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Implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management: emerging policy issues

Submission by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry and the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry on a proposed contribution from the science community on emerging issues

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat has the honour to circulate, for the information of participants, a submission by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry and the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry on a proposed contribution from the science community to support implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management with regard to emerging policy issues. The submission, contained in the annex to the present note, has been reproduced as received without formal editing.

* SAICM/ICCM.2/1.

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Annex

Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
Emerging Issues – a Proposed Contribution from the Science Community

International Conference on Chemicals Management
Geneva, May 2009

There are a number of important contributions that the science community can make in support of the implementation of SAICM:

1. ensuring a firm scientific basis for policy development,
2. education and capacity building in relation to chemistry and its safe and responsible application, and
3. the early identification and mitigation of emerging issues of concern to health and the environment.

This note refers specifically to the latter and proposes a contribution to SAICM that could be made by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) and the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC).

A science perspective is an important component in any consideration of emerging issues:

- Perceptions of issues of concern may or may not be founded on the best available knowledge. Science can bring new insights, understanding and a sense of proportion when emerging issues are identified, thereby providing an ability to judge priorities for action.
- Scientists, and in this case chemists and environmental toxicologists, will often have an appreciation of potential issues before they reach the public and political domain, thereby providing early warning.
- Scientists are well placed to develop both an understanding about possible risks to human and environmental health and the possible mitigation of these risks, including practical measures to minimise exposure.

Following the informal discussions held in Rome, IUPAC and SETAC have followed the preparations on emerging policy issues with interest and have further considered ways in which the two organizations, through their respective memberships, could engage further with the implementation of the Strategic Approach. Hereby it is proposed that IUPAC and SETAC jointly organize and facilitate a science meeting to consider emerging issues one year in advance of each ICCM meeting. This would be a major international event,
the first held as part of the UN International Year of Chemistry 2011. IUPAC and SETAC would take responsibility for establishing the scientific committee which would

organise the meeting, be accountable for ensuring the scientific integrity of the process and the peer review of the proceedings. The proceedings would comprise perspectives and recommendations relating to emerging issues for consideration by the wider SAICM community within the implementation process. The scientific committee would comprise experts drawn from the two global science bodies together with others from such other relevant international science unions as the International Union of Toxicology (IUTOX).

Emerging issues to be considered would be brought forward from either the SAICM community or from the science community. The scientific committee could also be available to provide science views from time to time on issues at the request of the SAICM secretariat.

The objective is to establish an arms-length, purely scientific forum. The meeting would be open to scientists from across the relevant disciplines and the SAICM community. It is not intended as a formal SAICM structure but one that can provide scientific perspectives for discussion that would take place within the formal ICCM structure. Such inputs would be based on the scientific integrity of the two organisations and their respective experience in chemistry, environmental chemistry, and environmental toxicology and health, see www.iupac.org and www.setac.org. Both organisations have relevant ongoing programmes and projects of direct relevance to SAICM interests across the range of emerging issues, in the fields of environmental chemistry, toxicology, risk assessment and life cycle, combined with the competence to organise the meeting as proposed.

IUPAC has directly comparable experience in support of the Chemical Weapons Convention http://www.iupac.org/web/ins/2006-036-1-020, where it has worked to ensure that the Convention continues to take account of advances in chemical science and technology http://www.iupac.org/publications/pac/80/1/0175/. IUPAC is the globally accredited body for all areas of chemical nomenclature and standards. Together with UNESCO, IUPAC is organising the UN International Year of Chemistry in 2011. SETAC's recent SAICM relevant scientific activities include a February 2008 global "state of the science" workshop on POPs and PBTs and a series of meetings around the globe addressing emerging chemicals management issues within SAICM. SETAC is also actively involved in capacity building within SAICM via its March 2009 SAICM Africa regional training workshop on risk assessment and proposals for global SAICM life cycle training and further risk assessment training in Latin America and Asia Pacific, Short credentials of the two organisations are attached as Appendix 1.

Action Requested at ICCM2

The International Conference on Chemicals Management is asked to support and approve this science contribution to the questions of emerging issues within SAICM implementation in preparation for ICCM3.

Appendix 1

The International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC)

Helping the worldwide chemistry community create and deliver a sustainable future

The International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) is a nongovernmental organization of member countries, chemical industry, and individuals that encompass more than 85 percent of the world's chemical sciences. The members of IUPAC—chemical societies, national academies of science, company associates, and individuals from close to 75 countries—represent most of the world's chemistry research and industry. IUPAC also has formal and informal ties to international organizations that touch on every aspect of society.

IUPAC is a trusted and objective leader in addressing global issues involving every aspect of chemistry. IUPAC enables chemists everywhere to communicate clearly and without misunderstanding. For close to a century, IUPAC has been recognized as the world authority on chemical nomenclature, terminology, standardized measurement methods, and critically evaluated chemical data. It promotes the norms, values, standards, and ethics of science and encourages the free exchange of scientific information. In fulfilling this mission, IUPAC effectively contributes to the worldwide application of the chemical sciences by helping to advance research in the chemical sciences, improve chemistry education, and encourage the public appreciation of chemistry.

IUPAC's goals are:

- to facilitate the advancement of research in the chemical sciences through the tools that it provides for international standardization and scientific discussion;
- to assist chemistry-related industry in its contribution to sustainable development, wealth creation, and improvement in the quality of life;
- to foster communication among individual chemists and scientific organizations, with special emphasis on the needs of chemists in developing countries;
- to utilize its global perspective and network to contribute to the enhancement of chemistry education, the career development of young chemical scientists, and the public appreciation of chemistry;
- to broaden its national membership base and seek the maximum feasible diversity in membership of IUPAC bodies in terms of geography, gender, and age.

IUPAC is intent on expanding and diversifying its international chemical network to ensure that the chemical sciences continue to make essential contributions to the modern world.

The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry
(SETAC)
"Environmental Quality through Science"

SETAC is a nonprofit, worldwide professional society comprised of some 5,000 individuals and institutions engaged in the study, analysis, and solution of environmental problems, the management and regulation of natural resources, environmental education and research and development. SETAC's unique strength: its commitment to balance the interests of academia, business, and government. The founding principles of SETAC are:

- Multidisciplinary approaches to solving environmental problems
- Balance: Academia, Business, Government
- Objectivity: Science-based

SETAC's mission is to support the development of principles and practices for protection, enhancement and management of sustainable environmental quality and ecosystem integrity. SETAC promotes the advancement and application of scientific research related to contaminants and other stressors in the environment, education in the environmental sciences, and the use of science in environmental policy and decision-making. The Society provides a forum where scientists, managers, and other professionals exchange information and ideas for the development and use of multidisciplinary scientific principles and practices leading to sustainable environmental quality. Environmental toxicology and chemistry embrace fields of study that include analytical chemistry, atmospheric sciences and engineering, biology, classical toxicology, ecology, economics, environmental chemistry, environmental assessment and management, genetics, product life cycle assessment, microbiology, organic chemistry, physiology, risk assessment, soil and water sciences and engineering.