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Implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management: financial and technical resources for implementation

Report on the implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund

Note by the secretariat

- 1. The annex to the present note contains a report on the implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund, in accordance with paragraph 24 of the Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.
- 2. The information presented in the report was drawn from reports considered by the Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme, in particular those considered at the seventh meeting of the Executive Board, held on 7 and 8 May 2012. That information has been partially updated by the secretariat as appropriate to reflect the status of projects following the meeting of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee held on 9 May 2012.
- 3. The report is provided for the information of participants.

Annex

Report on the implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund

I. Introduction

- 1. In its resolution I/4, the International Conference on Chemicals Management established the Quick Start Programme for the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management objectives. In the same decision, the Conference decided that the objective of the Quick Start Programme was "to support initial enabling capacity-building and implementation activities in developing countries, least developed countries, small island developing States and countries with economies in transition". In its resolution I/1, the Conference urged Governments, regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to make contributions to the voluntary trust fund established by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to support Strategic Approach implementation activities under the Quick Start Programme.
- 2. In resolution I/4, the Conference established the Quick Start Programme Executive Board, which provides operational guidance on the implementation of the strategic priorities of the Programme and advises on other matters of relevance as required, and invited the representatives of participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to form a Trust Fund Implementation Committee to review and appraise project proposals seeking funding from the Trust Fund. The Trust Fund Implementation Committee reports to the Committee on the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund, comprising regional representatives and donors to the Trust Fund, which in turn reports to the Executive Board.
- 3. The Executive Board meets once a year to review the progress of the Quick Start Programme on the basis of reports from the Trust Fund Implementation Committee and the committee of the Board as well as other relevant information.
- 4. The present report of the Executive Board on the implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund was prepared on the basis of reports considered by the Board at its seventh meeting, held in Geneva on 7 and 8 May 2012. It provides a status update on the implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund. Section II provides information to the Conference at its third session on the financial aspects of the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund and its administration, including secretariat support to the Quick Start Programme, while section III provides information on the implementation of the business plan.
- 5. Additional details on the implementation of the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund are set out in the reports by the secretariat on the status of projects funded under the Quick Start Programme (see SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/16/Rev.1) and the status of implementation of the Quick Start Programme business plan (see SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/26), considered by the Executive Board at its seventh meeting. A list of the countries and organizations participating as members of the Executive Board of the Quick Start Programme is set out in annex I to the present report.

II. Status of the Quick Start Programme

A. Meetings of the Executive Board and the Implementation Committee

6. In resolution I/4, the Conference established the Executive Board, ¹ consisting of two government representatives of each of the United Nations regions and all the bilateral and multilateral donors and other contributors to the Programme, and invited representatives of the participating organizations of IOMC² and UNDP to form a Trust Fund Implementation Committee, which reviews and appraises proposals for projects to be financed by the Trust Fund.

¹ A list of current Quick Start Programme Executive Board members (countries and organizations) is set out in annex I.

The participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations Development

