
**Fourth virtual meeting of the Informal Drafting Group
on a possible ICCM5 High-level Declaration**
Tuesday, 9 March 2021, from 13:00 – 15:00 CET

**INFORMAL DRAFTING GROUP ON A POSSIBLE ICCM5 HIGH-LEVEL
DECLARATION ON THE SOUND MANAGEMENT OF CHEMICALS AND WASTE
BEYOND 2020**

**Co-facilitators' summary of the 4th Virtual Meeting: Open discussion and guidance on
terminology and a selection of elements**

1) Welcome remarks

The Co-facilitators welcomed the members of the High-Level Declaration informal drafting group to the 4th meeting of the group.

2) Additional reflections to the previous meeting

The Co-facilitators sought guidance on proposed text they developed based on elements discussed during previous meetings. During the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised on the three elements:

Illegal/legal traffic: some participants suggested to focus on risks of exposure rather than on the harmful characteristics of chemicals. Others pointed out that instead of risks, the focus should be on impacts and that double standards in exporting chemicals should be mentioned in the declaration text. Furthermore, best technology should not only be harnessed but also made available.

Stronger links with the **SDGs** as well as with climate and biodiversity clusters: the discussion focussed around the terms: “safe” management of waste, non-chemical alternatives and the stronger focus on chemicals and waste as a cross-cutting issue. The group largely shared the view that chemicals are not “the only way” to achieve the SDGs, but rather a prerequisite.

Science-Policy Interface: participants agreed that further discussion in the intersessional process would be needed to define the functions, characteristics and roles and responsibilities. It was noted that the ICCM5 High-level Declaration could not establish a SPI but call for a strengthened SPI. Some participants mentioned the importance of “precautionary” to remain in the text. The notion of “at all levels” was not clear. One participant emphasized the importance of an intergovernmental platform, another participant also mentioned the importance of ensuring multidisciplinary and independence of experts, while some participants highlighted the need for all stakeholders to be involved in the nomination of experts.

3) Terminology

The Co-facilitators asked participants for guidance on the use of terminology:

- On the question of “**Sound management of chemicals and waste**” or “**safe and effective management of chemicals and waste**”, one participant offered to provide results from focus groups on understanding of language such as safe, sound, responsible, etc; overall participants preferred to stick to agreed language “sound” in other MEAs for fear of difficult and long discussions, even though it may be more difficult to communicate. One participant suggested that for communications purposes “sound” should be accompanied by “minimising the adverse impacts on human health and the environment”.
- Participants did not agree on a clear preference for either “**Harmful substance / hazardous substance / hazardous chemical**”. However, several participants indicated that the scope of “harmful” is much broader with respect to the rest of the terms.
- Participants largely agreed to use both “**sustainable**” and “**green chemistry**” in conjunction.
- Whether to use the term “**Low to Middle income country**” or “**developing country**” was contested. One participant noted that countries with economies in transition should also be included along with developing country. One participant highlighted that clarity was needed on the meaning, common use and scope of each of the terms before agreeing on which one to use.

The following terms were not discussed due to time constraints:

- Cluster / community
- Chemical free alternatives / safer chemicals / toxic free / chemical-safe
- Pollution
- Sustainable consumption and production

Participants are asked to submit their views on these issues in writing by 23 March 2021.

4) Commitments

The Co-facilitators invited participants to share their views on different elements that had so far not been discussed in previous meetings.

Capacity Building, finance, technology transfer

One participant on behalf of a region stated the need for an independent global fund to be reflected in the HLD that would support implementation of the new instrument. Two participants asked that chemicals and waste should be brought forwards to the beginning of the sentence. Two participants noted that given the uncertainty of ICCM5, the language on the GEF and Special Programme would need to be adjusted in terms of the timelines. One stakeholder proposed the text on the GEF should refer to programming rather than replenishment. Several participants suggested to keep a placeholder to possibly include fees, the polluter pays principle, internalisation of costs and to revisit this depending on the outcome of the virtual working group on Financial Considerations.

Green / Sustainable chemistry

One participant suggested to align the HLD with SDG12 on sustainable consumption and production. Another participant said, the concepts of green and sustainable chemistry are used as a guide for substitution and for the design of products and new materials, which should be reflected in the text. One participant

noted that the paragraphs were addressing different issues related to green and sustainable chemistry, one relates to actual production and consumption practices and the other relates to sensitisation and education.

Gender

One participant indicated that the declaration should focus on all vulnerable groups and including a gender approach. One participant suggested the inclusion of generation of gender-disaggregated data in the text.

Precautionary principle

A number of participants welcomed the idea and specific reference to the precautionary principle in the HLD, though they agreed that the language needs improvement. One stakeholder also noted that since this is a non-binding instrument, any binding language throughout the text needs to be revised.

5) Closing remarks and next steps by ICCM5 President Ms. Sahler

The President thanked all participants and the Co-facilitators for their engagement and hard work in the group. Since the indefinite postponement of IP4 and ICCM5 has created more time for discussion, she expressed her hope that participants would extend their commitment to participate in additional meetings of the group. She also suggested that, since the HLD should build on, and not replace the Dubai Declaration, the group may consider to avoid duplication of elements and language of the Dubai Declaration in the new HLD. Lastly, she explained that, in her view, the main purpose of the HLD is to increase political awareness for the importance of the chemicals and waste cluster. Hence, the HLD should adopt the new framework of the SAICM successor but at the same time pave the way for stronger political commitment at international and national levels.

Next steps

- The Secretariat will send out an email inviting the group to confirm their availability and willingness to continue participating in the High-Level Declaration informal drafting group; and inform the participants of the deadline for comments on the terminology and additional points on the elements discussed at this and previous meetings.
- The 5th meeting of the High-Level Declaration informal drafting group will be held on 4 May 2021.
