
**Fourth meeting of the Quick Start Programme
Executive Board**
Geneva, Switzerland
23-24 April 2009
Adoption of the report of the fourth meeting of the Board

Report of the fourth meeting of the Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

Introduction

1. In resolution I/4 adopted at its first session, the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) decided to establish a Quick Start Programme (QSP) to support initial enabling capacity-building and implementation activities for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was requested to establish a voluntary, time-limited trust fund to provide seed money to support QSP objectives in accordance with resolution I/4.

2. Resolution I/4 also established the QSP Executive Board, consisting of two Government representatives of each of the United Nations regions and all the bilateral and multilateral donors and other contributors to the Programme. The Board reviews progress under the QSP on the basis of reports from the Trust Fund Implementation Committee* and other QSP participants, and provides operational guidance on the implementation of the strategic priorities of the QSP. The first meeting of the Executive Board was held on 26 and 27 April 2006 in Geneva. The second meeting of the Board was held on 23 and 24 April 2007 and the third meeting took place on 6 and 7 May 2008.

I. Opening of the meeting

3. The fourth meeting of the Board was held at International Environment House in Geneva, Switzerland, on 23 and 24 April 2009. The meeting was opened by Mr. Matthew Gubb, coordinator of the SAICM secretariat, who welcomed the representatives.

* The QSP Trust Fund Implementation Committee comprises representatives of the participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The participating organizations of IOMC are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), UNEP, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

II. Organizational matters

A. Organization of work

4. The Board agreed to meet from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The Board decided to hold the separate meeting of the Executive Board's Committee on the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund composed of regional representative and trust fund donors from 10:30 a.m to 1 p.m. on 23 April 2009 as indicated in the annotated agenda SAICM/EB.4/1/Add.1.

B. Attendance

5. The meeting was attended by the following Government representatives of the five United Nations regions:

Africa:	Mr. Adolphe Nahayo (Burundi)
Asia-Pacific:	Mr. Nassereddin Heidari (Islamic Republic of Iran) Mr. Supat Wangwongwatana (Thailand)
Central and Eastern Europe:	Ms. Irina Zastenskaya (Belarus) Mr. Mikheil Tushishvili (Georgia)
Latin America and the Caribbean:	Ms. Vilma Morales Quillama (Peru)
Western European and others:	Mr. Jozef Buys (Belgium) Ms. Ana Corado (United States of America)

6. In addition, the meeting was attended by representatives of the following other QSP trust fund donors: the Governments of the Czech Republic, Finland, the Republic of Korea, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, and Switzerland and the European Commission.

7. The meeting was attended by representatives of contributors to the non-trust fund QSP: Japan, OECD, International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA), UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO and UNITAR.

8. Two regional representatives, Mr. Adel Shafei Osman (Egypt) and Ms. Gillian Guthrie (Jamaica), sent their apologies for not being able to attend the meeting.

C. Election of officers

9. The participants agreed that Ms. Irina Zastenskaya (Belarus) as the co-chair from the group of Government representatives of the five United Nations regions and Mr. Jozef Buys (Belgium) as the co-chair from the group of donors would co-chair the meeting.

D. Adoption of the agenda

10. The representatives adopted the following agenda for the meeting on the basis of the provisional annotated agenda set out in document SAICM/EB.4/1 and SAICM/EB.4/Add.1

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Election of officers;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Organization of work.
3. Adoption of the report of the third meeting of the Executive Board.

4. Status of the Quick Start Programme:
 - (a) Quick Start Programme Trust Fund;
 - (b) Non-trust fund Quick Start Programme.
5. Report of the Executive Board's Committee on the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund.
6. Further development of operational guidance on the implementation of the strategic priorities of the Quick Start Programme.
7. Further consideration of the Quick Start Programme business plan.
8. Other matters
9. Next meeting.
10. Adoption of the report.
11. Closure of the meeting.

III. Adoption of the report of the third meeting of the Executive Board

11. The Executive Board adopted the report of the third meeting of the Executive Board, contained in document SAICM/EB.4/6.

IV. Status of the Quick Start Programme

A. Quick Start Programme Trust Fund

12. The meeting took note of the presentation made by the secretariat on the financial and administrative situation of the QSP Trust Fund and the status of implementation of projects approved in the first six rounds, as outlined in documents SAICM/EB.4/2 and SAICM/EB.4/3.