- 7. Since 2009, the Executive Board has held three annual meetings in Geneva, as follows:
- (a) Fifth meeting, held on 29 and 30 June 2010 and co-chaired by Mr. Jeffrey A. Headley (Barbados) and Ms. Susan Gardner (United States of America);
- (b) Sixth meeting, held on 13 and 14 September 2011 and co-chaired by Mr. Nassereddin Heidari (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Mr. Gordo Jain (Germany);
- (c) Seventh meeting, held on 7 and 8 May 2012 and co-chaired by Mr. Nassereddin Heidari (Islamic Republic of Iran) and Mr. Gordo Jain (Germany).
- 8. In accordance with resolution I/4, the Executive Board has, in organizing its work, made provision for a meeting of the committee of the Executive Board on the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund, comprising donors to the Trust Fund and the regional representatives. The Board has agreed on its rules of procedure, which are available on the Strategic Approach website.
 - 9. The Board provides operational guidance on the Programme, including on eligibility for financing from the Trust Fund and on administrative matters and provides advice on other relevant matters as appropriate. It provides its guidance on the basis of reports of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee on project implementation and of UNEP, as trustee of the Trust Fund, on the financial situation of the Trust Fund. The Quick Start Programme business plan, adopted in 2007, was updated by the Executive Board at its fifth meeting, in 2010, and at its sixth meeting, in 2011. The Board also set a fund-raising target of \$4 million for 2012.
 - 10. Since the second session of the Conference, held in May 2009, the Trust Fund Implementation Committee has held six meetings, as follows:
 - (a) Eighth meeting, held in Washington, D.C., on 15 and 16 October 2009;
 - (b) Ninth meeting, held in Geneva on 30 and 31 March 2010;
 - (c) Tenth meeting, held in Rome from 18 to 20 October 2010;
 - (d) Eleventh meeting, held in Geneva on 13 and 14 April 2011;
 - (e) Twelfth meeting, held in Paris on 22 and 23 November 2011;
 - (f) Thirteenth meeting, held in Geneva on 9 May 2012.
 - 11. The eighth and ninth meetings of the Implementation Committee were chaired by Mr. Robert Visser of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth meetings were chaired by Mr. Mark Davis of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The Committee adopted its rules of procedure at its second meeting.³
 - 12. Following each round of applications to the Trust Fund, the Implementation Committee reviewed and appraised proposals after they had first been screened by the secretariat for completeness and eligibility. Over the course of 12 rounds of applications, the Committee approved 154 projects with total funding of \$32,281,403.⁴ In addition, the Implementation Committee provided guidance on the process of applying to the Trust Fund, including in relation to application forms and guidelines, and on project implementation arrangements, including the monitoring and evaluation of projects. The Committee monitors the implementation of Trust Fund projects and reports to the Executive Board on their status.

B. Financial update of the Trust Fund

13. The Quick Start Programme was established in 2006 by the International Conference of Chemicals Management at its first session to support initial capacity-building activities for the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. From the date of its establishment to March 2012, the Quick Start Programme has mobilized a total of \$40.8 million. This amount includes \$33.3 million in Trust Fund contributions and \$7.5 million in cash and/or

Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the World Health Organization and the World Bank.

- The Implementation Committee's rules of procedure are available from the Strategic Approach website.
- Following the suspension of eight projects, the Quick Start Programme portfolio includes 146 projects with the total funding of \$31,237,454. See also document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF16/Rev.1, which contains information on the status of projects funded under the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund until the tenth Quick Start Programme applications round.

in-kind contributions from project implementers and executing agencies. In addition, \$57.5 million⁵ in non-Trust Fund contributions were reported and an amount of approximately \$5 million in Quick Start Programme funds was used to leverage up to \$25.2 million from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to support projects in Africa and Asia-Pacific.⁶

- 14. Since 2006, the Trust Fund has received pledges for contributions totalling approximately \$33.3 million from the Governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Madagascar, the Republic of Korea, Pakistan, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, as well as from the European Commission and the International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA).
- 15. In 2007, the Executive Board developed a business plan that included a cumulative minimum fund-raising target of \$40,811,477⁷ to be raised by the end of 2011. As at 31 December 2011, the total contributions and pledges received stood at \$33,000,932, 8 representing an achievement rate of approximately 81 per cent and a shortfall of \$7,810,545. Pledges and contributions made in 2012 so far amount to \$276,286, not including the European Commission contribution of €60,000 recorded in 2011 but to be disbursed in 2012. More details are provided below (see sect. III) and in the note by the secretariat on the status of the implementation of the Quick Start Programme business plan (SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/26).

C. Application rounds

- 16. Existing Trust Fund arrangements provide that each year two application rounds with fixed deadlines are held. Governments of developing countries and countries with economies in transition are eligible for support through the Trust Fund for projects with a value of between \$50,000 and \$250,000 which are of a maximum duration of 24 months. Proposals may be presented by Governments participating in the Strategic Approach that have given appropriate formal recognition to the Strategic Approach, at a minimum by designating an official Strategic Approach national focal point. On an exceptional basis, civil society networks participating in the Strategic Approach can also be eligible to present project proposals, which must be endorsed by the Strategic Approach national focal points. Projects may also involve such project executing agencies as intergovernmental organizations or convention secretariats.
- 17. Since its establishment, 12 rounds of applications to the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund have been held. The secretariat has screened 385 project proposals for completeness and eligibility, of which 298 applications were forwarded for appraisal by the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund Implementation Committee. The Committee approved 146° projects, valued at approximately \$31.2 million and involving 105 countries, including 54 least developed countries or small island developing States, ¹⁰ as well as 16 civil society organizations. According to the Quick Start Programme business plan, one more application round is anticipated for the Trust Fund before it ceases to receive contributions in September 2012, depending upon the availability of funds. ¹¹ Annex II to the present note contains a summary of projects approved per application round.

