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**International Conference on Chemicals**

**Management**

**Third session**

Nairobi, 17– 21 September 2012

Item 2 (d) of the provisional agenda\*

**Organizational matters: organization of work**

## **Scenario note for the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management**

### **Note by the Chair**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The present scenario note, which I have prepared in consultation with the bureau of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, sets out the plan and general expectations for the third session of the Conference.
2. The aim of achieving, by 2020, the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle, and of hazardous wastes, in ways that lead to minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, as set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, has recently been reaffirmed by heads of State and Government and high-level representatives who met at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012. Their call for the effective implementation and strengthening of the Strategic Approach as part of a robust, coherent, effective and efficient system for the sound management of chemicals provides a high-level political direction for the work of the Conference at its third session, particularly in view of the prime function of the Conference to undertake periodic reviews of the Strategic Approach and, in particular, to review progress against the 2020 goal and take strategic decisions, programming, prioritizing and updating the approach as necessary.
3. The present scenario note provides guidance on how the Conference at its third session can help to deliver the vision for the future as described in the Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management and reaffirmed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The theme for the third session of the Conference, “Chemical safety for sustainable development”, further emphasizes the major role that the sound management of chemicals has to play in the attainment of sustainable development. I hope that this scenario note will assist stakeholders in preparing for and achieving significant progress in a number of areas at the session.

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\* SAICM/ICCM.3/1

## II. Timing and organization of the third session

4. The third session of the Conference is taking place at a pivotal time, only a few months after the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, at which the Strategic Approach was specifically referred to in the political vision for “The future we want”.<sup>1</sup> The actions and decisions we take at this crucial session will have a far-reaching effect on our success in meeting our long-standing and critical goals for 2020.

5. The third session will open at 10 a.m. on Monday, 17 September 2012, and is expected to close on Friday, 21 September 2012 by 6 p.m. The day before our first formal day’s work, Sunday, 16 September, has been reserved for preparatory work, including a technical and informational briefing from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., introducing information on reporting on the 20 indicators agreed upon by the Conference to measure progress as well as on endocrine disruptors, the latter of which will be considered by the Conference as a new emerging policy issue. There will also be an opportunity for regional meetings on Sunday, 16 September, and for an afternoon meeting, from 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m., on the Quick Start Programme, including a chance to meet project implementers in an informal setting and take part in a panel discussion on lessons learned from projects for future activities of the Strategic Approach.

6. On Thursday, 20 September 2012, a high-level dialogue will be held to discuss strengthening national chemicals management, taking into account the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and other important initiatives, such as those launched in tandem with the Stockholm+40 Partnership Forum for Sustainable Development, focusing on eight areas that could be reinforced in the coming eight years before the 2020 deadline,<sup>2</sup> and the findings of the Global Chemicals Outlook report,<sup>3</sup> to be launched in early September. The dialogue will take place in plenary and will involve a panel of high-level representatives of Governments and organizations. The dialogue will be aimed at providing overall direction and guidance on areas of focus, including specific elements in the lead up to the 2020 goal.

7. During the third session, the Conference will be invited to recognize the significant financial and in kind contributions of a number of donors and other stakeholders in support of the Quick Start Programme and other activities of the Strategic Approach. An awards ceremony will follow the afternoon meeting on Thursday, 20 September, from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.

8. A series of side events based on the topics covered on the agenda for the session have been organized during lunch periods and on one of the evenings. Representatives are invited to participate in these side events for further in depth information on the key issues before the Conference and other matters relevant to sound chemicals management.

9. The work of the Conference will be conducted in plenary meetings with detailed discussions taking place in smaller groups that I will establish, in consultation with the bureau, as appropriate. Representatives are encouraged to participate in these smaller groups and address the issues raised with a view to reaching consensus. Decisions approved by participants in the smaller groups will be presented to the Conference in plenary meeting for any further clarifications and possible adoption. Requirements for smaller groups and arrangements for their meetings will be based on a plan developed in consultation with the bureau, but ultimately determined on a running basis during the session.

10. I would like to bring to your attention that, at its third session, the Conference will be renewing its leadership by electing new officers to serve as members of the bureau of the Conference together with regional representatives to serve as members of the Quick Start Programme Executive Board until the fourth session of the Conference or until the end of the Quick Start Programme should it end prior to the fourth session. In addition, the Conference shall elect new regional focal points, whose support and collaboration are critical to the work undertaken in the intersessional periods, including the organization of regional meetings. Representatives should arrive at the session prepared to nominate such officers and regional focal points for the endorsement of the Conference towards the end of the week.

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1 The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”, is set out in document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/25.

2 See SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/29.

3 Information on the Global Chemicals Outlook report is contained in document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/15.