13. The Executive Board noted the views of its committee on the trust fund, including the views of stakeholders, that there was a need for more information on the outcomes and impacts of projects, when such evaluations became available. The committee had discussed the various needs for reporting on projects including those for donors, the Executive Board itself, and the public. The committee had welcomed a proposal by the secretariat to prepare a compilation of projects for its next meeting. In response to the committee's observation that there were comparatively few approved projects without the executing agencies, the secretariat explained that this may be due to these applicants being less familiar with application procedures than those assisted by executing agencies.

14. The Board took note of the success of the trust fund in attracting almost US\$ 20 million by the end of 2008, in accordance with its business plan target, and the relatively low level of contributions to the trust fund in 2009, so far. The secretariat suggested that the latter might be partly linked to the fact that currently the main focus of potential donors was on funding the second session of the ICCM and that some countries might choose to announce their 2009 contributions to the QSP trust fund at the ICCM session.

15. The Board discussed the status of the projects approved in the first round applications. The secretariat clarified that while none of these projects were fully completed, nine out of 15 countries involved in three multi-country projects had finalized their activities. UNITAR added that some countries from the multi-country projects, which had not yet completed project activities, were preparing SAICM capacity assessments and setting their priorities which would provide useful information for follow-up activities.

16. In regard to the documents SAICM/EB.4/INF/4 and SAICM/EB.4/INF/5, the Board requested the secretariat to indicate more clearly the requirement that a civil society network application for QSP Trust Fund should receive endorsements from the relevant SAICM national focal point and also the non-governmental organization (NGO) focal point on page 7 of the QSP application guidelines as well as in the checklist box of the QSP application form I. The secretariat was also requested to include a definition of SAICM NGO focal point in the glossary of terms annexed to the guidelines.

17. The Board noted that the secretariat would be proposing to the second session of ICCM the establishment of a second staff position to support QSP operations.

B. Non-Trust Fund Quick Start Programme

18. The secretariat reported on the status of non-trust fund contributions to the QSP, including four updated declarations of non-trust fund contributions which had been received in 2009. Representatives of the Governments of Japan, the Republic of Korea, and the United States reported that declarations on non-trust fund QSP contributions would be submitted by their governments later in 2009.

19. One regional representative noted that some of the non-trust fund contributions indicated financial values whereas such information is not provided for other contributions. The secretariat explained that it was difficult to quantify some in-kind contributions.

V. Report of the Executive Board's committee on the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund

20. In accordance with ICCM resolution I/4 and rule 29 of the Executive Board's rules of procedure, a committee, composed of the Government representatives of the five United Nations regions and the representatives of trust fund donors, met to consider the operation of the trust fund. The committee was co-chaired by Mr. Jozef Buys (Belgium) and Ms. Irina Zastenskaya (Belarus). The committee considered agenda items 4(a) and (b), 5, 6, and 7. The outcomes of the committee's discussions are reflected in the present report under relevant agenda items.

VI. Further development of operational guidance on the implementation of the strategic priorities of the Quick Start Programme

21. The Executive Board had before it document SAICM/EB.4/4, setting out issues for possible consideration in the further development of operational guidance for the QSP. The secretariat introduced the document noting that the issues raised in the document were presented primarily for information purposes.

22. Participants took note that the application forms had been revised to include information on links to the overall objective and the strategic priorities of the QSP. Likewise, the glossary of QSP Trust Fund terminology annexed to the QSP application guidelines had also been modified in line with the suggestions of the Executive Board and the Implementation Committee. The Board decided to further revise the QSP application guidelines to express more clearly the requirement that a civil society network application for QSP Trust Fund should receive endorsements from the relevant SAICM national focal point and the NGO focal point, and to include a definition of a SAICM NGO focal point.

23. On the issue of eligibility, the Board took note of the interpretation of the QSP Trust Fund Implementation Committee at its sixth meeting held on 16 and 17 October 2008 that multi-country civil society projects could be considered in the multi-country or civil society categories and that civil society networks could submit several proposals covering different countries if they demonstrated their administrative capacity to implement more than one project. The secretariat explained that the flexible approach with regard to classification of civil society projects with a multi-country dimension would allow maximum use of country quotas.

