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Fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020

Bucharest, Romania, 23-27 March 2020

Scenario note prepared by the co-chairs of the intersessional process

I. Introduction

1. The present scenario note, developed by the co-chairs of the intersessional process, Ms. Judith Torres (Uruguay) and Mr. David Morin (Canada), suggests a proposed plan and general expectations for the fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.
2. As set out in resolution IV/4 of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM), the task of the intersessional process is to prepare recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, including consideration for the need to develop measurable objectives in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
3. The intersessional process is open for participation of all Strategic Approach stakeholders.
4. As requested by ICCM4, the intersessional process has been informed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and resolution 1/5 of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), including the related outcome document “Strengthening the sound management of chemicals and wastes in the long term”¹.
5. Further, the Independent Evaluation of the Strategic Approach for 2006-2015² and the Global Chemicals Outlook II³ have provided insights for Strategic Approach stakeholders in looking beyond 2020. These documents assist in setting priorities and identifying gaps and trends, including those that exist between developed and developing countries in their capacity to pursue the sound management of chemicals and waste. Also, deliberations in the intersessional process are informed by stakeholder submissions and outcomes of regional meeting discussions.
6. Recommendations developed by the intersessional process are to be forwarded to the fifth session of the Conference (ICCM5) for its consideration in Bonn, Germany, from 5 to 9 October 2020. The aim is to enable the Conference to take an informed decision on the future arrangements for the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.
7. The present note aims to enable participants at the fourth meeting of the intersessional process to reach a successful conclusion in the development of the requested recommendations in a timely manner.
8. Stakeholders may find further guidance for this fourth meeting in the annotations to the provisional agenda (SAICM/IP.4/1/Add.1).

¹ <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/strengthening-sound-management-chemicals-and-waste-long-term>

² http://www.saicm.org/Portals/12/Documents/reporting/ExecSum_Independent-Evaluation-SAICM-2006-2015.pdf

³ <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/policy-and-governance/global-chemicals-outlook>

II. Timing and organization of the fourth meeting

9. The fourth meeting of the intersessional process will open at 9.30 a.m. on Monday, 23 March 2020. On-site registration for the meeting will commence at 7.30 a.m. on Sunday, 22 March 2020, and will be available throughout the week.
10. The work of the fourth meeting will be conducted in plenary sessions and thematic groups. In structuring plenary discussions, issues will be addressed in the order in which they are presented in the provisional agenda (SAICM/IP.4/1). This structure was discussed in consultation with and approved by the ICCM5 Bureau at its eighth meeting in January 2020.
11. In this scenario note, we as co-chairs have set our views on how to finalize recommendations. It is our expectation that participants will deliberate, make tangible progress on each issue in plenary and during the thematic group discussions and reach agreement, as far as possible, on final recommendations to the fifth session of the Conference.
12. Three thematic groups are proposed to support the work of the plenary and serve as an opportunity for participants to discuss issues in detail so that text may be finalized. The proposed topics for the three thematic groups are: a) strategic objectives, targets, milestones and indicators; b) institutional arrangements and mechanisms to support implementation; and c) financial considerations.
13. Technical briefings will precede the formal meeting on Sunday, 22 March 2020. These briefings will provide an opportunity for various stakeholders to make presentations on important topics and activities which will contribute to a successful outcome. The aim is to inform discussions throughout the rest of the week. An up-to-date programme with more detail has been made available to participants on the SAICM website (www.saicm.org).
14. Given that meeting documents were made available in advance of the meeting and stakeholders were given opportunities to provide input, we expect that all participants will come to this fourth meeting well prepared for a successful outcome so that together we will finalize recommendations to be presented to the fifth session of the Conference.
15. We would also like to remind participants that the rules of procedure of the International Conference on Chemicals Management will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the work and proceedings of this fourth meeting. As set out in Conference Resolution IV/4, the meeting will be conducted in English only.
16. In opening agenda item 3, regional groups, sectoral groups and the IOMC will be invited to provide their views and overarching perspectives on the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020.

