
**9th meeting of the Quick Start Programme
Executive Board**
Geneva, 8 May 2014
Adoption of the report of the 9th meeting of the Board

Provisional report of the 9th meeting of the Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

I. Opening of the meeting

1. The 9th meeting of the Executive Board was held at International Environment House I in Geneva on 8 May 2014. The meeting was opened by Ms. Leonor Alvarado, the representative of the secretariat, who welcomed the members of the Executive Board. Ms. Fatoumata Keita-Ouane, as representative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) presented to the Board, communicating the sad news of Mr. Matthew Gubb's passing, the first SAICM coordinator.
2. Following welcoming remarks, the secretariat invited the Executive Board to elect the two Co-Chairs that would preside over the meeting, in accordance with Rule 8 of the rules of procedure.

II. Organizational matters

A. Election of officers

3. The participants agreed that Ms. Lindita Tafaj (Albania) would serve as the co-chair from the group of Government representatives of the five United Nations regions and Mr. Hans Meijer (the Netherlands) would serve as the co-chair from the group of donors.

B. Organization of work

4. The Board agreed to meet from 9.30 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursday 8 May 2014, with a break between 12 p.m. and 1 p.m.

C. Attendance

5. The meeting was attended by the following regional representatives, or their designated replacements or advisors: Mr. Kouame Georges Kouadio (Côte d'Ivoire), Mr. Adel Shafei Othman (Egypt), Mr. Rasio Ridho Sani and Ms. Elsa Miranda (Indonesia), Ms. Lindita Tafaj (Albania), Ms. Tatiana Tugui (Moldova, Republic of), Mr. Jaime Moscoso (Chile), Mr. Gordo Jain (Germany), and Ms. Ana Corado (United States of America).

6. The meeting was attended by the following donor representatives: Ms. Kristina Kivilohkare (Finland), Mr. Philippe Chemin (France), Mr. Hans Meijer (Netherlands), Mr. Henrik Eriksen (Norway), Mr. Jo Jaehong (Republic of Korea), Ms. Noluzuko Gwayi and Mr. Mr Teboho Sebege (South Africa), Ms. Maria Delvin and Mr. Loïc Viatte (Sweden), Ms. Gabi Eigenmann (Switzerland), and Mr. Jorge Peydro-Aznar (European Commission, EC).

7. The meeting was attended by the following contributors: Mr. Etienne Gonin (United Nations Development Programme, UNDP), Ms. Fatoumata Keita-Ouane and Mr. Kaj Madsen (UNEP), Ms. Virginia Doss (United Nations Institute for Training and Research, UNITAR), Ms. Anna Hitschler (International Council of Chemical Associations, ICCA), and Mr. David Azoulay (The Center for International Environmental Law, CIEL/International POPs Elimination Network, IPEN).

D. Adoption of the agenda

8. The participants adopted the following agenda for the meeting on the basis of the provisional agenda set out in document SAICM/EB.9/1 and SAICM/EB.9/1/Add.1. Norway reflected on agenda item 6, whether or not it should be promoted up the agenda, given the importance of the discussion.

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 8th Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme meeting.*
4. *Review of implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund*
 - (a) *Status of the Quick Start Programme;*
 - (b) *Non-Trust Fund contributions to the Quick Start Programme;*
 - (c) *Status of projects under the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund.*
5. *Approval of the draft terms of reference of the QSP impact evaluation.*
6. *Revisions of the Business Plan for the SAICM Quick Start Programme.*
7. *Other matters.*
8. *Adoption of the report.*
9. *Next meeting.*
10. *Closure of the meeting.*

III. Adoption of the report of the 8th Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme meeting

9. The representative of the secretariat outlined minor style and editorial changes to the 8th meeting report, in document SAICM/EB.9/2. The Board members approved the report as presented without further amendments.

10. One participant requested an update from the last meeting on the Senior Expert Resource Group (SERG). The secretariat reported that candidates have applied to be members of the SERG, though it continues to be the case that projects do not request support. Projects that have been appropriate for the SERG have been contacted, but no final utilisation of the Group has been requested.

