

Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)

REGIONAL BRIEFINGS

7 – 8 September 2021

Elements for discussion on the Intersessional Process moving forward

The fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM4), through resolution IV/4, initiated an intersessional process to prepare recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 to be presented at ICCM5. Three meetings have been held to date with a fourth and final meeting (IP4) planned prior to ICCM5. Resolution IV/4 also endorsed flexible work arrangements including that the intersessional process may work by correspondence and/or by electronic means. Following the postponement of IP4 due to the pandemic, a virtual working group process held in 2020/21.

The date of IP4 is still to be confirmed pending the ability of the international community to safely hold a face to face meeting. There is a common desire to see a successful outcome out of ICCM5 that reaffirms a commitment for global collaboration and includes a decision on a new ambitious beyond 2020 framework that will shepherd us into a new era of accelerated action to manage chemicals and waste.

Much progress has been made identifying and discussing key elements of a renewed global framework on chemicals and waste management beyond 2020; however there remains work to do. It would be advantageous to use this extended intersessional period to our advantage, to advance our progress further so that by IP4 we will be near completion to finalize recommendations to be submitted to ICCM5.

While working virtually has had its challenges, lessons learned from the VWG process and from virtual work done in other fora, can inform plans to improve virtual work moving forward. For example, 69% of survey respondents who had participated in the VWGs found the schedule difficult to handle.

Building on the feedback received from the survey and from these regional discussions, the approach to future work may also vary depending on the nature of the issue. For example: some issues may be better suited to a process of correspondence to solicit written input; while issues of a more complex technical nature may be better handled by a focused working group or expert group, followed by a period of consultation, written input or regional dialogue; still, others may be of an informational nature whereby a webinar may be the best approach.

Regional participants may wish to consider the following questions and provide feedback to the Co-Chairs of the intersessional process to inform planning of next steps.

QUESTIONS:

- **How can we take the best advantage of this time to move the work forward to contribute to a successful outcome when we are able to meet face to face at IP4?**
- **Considering the outcomes of the work to date, what would be the top priorities for your region to advance the work in preparation for IP4? What type of schedule/level of work would be manageable for participants?**
- **Are there any gaps in terms of areas in need of further discussion but not identified in document IP.4/2 Compilation of recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 and discussions during the VWGs?**