III. Objectives of the fourth meeting

17. We would like participants to recall that at the fifth session of the Conference, key decisions will be taken on the future arrangements of the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. The primary goal at this fourth meeting is to finalize the recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 for consideration at the fifth session of the Conference.
18. We as co-chairs appreciate that the task before us at the fourth meeting of the intersessional process is immense. We believe that we must remain ambitious in our approach. We would also like to remind participants that this fourth meeting is a critical milestone and our last opportunity to bring all stakeholders together for face-to-face discussions and ensure we reach our desired outcome at the fifth session of the Conference.
19. The participants at the third meeting of the intersessional process in Bangkok in October 2019 agreed that the secretariat, under the guidance of the intersessional process co-chairs and in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference, would produce for the fourth meeting of the intersessional process a single draft document consisting of the collated outcomes of the four thematic groups of the third meeting of the intersessional process, incorporating them, as appropriate into the outcome document of the Open-ended Working Group contact group on the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. This document is available to participants (SAICM/IP.4/2).

20. We would propose that document SAICM/IP.4/2 be used as the basis for discussions at the fourth meeting of the intersessional process. The agenda of this meeting is structured primarily around the sections of this compilation document, namely:
- (a) Cross-cutting elements, including: vision; scope; principles and approaches;
 - (b) Strategic objectives and targets;
 - (c) Governance and implementation, including: institutional arrangements; mechanisms to support implementation; issues of concern; and
 - (d) Financial considerations.
21. With respect to the cross-cutting elements identified in paragraph 20(a), we expect discussions in the plenary to focus on remaining outstanding issues and removing any remaining brackets within the proposed text, to the extent possible. For the strategic objectives and targets, governance and implementation as well as financial considerations, we propose that these issues be taken up in thematic groups following introductory discussions in plenary.
22. Participants may wish to consider additional recommendations to forward to ICCM5 on areas that will facilitate implementation of the future instrument as well as on other important related elements, such as issues related to the science policy interface that will be taken up under discussions related to governance and implementation.

IV. Key deliverables at this fourth meeting

23. The key outcome at this fourth meeting is finalized recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 for consideration at the fifth session of the Conference.
24. Consideration should be given to the desired outcome(s) of the fifth session of the Conference and any follow-up actions needed and how best to communicate key messages and considerations to decision-makers at the fifth session of the Conference to implement those outcomes.
25. It is proposed to structure and focus the meeting deliberations along three important deliverables for input to the fifth session of the Conference:
- i. Recommendations on a new voluntary multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder instrument. These recommendations aim to replace the current Overarching Policy Strategy⁴ to reflect the current global environment, address weaknesses in the current approach and build on the strengths and lessons learned from SAICM to date.
 - ii. Discuss elements of a High-Level Declaration for consideration at the fifth session of the Conference, building on the Dubai Declaration as a starting point and incorporating aspects to enable an improved governance arrangement.
 - iii. Recommendations for other supporting elements or further work that may be needed to facilitate implementation of the future instrument. The thematic groups may wish to discuss and propose such supporting elements as part of the outcome of their deliberations.
26. It is recommended that participants deliberate and make tangible progress on these topics in plenary and in the thematic groups. For the High-Level Declaration, the Bureau agreed that this may be done through an informal Friends of the President group at the fourth meeting, in a manner that does not coincide with or disrupt our work. Given the limited time and the size of delegations, there will only be three thematic groups. The thematic groups will have very clear and concise mandates such that participants have an opportunity to discuss specific topics in detail and advance text on these topics as needed, which should be results oriented (working on specific deliverables to be presented to plenary).
27. We would like to reiterate that the primary goal at this fourth meeting is to finalize the recommendations regarding the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 for consideration at the fifth session of the Conference. We encourage participants to arrive with a constructive spirit, so we can make significant progress at the fourth, and final, meeting of the intersessional process.

⁴ http://www.saicm.org/Portals/12/Documents/Overarching_Policy_Strategy.pdf

28. We would like participants to recall that after the fourth meeting of the intersessional process, but in advance of the fifth session of the Conference, regional meetings will be held between July and September 2020. These meetings are intended to support the different regions in their preparations for the fifth session of the Conference.
29. In conclusion, we very much look forward to working together with you and achieving a successful outcome at this fourth meeting of the intersessional process in Bucharest, Romania.

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& David Morin (Canada)

Co-chairs of the intersessional process