11. Meeting participants discussed the merits of the SERG, with one participant commenting that while the group is a good idea, it is possibly time to accept that it does not work, even if UNITAR has positive experiences with a similar scheme. With this in mind, the Board decided that the secretariat may continue with the scheme but without investing significant resources in promoting or operating it, unless specifically required by a project.

IV. Review of implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund

A. Status of the Quick Start Programme

12. The secretariat provided a presentation, updating participants on: the financial status of the Trust Fund; the projects awaiting approval; performance against fundraising targets and strategies; outreach and equitable delivery; the latest figures from the non-Trust Fund contributions; the latest status of projects; and some points for the Board's consideration in relation to revising the Business Plan. The meeting had before it the documents SAICM/EB.9/3, Report on the status of QSP TF and Business Plan, SAICM/EB.9/INF/1, Provisional report of the 16th meeting of the QSP Trust Fund Implementation Committee, Vienna, 25-26 November 2013, SAICM/EB.9/4, Report on projects funded under the QSP Trust Fund, and SAICM/EB.9/5, Proposed revisions of the Business Plan for the QSP.

13. One participant sought clarification on the figures of "up to US\$25.2 million GEF (Global Environment Facility) funds have been leveraged with QSP funds", noting that less than that figure had been available to SAICM activities through the GEF. The secretariat commented that QSP projects have been able to access funding from focal areas other than those earmarked for SAICM activities, not only for the US\$10 million window for SAICM, including focal areas in support of the Stockholm Convention (POPs) and the Minamata Convention (Mercury).

14. The secretariat confirmed to participants that as of 8 May 2014, only one pledge had been received for contributions to the QSP Trust Fund. This was a pledge received from the Government of France of €250,000 (approximately US\$335,000), earmarked for non-chemical alternatives projects.

15. Given that sufficient funding has now been secured for the remaining eight priority projects from the 12th round of applications, and the four approved (with funding) projects from the 13th round, any subsequent contributions to the Trust Fund would go directly to the 17 approved (without funding) projects from the 13th round. These 17 pre-approved projects currently sit in a priority list, awaiting possible funding. Letters have been sent to the respective projects along with an offer to send letters of support for the applications. The secretariat is also seeking to establish links to GEF funding for these projects.

16. Several participants requested greater clarity on the QSP's achievement in terms of the strategic priorities, indicating that the lists of projects in the meeting document could be clearer in indicating which priority is being addressed by each project, and therefore how much is committed to each priority. The secretariat communicated that the regional meetings had received comprehensive updates on the focus on each strategic priority as a result of QSP projects and that this information is publicly available on the SAICM website. The secretariat indicated that a summary of this information could be prepared for the Board (see annex I).

17. The representative of UNEP suggested that the Board considers a discussion on fundraising and how projects from the QSP can link through to GEF projects and those to be funded under the proposed Special Programme. The Special Programme will be considered by the first meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly, to be held from 23-27 June 2014 in Nairobi, for possible adoption.

18. One participant recommended that approved applications awaiting funding would be contacted when funding is available and when a project can be expected to start. The secretariat confirmed that all relevant applicants have been sent letters informing them that their projects have been approved without

funding. Once funding becomes available, the applicants would be contacted to initiate the process for signing funding agreements based on the priority list approved by the Trust Fund Implementation Committee. The same participant also noted that it was promising to see only a US\$500,000 deficit from the fundraising target in 2013.

19. The representative from the European Commission announced to the Board that it was intending to make one last and significant contribution to the QSP, particularly with a link to mainstreaming as funding for chemicals and waste moves away from the QSP. With reference to mainstreaming, one participant asked to what extent the recently approved projects were prioritised with mainstreaming in mind. The secretariat reminded the Board members that the Business Plan had not been updated to reflect a greater importance on strategic priority C (effectively mainstreaming), as well as the fact that the 13th round was open before the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM), where the focus on mainstreaming had been declared. Consequently, no specific prioritisation had been given to mainstreaming.

