross-referenced so that all stakeholders can have a good overview of the work done, ideally by looking at one document with annexes. This would facilitate further discussions, be they virtual or face to face. In this regard, Ms. Sara Brosché (IPEN) and Mr. Mohsen Naziri (Asia Pacific) asked that the final reports of the four VWGs be compiled into one final report which should also highlight the interlinkages and be endorsed by all SAICM stakeholders. To further increase the ownership of stakeholders to the next phase of the virtual process, Mr. Naziri (Asia Pacific) proposed that the Secretariat offers technical briefings to bring stakeholders, including from other agencies, on the same level of knowledge; and that the Secretariat circulates all newly appearing documents via email, in addition to uploading them on the SAICM website.

With a view to the survey results, Ms. Sara Brosché (IPEN) asked what a clearer role of the VWG Co-facilitators would entail. On that occasion, Ms. Servet Goren (Industry) expressed her gratitude for the extraordinary and hard work from the Co-facilitators and suggested to create a symmetric communication between Co-facilitators and stakeholders on moving forward i.e. encouraging stakeholders to initiate processes as well to further increase engagement and ownership.

Since no regional briefing was organized for the WEOG Region, Ms. Victoria Tunstall summarized the feedback she received. A few WEOG countries recognized that some stakeholders found it difficult to take part in the virtual meetings. However, they noted that relevant information was available on the SAICM website and that stakeholders could participate through written comments, which were indeed included into the discussions and reports. The general feedback received was that it is important to continue virtual work as long as the pandemic does not allow for physical meetings. However, a less ambitious schedule would be needed, more limited in scope and with a focus on specific issues, on which most progress could be made. One country noted the additional time gained with the postponement of ICCM5, which should allow SAICM Beyond 2020 process to be more ambitious and reach higher grounds. Suggestions for topics for this virtual work included further discussion on targets and indicators, issues of concern and a science-policy interface.

In response to the challenges developing countries face to participate in virtual processes due to connectivity and technical issues noted in the survey, Ms. Victoria Tunstall (WEOG) informally offered support from the UK to solve these issues and asked the Secretariat for a proposal on how to approach this. They would also encourage further measures identified through the survey, such as simultaneous online interpretation. Lastly, the UK would like to reiterate its offer to organize an expert meeting on targets and indicators for the beyond 2020 instrument as recommended by the VWG and asked for the Presidency's view on this proposal. Finally, some WEOG members had expressed hope for a more solid timeline for the upcoming SAICM face-to-face meetings soon as well as an idea of which topics would be reserved for ICCM5 and which could be addressed at IP4 (and possibly OEWG4).

Ms. Valentina Sierra (GRULAC) reiterated the importance and success of the regional briefings. She mentioned that the region is fully engaged and ready to advance in the process. She informed the Bureau that very valuable ideas arose from the GRULAC regional briefing and that different ways are currently explored to broaden participation and engagement. She asked the Secretariat for support to develop a two-page information sheet on the SAICM Beyond 2020 process, as previously brought up by Ms. Goren, to reach out to new stakeholders. In this regard, she supported the proposal of Mr. Mohsen Naziri (Asia Pacific) to conduct technical briefing to bring stakeholders on the same level of knowledge.

While Mr. Bob Diderich (IOMC) and Ms. Goren (Industry) supported the proposal of a workshop on targets and indicators organized by the UK, Mr. Naziri (Asia Pacific) firmly opposed the idea, stating that a comprehensive proposal on the way forward in the Intersessional Process is needed before groups move ahead with one specific topic. He further pointed out that many countries have held workshops on various topics but that these have not been inclusive to all stakeholders, and this has caused problems during face-to-face negotiations. He urged that this should be discouraged. Mr. Bob Diderich added that IOMC were in favour or continuing VWGs to advance discussions and supported further work on targets and indicators and are willing to contribute to this. Furthermore, he noted that, if the group cannot agree to further virtual work, we may need to take a step back and look at our ambitions. Mr. Domagalski of CEE also expressed strong support for further Virtual Work and asked for a draft work programme for the next bureau meeting. Ms. Libarona (GRULAC Regional Focal Point) agreed that the focus of virtual work should be on smaller, fewer topics where we can make significant progress. She also asked about the involvement of the SDG interagency expert group in the indicators work.

The IP Co-chair Mr. David Morin first thanked the UK for their continued engagement in this process and highlighted the importance different groups taking leadership to advance on certain topics. However, he asked the UK to wait until the current exercise to identify priorities is completed and a report back to the Bureau has been done, before they move ahead. He added that it was not on the IP Co-chairs to tell SAICM stakeholders what they can and cannot do, but that they would appreciate if, as part of the SAICM process, this could be set up as a follow-up item once the exercise has been completed. The President Ms. Breyer endorsed the Co-chairs' proposal. First, the rules should be set, and the current state of the art clarified before we continue working under these conditions. He was encouraged by the positive feedback on the VWGs and the enthusiasm to maintain momentum.