Non-trust contributions have been revised to ensure no double-counting had been made, following a request by the Executive Board at its sixth meeting.

Since 2006, the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund has been providing funding for eligible developing countries and countries with economies in transition for national and multi-country projects related and complementary to the GEF projects "Capacity strengthening and technical assistance for the implementation of Stockholm Convention national implementation plans in African least developed countries and small island developing States" and "Pacific POPs release reduction through improved management of solid and hazardous wastes" in Asia-Pacific for a total of \$16 million and \$9.2 million, respectively.

This figure was revised at the sixth meeting of the Executive Board to include the period between January and September 2012 for a total of \$44,811,477 for the entire life of the Trust Fund.

This amount includes a contribution from the European Commission made in 2011, to be disbursed in 2012.

⁹ Since 2006, the Implementation Committee has approved 154 projects. Following the suspension of 8 projects, 146 projects remain in the Quick Start Programme portfolio.

¹⁰ Further information on Quick Start Programme Trust Fund projects is contained in document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/16/Rev.1.

Owing to the lack of funds in the Trust Fund, the thirteenth application round has been postponed until after the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management.

D. Status of projects

18. A summary of the status of the implementation of the Quick Start Programme project portfolio for the first 10 rounds of application is set out below. Projects are classified in four main groups according to their status: completed projects, projects under way, projects in the early stages of implementation and suspended projects. Detailed information on each project is contained in the note by the secretariat on the status of the projects funded under the Quick Start Programme (SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/16/Rev.1).

1. Completed projects

- 19. As at 15 March 2012, 44 projects from rounds one to six had completed their activities. Of these, 32 are considered "duly completed", since they have submitted all the required deliverables. The remaining 12 are in the process of submitting their final reports. For most of the completed projects, activities and main key outcomes were aimed at:
 - (a) Developing national chemicals profiles;
 - (b) Developing national capacity assessments;
 - (c) Setting priorities for activities for the implementation of the Strategic Approach;
 - (d) Developing risk assessment methodologies;
- (e) Mainstreaming issues pertaining to the sound management of chemicals into the national development plans of the participating countries;
 - (f) Improving cohesion and implementation of existing international agreements;
 - (g) Developing national awareness-raising campaigns on sound chemicals management.
- 20. Annex II, table A.1, of document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/16/Rev.1 lists the completed projects that have provided their final reports, with relevant information on the dates of the agreement, funding and the status of the project, while table A.2 provides information about projects that have completed their activities but have not yet submitted final reports.

2. Projects under way

21. There are 61 projects from the first to the ninth rounds which are in the process of implementing project activities. A total of 19 projects from rounds two to nine are demonstrating good progress according to their workplans; a further 21 projects are progressing but facing delays, and proponents have therefore either requested project extensions or intend to do so. The remaining 21 projects have had serious issues, such as failing to submit reports or to complete activities within 36 months after the signing of the agreement. These projects were brought to the attention of the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund Implementation Committee for a decision on suspension or extension. The Committee recommended extending 18 of these projects and suspending 3. Annex III of document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/16/Rev.1 contains a list of projects under way with some relevant comments relating to the dates of the agreement, funding and status of the project.

3. Projects in the early stages of implementation

22. There are 40 projects from the ninth to the eleventh rounds that are either in the initial stages of project implementation or completion of legal agreement to enable implementation. Agreements have been concluded and signed for 33 projects and preliminary arrangements for their implementation have begun; 7 agreements remain to be concluded. Annex IV, table C, of document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/16/Rev.1 contains a summary of projects in the early stages of implementation.

4. Suspended projects¹²

23. Eight projects from application rounds one, two, three and seven have been suspended for reasons explained in annex V of document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/16/Rev.1. One of the eight was resubmitted and approved in the eighth round, while another one was resubmitted and received deferred conditional approval in the eleventh round.

E. Secretariat support for the Quick Start Programme

24. In resolution I/4, the Conference requested the Strategic Approach secretariat to perform the following functions in relation to the Quick Start Programme:

¹² The project in Eritrea was suspended at the second round and re-approved at the eighth round; the project in Belarus was submitted at the eleventh round and received deferred conditional approval.