20. One representative suggested discussing the future of SAICM after the closure of the QSP Trust Fund, in particular with regards to the existing GEF focal area for SAICM and the new proposed Special Programme.

21. The same participant indicated that his government is seeking funds to make one last contribution to the QSP, although this would only be available after further internal discussions and in the second half of the year. One participant also urged Board members to consider that if more contributions are received towards the end of 2015, this would have a consequence for the resourcing needs of the secretariat. The representative of the secretariat emphasised document SAICM/EB.9/5, Proposed revisions of the Business Plan for the QSP and the proposals it contained for continuing staffing of the secretariat into 2017 and 2018 in order to maintain administrative support for ongoing projects.

22. With reference to staffing levels, some participants noted the heavy workload of the secretariat, and requested clarification whether the imminent recruitment of the P-2 Associate Programme Officer will help to alleviate that. The secretariat outlined some of the elements that contribute to the workload, particularly with regards to the processing of project agreements, extensions, budget revisions, and following up on reporting. The support of the European Commission and Sweden (providing funds for the P-3 and P-2 respectively) will allow for greater continuity and certainty among staff members, in addition to some improvements already made in working practices, and the removal of two QSP rounds per year. The secretariat noted that administrative lessons can be learnt for any new financing programme. These factors would result in improved management of the heavy workload.

23. The Board proceeded with discussions on future application rounds and the revision of the fundraising targets as set out in the Business Plan. The Board decided that given the number of projects already approved and not funded, no new general application round would be opened unless there were sufficient funds to justify the opening of another round. Such a decision would be taken by the Executive Board should the conditions allow it.

24. Considering that some earmarked funds were still available for projects addressing non-chemical alternatives, the Board discussed the relative merits and costs of opening a specific round for these projects. Issues discussed included: whether there would be sufficient proposals to justify a new non-chemical alternatives-only round; whether the secretariat would have the capacity to screen project proposals; the most appropriate mode of holding a meeting for appraising the proposals; and whether the donor of the earmarked funds would agree to support other general projects if the funds are not used.

25. In the ensuing discussion, some participants indicated that there were several stakeholders willing to submit applications to a non-chemical alternatives-only round.

26. One participant enquired if the secretariat could appraise the proposals, thereby avoiding to have to convene a meeting of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee. The secretariat indicated that the secretariat staff does not have the technical capacity to appraise the applications.

27. Finally, on the issue of supporting general projects, the donor indicated that maximum efforts should be made to attract proposals for non-chemical alternatives. However, if insufficient suitable proposals were received, the donor would agree to support other, general QSP proposals. Following this

agreement by the donor, the Board decided that any remaining funds that are not allocated would be used for general QSP proposals, including for the priority projects that have already been approved.

28. The secretariat was requested to liaise specifically with the Stockholm Convention secretariat in order to establish if any projects (such as those for DDT or Endosulfan) would be suitable for conversion to QSP-eligible projects and the earmarked funds.

29. The Board decided to open a non-chemical alternatives-only round, closing on 30 September 2014, with the 20 per cent NGO ceiling waived. The next appraisal meeting would therefore be scheduled for the next meeting of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) members, in October 2014, in Rome.

30. The representative of the secretariat confirmed that an NGO-led project would still need the backing of the National Focal Point. Participants at the meeting were encouraged to coordinate with FAO, WHO, IPEN and Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF), having all shown a significant interest in this area.

B. Non-Trust Fund contributions to the Quick Start Programme

31. Several participants commented on the reporting of non-Trust Fund contributions. They noted that while it is important to try to provide monetary values for contributions, these are difficult to assess, given the risk of double-counting, particularly in the case of UN organizations, as the contributions are often extra-budgetary funds coming from the same donors that provide funds to chemicals work elsewhere.

32. The representative of the secretariat indicated that the impact evaluation would include a brief assessment of non-Trust Fund contributions and how this system may be improved.

33. One participant stated that they would like to see greater acknowledgement of those who have contributed to the secretariat, as this facilitates the work of the QSP, rather than a narrow focus on Trust Fund contributions.