Mr. Mohsen Naziri (Asia Pacific) agreed but asked for the views of the stakeholders in the region to be taken into account when identifying priorities. Mr. Morin assured him that this would be done through the bilateral consultations with the Regional Focal Points.

In order not to lose sight of the agenda for the meeting, the ICCM5 President gave the floor to the IP Co-chair Ms. Judith Torres to reflect on the outcomes of the Regional Briefings which took place on 7 and 8 September 2021. Ms. Torres summarized that key points raised to inform the IP Co-chairs in their efforts to design the next phase of the virtual work such as that virtual sessions should be of informative purposes and not entail negotiations, the proposal to hold hybrid meetings, to make sure that written comments are allowed and appropriately reflected in the outcome documents, and concerning subjects, that capacity building, financing, as well as targets and indicators are of top priority. The summary report of the Regional Briefings can be accessed [here](#). The Secretariat gave a brief overview on the participation at the Regional Briefings, including gender and sectoral disaggregated data.

With regards to the way forward to design the next phase of the virtual work, the President informed the Bureau that the IP Co-chairs will develop a proposal based on the outcomes of the survey, the points raised during the virtual work as well as the inputs from the Bureau members. This proposal will be discussed bilaterally with the Regional Focal Points in the upcoming weeks. Before the finalization of the proposal, it will be circulated among the Bureau members and discussed at the next Bureau meeting. The IP Co-chair Mr. David Morin added that they will firstly be interested in hearing of the top priorities from the Regional Focal Points and secondly on which of these points progress can be made in a virtual space. Thirdly, it will be important to discuss the best approach to move these issues forward most efficiently.

Ms. Sara Brosché (IPEN) requested to know how civil society, work unions and other stakeholders can contribute to the development of the proposal on next steps before the proposal is presented to the Bureau at its next meeting. Mr. Morin assured her that bilateral discussion will also be scheduled with these stakeholder groups prior to the finalization of the draft proposal.

6) Next teleconference of the Bureau

Under this agenda item, Ms. Breyer firstly asked whether the Bureau meetings could from now on be moved from Wednesday to Tuesday. No member of the Bureau rejected this proposal. Next, the President proposed either Tuesday, 25 January or Tuesday 1 February as suitable dates for the nineteenth meeting and eleventh teleconference of the ICCM5 Bureau, in order to allow for enough time for the IP Co-chairs to design a draft proposal for the next virtual phase and consult with the regions. She asked the SAICM Secretariat to circulate a poll to agree on one of the two dates for the next meeting.

7) Any Other Business

No points were raised under Any Other Business.

8) Closure of the meeting

The ICCM5 President thanked the SAICM Secretariat for organizing the eighteenth meeting and tenth teleconference of the ICCM5 Bureau. She thanked all Bureau members for expressing their points of view on possible ways forward in the Intersessional Process and expressed confidence to find good solutions on this basis, together with the IP Co-chairs and the Regional Focal Points. The President wished everyone a good day, afternoon or evening and closed the meeting at 4:38 pm CET.

Annex

Participants

Bureau Members: Ms. Anita Breyer (Germany, ICCM5 Bureau Member Western Europe and Others Group), Mr. Szymon Domagalski (Poland, ICCM5 Bureau Member Central and Eastern Europe), Mr. Dinesh Runiwal and Mr. Ved Prakash (representing India, ICCM5 Bureau member Asia Pacific Region and Ms. Valentina Sierra (Uruguay, ICCM5 Bureau Member Latin America and the Caribbean).

Regional Focal Points: Mr. Mohsen Naziri Asl (Iran representing Asia-Pacific), Ms. Victoria Tunstall (Canada representing Western Europe and Others), and Ms. Ángela Teves Libarona (Argentina representing Latin America and the Caribbean).

Representatives of non-governmental participants and the IOMC: Ms. Sara Brosché (Public Interest Organizations), Mr. Rory O'Neill (Labour), Ms. Servet Goren (Industry), Ms. Susan Wilburn (Health), and Mr. Bob Diderich (IOMC).

SAICM Secretariat: Mr. Pierre Quiblier (Officer in Charge, temporary), Mr. Jose de Mesa, Mr. Eduardo Caldera Petit, Mr. Olivier Baldan, Mr. Oleksandr Nazarenko, Mr. Ricardo Dunn, and Ms. Marijana Todorovic.

Observers: Mr. David Morin (Co-chair of the Intersessional Process), Ms. Judith Torres (Co-chair of the Intersessional Process), Ms. Jutta Emig (Head of Division, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety), Ms. Sheila Aggarwal-Khan (Director, Economy Division, UNEP), and Ms. Catalina Pizarro (representing the Principal Legal Officer, Law Division, UNEP).

Regrets: Mr. David Kapindula (Zambia, ICCM5 Bureau Member Africa), Mr. Vladimir Lenev (Russian Federation representing Central and Eastern Europe), Dr. Dharmendra Kumar Gupta (India, ICCM5 Bureau member Asia Pacific Region), and Mr. Kouame Georges Kouadio (Cote D'Ivoire representing Africa).