### III. Progress made by the Open-ended Working Group

11. At its first meeting, held in Belgrade from 15 to 18 November 2011, the Open-ended Working Group was able to make good progress on the matters before it for consideration and, as a result, we are in a position to reach a conclusion on a number of key issues, including:

(a) Inclusion of new activities related to nanotechnologies and manufactured nanomaterials, and to hazardous substances within the life cycle of electrical and electronic products, in the Global Plan of Action of the Strategic Approach. A compilation by the secretariat on further comments on the proposed activities considered by the Working Group is set out in document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/4 for the consideration of the Conference;

(b) Progress in the implementation of resolution II/4, on emerging policy issues, including lead in paint, chemicals in products, hazardous substances within the life cycle of electrical and electronic products and nanotechnologies and manufactured nanomaterials, and resolution II/5, on managing perfluorinated chemicals and the transition to safer alternatives. The Working Group developed a draft omnibus resolution, set out in decision OEWG.1/3, on emerging policy issues, for consideration by the Conference to provide direction and, where necessary, the mandate for further work on these issues in the 2012–2015 intersessional period. Decision OEWG.1/3 is reproduced in the annex to document SAICM/ICCM.3/13;

(c) New emerging policy issues. The Working Group, at its first meeting, agreed that decision OEWG.1/4A, on endocrine-disrupting chemicals, would be forwarded to the Conference for its consideration;

(d) The proposed strategy for strengthening the engagement of the health sector in the implementation of the Strategic Approach is presented to the Conference for its consideration and possible adoption (see SAICM/ICCM.3/20). The proposed strategy was well received by the Working Group, at its first meeting, and it is my hope that it can be used to further reinforce the importance of multisectoral engagement in our work.

### IV. Additional issues of key importance at the third session

#### A. Reporting on progress in implementation of the Strategic Approach

12. A summary of the findings from periodic reporting by stakeholders together with baseline and other supplementary information will facilitate the first evaluation by the Conference of progress towards the 2020 goal (see document SAICM/ICCM.3/4). Information compiled on the 20 indicators agreed upon by the Conference at its second session will also provide additional insights on sources of assistance for capacity-building activities and implementation of chemicals and wastes conventions and other key international instruments (see documents SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/6).

#### B. Financial and technical resources for implementation

13. There are three critical subjects to be considered under agenda item 4 (d), on financial and technical resources for implementation, as follows:

(a) UNEP Executive Director's draft proposal on an integrated approach to financing the sound management of chemicals and wastes. This will be the first opportunity for Strategic Approach stakeholders to consider and discuss the draft proposal by the Executive Director of UNEP (see document SAICM/ICCM.3/12). Guidance and input from the Conference will contribute to shaping this initiative, how it will proceed and its ultimate success. Action by the Conference may come in the form of a decision to be considered further by the Governing Council at its twenty-seventh session in accordance with its decision SS.XXII/4 on the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes;

(b) Conclusions and recommendations of the Executive Board on the midterm evaluation of the Quick Start Programme (see SAICM/ICCM.3/8), including its recommendation for a time-limited extension of the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund. The Quick Start Programme has been successful in supporting initial enabling activities for the sound management of chemicals in 103 countries and it has been cited in many forums as providing a practical and accessible mechanism to quickly initiate activities. The Executive Board recommended that the Conference should consider a time-limited extension to the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund as the discussions on a more sustainable funding mechanism continue in order to avoid gaps in the implementation of the Strategic Approach. Representatives are urged to arrive at the session fully prepared to discuss this agenda item with a view to reaching a conclusion on the future of the Quick Start Programme and its financing;

(c) Wider support for implementation of the Strategic Approach. In compliance with resolution II/3, on financial and technical resources for implementation, reports on steps undertaken to implement the financial arrangements of the Strategic Approach, presented to the Conference by relevant financial institutions, including the World Bank, regional development banks and other international, regional and subregional funding institutions, reveal that much work remains to be done to raise the profile of sound chemicals management among these institutions. Representatives are encouraged to arrive at the session prepared to consider how better to engage these institutions in the implementation of the Strategic Approach, particularly in the light of the political support expressed by heads of State and Governments and high-level representatives in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”.

14. The summary by the co-chairs of the contact group on finance and technical assistance established by the Open-ended Working Group at its first meeting will also help to inform discussions under agenda item 4 (d) (see SAICM/ICCM.3/11).

### **C. Indicative budget and staffing structure of the secretariat**

15. While the Strategic Approach is a voluntary framework, the effective support of the secretariat, particularly in facilitating meetings and intersessional work and promoting information sharing among stakeholders, is vital to the achievement of our collective efforts. In this regard, the Conference will review and approve the proposed indicative budget and staffing structure of the secretariat for the coming intersessional period.

## **V. Desired outcomes of the third session**

16. Having established how we may wish to work during the third session, I would like to conclude by considering what we might hope to accomplish by the end of the session. I expect that we will have fully discussed all the items on the agenda in a comprehensive manner; identified through the high-level dialogue and other discussions, gaps in the implementation of the Strategic Approach, and agreed on collaborative action on priority areas towards achieving the 2020 goal; adopted resolutions in relation to emerging policy issues; agreed on a health sector strategy; reached agreement on the future of the Quick Start Programme and adopted resolutions related to the longer-term financing of chemicals and wastes, including the Strategic Approach; and reached agreement on the budget and staffing structure of the secretariat for the period 2013–2015. More importantly, I expect that through our discussions, we will have reached consensus on matters that need to be addressed in order to strengthen this voluntary framework and bring us closer to the achievement of the 2020 goal.

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