C. Status of projects under the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund

34. The secretariat introduced the item, referring to document SAICM/EB.9/4. In the ensuing discussion, one participant requested updates from the secretariat on the projects experiencing delays and on receiving returned funds from suspended projects, emphasising that money should be returned to the Trust Fund and thus available for funding projects.

35. The Board decided that the secretariat will act as appropriate to ensure that the unspent funds are returned to the Trust Fund immediately. The secretariat confirmed that funds from these projects have been returned or will be returned shortly.

V. Revisions to the Business Plan for the SAICM Quick Start Programme

36. The secretariat presented on "Learning from and building upon the QSP experience". The presentation aimed to provide participants with an understanding of what SAICM overarching priority strategies had been addressed by QSP projects, the resources mobilised thus far, and how it has contributed to the broader aims of sound management of chemicals. The intention was to demonstrate how the QSP can contribute to the future of chemicals and waste financing, given mechanisms such as GEF-6 and the proposed Special Programme. The impact evaluation of the QSP and the production of the Overall Orientation and Guidance are also intended to contribute significantly to stakeholders' considerations of the future of chemicals and waste agenda.

37. One participant noted several times during the meeting that they would encourage Board members to consider what financing mechanisms would be in place after the end of the QSP.

38. Participants also had SAICM/EB.9/5, Proposed revisions of the Business Plan for the QSP. This was intended as a thought starter on areas where revisions may be necessary, emphasising that

fundraising targets may be reworked so as not to raise unreasonable expectations of available funding for the QSP among potential applicants. Furthermore, factors surrounding the closure of the Trust Fund for contributions and secretariat needs beyond ICCM4 were presented, given the ongoing projects and possible final round of applications.

39. The secretariat clarified that resolution III/I extended the term for contributions to the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund until the fourth session of the Conference. However, it will be necessary to decide on a date for full and final closure of the trust fund for the management of the financial accounts, including disbursements and receipt of returned funds. Such a closure needs to be notified to UNEP at least six months in advance of the final closure. The Board decided that the secretariat should propose to the International Conference on Chemicals Management a realistic date, possibly towards the end of 2018, and that once agreed such a date should be communicated to UNEP.

40. Several participants discussed the merits of reducing the Business Plan targets for the remaining years of contributions to the QSP to match those of the 17 projects approved without funding. The Board decided that the final fundraising target, for the period 2014/2015 until ICCM4, is to be set to the level of the currently approved 17 projects that are awaiting funding (US\$3.7 million).

41. One participant responded to the presentation seeking clarification of the point that the 17 project proposals would not duplicate previous efforts. The secretariat confirmed that the Trust Fund Implementation Committee uses both the information provided by the secretariat on previous submissions and projects from countries, and their personal knowledge and expertise to judge the levels of duplication. The participant was also motivated to see the presentation as a means to begin thinking about how work is continued under SAICM without the QSP funding mechanism, how work on chemicals management should continue beyond 2020, and if SAICM itself is to be continued.

42. One participant was pleased to see the coordination between the SAICM indicators and the QSP projects. She noted that the QSP and the Special Programme should be considered as different funding mechanisms; while there can be lessons learned, they should not be considered as aligned. The representative of the secretariat indicated that the QSP contributes to building basic capacities in countries and it would be beneficial to ensure the Special Programme does not duplicate some of these activities, so as to build upon the work carried out under the QSP.

43. A Board member noted that we may consider ourselves in the “second phase” of SAICM, as moving beyond enabling capacities, with the Integrated Approach (including the Special Programme) about to launch. She also made a call for countries to remember their national responsibilities that must be undertaken, in addition to the commitments of the various intergovernmental organisations, such as labour commitments. She also urged stakeholders to see the relevance of the anticipated Sustainable Development Goals, which may become a vehicle for funding up to and beyond 2020.

