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Policy issues: State of the environment

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION SS.VII/3 ON STRATEGIC
APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT**

Note by the Executive Director

The present note contains information on progress made in the implementation of Governing Council decision SS.VII/3 of 15 February 2002, including options for taking forward the process of a strategic approach to international chemicals management. The text of the note has been reproduced without formal editing.

* UNEP/GC.22/1.

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION SS.VII/3 ON STRATEGIC APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT

1. In its decision SS.VII/3, Governing Council decided that there is a need to further develop a strategic approach to international chemicals management (SAICM) and endorsed the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety's Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action beyond 2000 as the foundation of this approach. The decision set out consultation requirements and an analytical process involving a review of current and planned chemical safety activities, identification of gaps and the proposing of priorities and projects. The Executive Director was requested to report to Governing Council at its twenty-second session on progress made in implementing this decision, including options for taking the process forward.

Progress in implementing the SAICM decision

2. An initial steering committee has been formed to plan the process for developing the strategic approach. The committee comprises the seven participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC),¹ together with the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank. It should be noted that the steering committee is not a working group that will embark on the substantive development of the strategic approach, as this is something that will require the direct engagement of the full range of stakeholders at various key points in the process. The committee's role is rather that of a facilitative steering mechanism to deal with practical aspects of the SAICM process, such as planning for documentation and consultative meetings. A questionnaire is being issued to Governments and organizations as a preliminary information-gathering measure. In September 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development endorsed the further development of a strategic approach by 2005.

Options for taking the SAICM process forward

3. The steering committee has concluded that fulfilling the potential of the strategic approach to energize the international community's efforts to improve chemicals management and to mainstream chemical safety as a sustainable development issue, will depend on the initiative being positioned as a clear advance on the status quo, for example by:

- the breadth of its inclusiveness (ensuring that Government, international organizations and NGO stakeholders from all sectors, including environment, health, labour, industry, agriculture and development, are engaged);
- the active commitment of the development agencies to supporting capacity-building for enhanced chemicals management;
- the pursuit of a concerted plan with a view to ensuring that objectives agreed under the strategic approach are followed up by commitments from the governing bodies of participating organizations; and
- high-level endorsement of the strategy at the proposed international multi-sector conference.

4. The steering committee proposes that the process of developing a strategic approach should culminate in a high-level, multi-sector conference in late 2005, which would fill the role of the "open-ended consultative meeting involving representatives of all stakeholder groups" referred to in the Governing Council decision. The conference would adopt a strategy document and possibly a political declaration. These documents would be developed during two preparatory meetings and would also draw on: the outcomes of IFCS Forum IV (November 2003); the results of the initial questionnaire; the review of current and planned chemical safety activities, identification of gaps and the proposing of priorities and projects called for in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of decision SS.VII/3; and, where appropriate, on individual sector consultations.

¹ FAO, ILO, OECD, UNEP, UNIDO, UNITAR, WHO

5. The estimated cost of such a process would be about \$4 million spread over three years, the major expenses being the final conference (\$1.1 million) and its two preparatory meetings (\$850,000 each). These costs are based on recent experience with meetings, such as those of the Stockholm and Rotterdam Convention Intergovernmental Negotiating Committees (INCs). Conference services for the SAICM meetings, including translation, interpretation and document reproduction, would be much the same as for the INC meetings, but travel costs would be higher due to the objective of broader multi-sectoral representation. Another principal item in the budget would be core secretariat costs of approximately \$300,000 per year, including one full time professional and a half-time support person, and use of consultants to assist with major documents such as the initial baseline report. Meeting participation costs of partner organizations and a Prepcom bureau have been estimated at about \$120,000 per year. The present understanding is that such funds would need to be raised from extra-budgetary sources. A summary of anticipated costs is provided in the table below:

Item	2003	2004	2005	Total
International Conference on Chemicals Management, Oct. 2005 (3 days)			Participants \$750,000 Conf. services \$350,000	\$1,100,000
Prepcom 1, March-April 2004 (5 days)		Participants \$500,000 Conf. services ² \$350,000		\$850,000
Prepcom 2, January-February 2005 (5 days)			Participants \$500,000 Conf. services \$350,000	\$850,000
UNEP Secretariat	Staff ³ \$250,000 Consultants \$50,000	Staff \$250,000 Consultants \$50,000	Staff \$250,000 Consultants \$50,000	\$900,000
Other participating organizations' secretariat costs, if any, that would need to be covered from central SAICM funds	<i>To be advised</i>	<i>To be advised</i>	<i>To be advised</i>	
Steering committee travel	4 x SC meetings \$60,000 Other \$10,000 ⁴	4 x SC meetings \$60,000 Prepcom1 \$20,000 Other \$20,000	4 x SC meetings \$60,000 Prepcom2 \$20,000 ICCM \$20,000 Other \$10,000	\$280,000

² Venue, translation, interpretation, document reproduction

³ 1 Professional staff and 0.5 General staff

⁴ For example, IFCS regional meetings

Prepcom bureau meetings		\$35,000	\$35,000	\$70,000
Additional individual sectoral consultations (if considered desirable and feasible)	<i>To be advised</i>			
TOTAL				\$4,050,000

6. In looking forward to the 2005 meeting, a number of possible options are under discussion. One alternative could be to link development of the strategic approach to scheduled IFCS Forum meetings. Another alternative might be to utilise the UNEP Global Ministerial Environment Forum in either 2005 or 2006 as the high-level segment of the final conference. It is foreseen that these, and possibly other, alternatives will be discussed within the steering committee, as well as with appropriate stakeholder groups, with an eye towards selecting an approach that is most resource efficient, ensures high-level and multi-sector participation and that can best facilitate the development of the strategic approach.