24. The Board discussed the issue of the revision of templates for project agreements and the considerable related delays in starting the projects. The secretariat reported on the progress in

concluding the project agreements and in consultations on the legal template between UNEP and executing agencies, in particular UNDP and WHO. The Board noted that bilateral agreements would now be used as an alternative to the tripartite agreements introduced in August 2008. Consultations had recently resulted in an agreement on the legal template for projects with UNDP as an executing agency while consultations with WHO had progressed but had not yet been completed. Agreements on the templates with other executing agencies had been reached earlier.

25. One regional representative expressed concerns over long delays in the commencement of a QSP project in her country. The needs that projects were intended to address could have altered during the waiting period.

26. The Board discussed whether there was a need for guidance on potential executive agencies and their comparative advantages to be provided to interested countries. The Board decided not to take any action on this matter given the broad range of issues falling under the SAICM framework, the number of inter-governmental and other organizations active in this field, and the information already available.

27. The secretariat provided clarification on paragraph 13 of the document SAICM/EB.4/4 stating that the SAICM secretariat had modified the application form by requesting applicants, where applicable, to include a letter from the executing agency confirming its role in projects and by adding the following text to the applicant certification: *“I confirm that should this project be approved with provision for an executing agency, initial management arrangements should be concluded between UNEP, as trustee, and the designated project executing agency”*. The revised application form was used in the sixth round of applications. It was this modification that had allowed reversion to the simpler bilateral approach for agreements, rather than a trilateral approach.

28. The Board agreed with the decision of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee to delegate the authority to the secretariat regarding minor adjustments to project arrangements, as set at in document SAICM/EB.4/4.

VII. Further consideration of the Quick Start Programme business plan

29. The Board had before it document SAICM/EB.4/5, a report on the implementation of the QSP business plan, providing information on progress against the business plan strategies and targets and additional information on QSP trust fund applications and approved projects over six rounds.

30. The Board noted the request of the committee on the trust fund that in order to strengthen publicity efforts for the QSP, the QSP information bulletin should be updated and translated into French and Spanish. The committee had recognized the need to further publicize impacts, both positive and negative, of QSP in a format easily understood by those unfamiliar with the QSP, based on, for instance, independent monitoring and evaluation reports of QSP projects.

31. The committee also noted that consideration of supporting SAICM implementation has not yet been taken up by the Meeting of Parties to the Montreal Protocol.

32. The Board would review again in the future whether to keep the business plan indicator related to financial leveraging of the trust fund since overall co-financing data of QSP projects were not yet available and were difficult to collect. Noting that industry had declined to make contributions to the QSP Trust Fund, some participants proposed that industry provide support directly to relevant QSP projects.

33. The Board agreed that the secretariat update the business plan, including by adding the summary graphs and table present in document SAICM/EB.4/5

VIII. Consideration of the UNEP Fundraising Strategy for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

34. The secretariat representative introduced document SAICM/EB.4/7, the UNEP fundraising strategy for SAICM developed by the UNEP's Resource Mobilization Section for consideration of the Board.

35. The Board noted that the secretariat would be the main interface with donors. The secretariat informed participants that provision for an additional staff member to undertake fundraising and other outreach tasks was included in the secretariat's budget proposal for the consideration by the ICCM at its second session.

IX. Other matters

36. The Board considered the report of the SAICM QSP Executive Board to the second session of the ICCM, contained in document SAICM/EB.4/INF/1. In addition to the recommendations agreed for inclusion in the Board's report to the ICCM, a number of Board members expressed support for initiating a mid-term review of the QSP, an issue that they hoped would be taken up at the second session of ICCM.

37. The secretariat made available to the Board, on an informal basis, draft elements for a possible ICCM resolution on financial considerations. The draft had been prepared by the secretariat as a possible starting point for discussion on financial matters at the second session of the ICCM. The Board had an informal exchange of views on the draft.

X. Adoption of the report

38. The Board agreed to adopt the report on Friday, 24 April 2009 and asked the secretariat to make it publicly available prior to the second session of the ICCM.

XI. Next meeting

39. The Board suggested scheduling its next meeting in April 2010.

XII. Closure of the meeting

40. The meeting was closed at 12:30 p.m. on Friday 24 April 2009.