44. Members of the Board also discussed how projects yet to receive funding under the QSP should be encouraged to consider further how mainstreaming can be incorporated into the activities, thereby focusing on QSP strategic priority C. The Board decided that the pre-approved projects would be contacted to review proposals to take into account mainstreaming, so that they may better align with this essential area of management of chemicals.

45. Board members discussed the merits of re-prioritising the pre-approved projects. The UNEP representative, and member of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee, confirmed that the projects were chosen on the basis of the existing prioritisation criteria. Some members felt that it was not appropriate to revise previous decisions and change the priority order. The Board decided that the implementers of the pre-approved projects in the 13th round would be requested to review, as far as possible, their proposals to take into account mainstreaming elements.

46. The offer of a guidance document from UNEP, UNDP and UNITAR on mainstreaming for both future applicants and the pre-approved projects was accepted by the Board. It was agreed that this would be made available at the earliest convenience and be provided to project proponents.

47. The Board decided to delete the last sentence from paragraph 1.2 of the Business Plan, as it was no longer necessary to retain the wording. The deleted text is: “The decision to extend the QSP trust fund was regarded as a temporary measure to bridge the gap in funding available to support enabling

activities in sound management of chemicals until a more sustainable integrated financial approach is fully operational”.

VI. Approval of the draft terms of reference of the QSP impact evaluation

48. The representative of the secretariat introduced the proposed terms of reference, with document SAICM/EB.9/6.

49. Several participants relayed their suggestions for the revision of the terms of reference, indicating the importance attached to the process. While the draft was generally considered of high quality, there were suggestions on how it may be improved. There were general comments about the overlap between scope and objectives, and a few participants recommended that the second session of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG2) would be an opportune moment to maximise interviews.

50. One member commented that email questionnaires were often an ineffective method of data collection, as they are easy to overlook and can be difficult to answer. If a questionnaire is to be developed, it should be done so with the intention that all questions are clear and that the setup encourages responses.

51. The Board agreed that members would provide comments to the secretariat by close of business on 19 May 2014, and the secretariat would accommodate the suggestions and re-distribute a draft for final consideration by 3 June 2014, with final comments due before the end of June 2014. The secretariat was encouraged to initiate finding consultants for this task, in advance of the finalised terms of reference.

52. The representative of the secretariat indicated that additional funds would be required if the TORs were to be implemented as suggested. Donors would be encouraged to consider providing additional funds to complete this task.

VII. Other matters

53. The next meeting of the Executive Board (the final meeting before the closure of the Trust Fund for contributions) would be open for participation in accordance with applicable rules and practice.

VIII. Adoption of the report

54. The meeting agreed to entrust the finalisation of the report by the secretariat in consultation with the co-chairs before publishing. According to customary practice, the report would be formally adopted at the next meeting of the Board.

IX. Next meeting

55. The next meeting will be proposed for the first half of 2015, bearing in mind the conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions (BRS COPs, planned for 4-15 May 2015). The Board will be invited by the secretariat to fix a date for a 10th meeting of the Board if considered necessary, pending the development of issues for the Board's consideration, in order to avoid an unnecessary meeting given limited discussion items. A particular issue for the Board would be the review of the draft impact evaluation. The secretariat also confirmed that it is the role of the Executive Board to oversee the implementation of the QSP; a meeting would, at a minimum, always have that as a discussion item. A half-day meeting prior to the BRS COPs was also suggested as a possibility.

56. It was agreed that the secretariat would in due course provide the needs or otherwise for having the next Executive Board meeting as a face-to-face meeting, with proposed items to discuss, and, if appropriate, including the proposed date for such a meeting.

X. Closure of the meeting

57. The co-Chairs Ms. Lindita Tafaj (Albania) and Mr. Hans Meijer (Netherlands) closed the meeting at 5 p.m. on Thursday 8 May 2014.

Annex I

Number of projects addressing each strategic priority of the QSP

Strategic Priorities	Number of projects
A	23
B	37
C	2
A & B	52
A & C	2
B & C	14
A & B & C	15
TOTAL	145

n.b. total is 145 projects, which excludes the 10 suspended projects. See document SAICM/EB.9/4 for further details.