- (a) To facilitate meetings of the Executive Board and Trust Fund Implementation Committee;
 - (b) To provide support to the Executive Board;
 - (c) To make publicly available reports provided to the Executive Board;
 - (d) To provide administrative support to the Trust Fund; and
- (e) To screen Trust Fund project proposals for completeness and eligibility and submit them to the Implementation Committee.

In addition, the secretariat's functions defined in paragraph 28 of the Overarching Policy Strategy include the provision of guidance to stakeholders in the initiation of project proposals.

25. Since 2009, the number of projects managed by the secretariat has more than doubled, from 71 to the current 146 projects. Despite this increase, the administrative infrastructure supporting the Quick Start Programme has not changed, thereby creating an excess workload that has affected the capacity of the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to service efficiently all aspects of the Quick Start Programme. In order to facilitate the management of the increasing information related to Quick Start Programme projects, the secretariat has developed electronic tools to facilitate management of the information requirements of the Programme until all activities for approved projects have been completed.

1. Meeting facilitation of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee and the Quick Start Programme Executive Board

26. As at May 2012, the secretariat had convened and serviced 7 meetings of the Executive Board and 13 meetings of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee. The secretariat coordinates preparation and follow-up for each meeting with the meeting chair or co-chairs, including the preparation of meeting documents and correspondence, the organization of teleconferences and travel arrangements for funded participants. For the Implementation Committee, a summary of each of the proposals is prepared, as well as detailed reports on the status of projects and other issues related to the administration of the Quick Start Programme.

2. Administrative support to the Quick Start Programme and its Trust Fund

- 27. As at March 2012, 127 agreements had been completed, out of a total of 150 projects approved in the first eleven rounds. Delays in the completion of the agreements were a result of various factors, including consultations with project implementers and executing agencies and the fact that the secretariat had not anticipated the burden that the rounds would place on its ability to process the agreements from the administrative and programmatic point of view.
- 28. As part of its administrative duties, the secretariat monitors the progress of funded projects. Each project must submit half-yearly progress reports, as well as one midterm independent evaluation report and one final independent evaluation report. The secretariat oversees the timely submission of these reports and assesses the overall performance of the projects. If remedial action is required, the secretariat consults the Quick Start Programme Implementation Committee for guidance.
- 29. The secretariat maintains a record of trust fund contributions and facilitates the conclusion of agreements with donors, the transfer and recording of funds and reporting. These tasks are coordinated with UNEP Chemicals Branch administration and the Treasury Section of the Budget and Financial Management Service of the United Nations Office at Nairobi.
- 30. In addition, the secretariat has facilitated the establishment of the Senior Experts Resource Group, as agreed by the Quick Start Programme Executive Board. The initiative was launched in July 2011, and its activities were initiated thanks to the financial support of the International Council of Chemical Associations and the Governments of Switzerland and the United States of America. There are currently eight expressions of interest in participating in the Senior Experts Resource Group, and the secretariat expects that requests for expertise will be made by the project implementers. Resources permitting, the secretariat will set up an online system that will facilitate matching expertise with technical requirements from project implementers to ensure that this valuable programme is successful in assisting project implementers with technical expertise.

3. Screening of trust fund project proposals for completeness and eligibility

31. The secretariat performs the function of screening project proposals for completeness and eligibility and, as defined in paragraph 28 of the Overarching Policy Strategy, guidance is provided to stakeholders in the initiation of project proposals. The secretariat assists prospective applicants

through correspondence and by responding to requests for clarification over the telephone. Following each application round, the secretariat informs applicants of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee's decisions and evaluates whether conditionally approved projects have met the conditions for final approval before preparing legal agreements with funding recipients or project executing agencies.

F. Midterm evaluation of the Quick Start Programme

- 32. The International Conference on Chemicals Management, in its resolution II/3 on financial and technical resources for implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, requested the Quick Start Programme Executive Board to evaluate the Programme. Accordingly, the Executive Board approved the terms of reference for a midterm review of the Quick Start Programme at its fifth meeting, held in Geneva on 29 and 30 June 2010. The secretariat engaged the services of two consultants to conduct the review in May 2011, in accordance with the approved terms of reference. The findings of the review were considered by the Executive Board at its sixth meeting, held in Geneva on 13 and 14 September 2011. The Board decided that additional input from stakeholders was required in order for them to make recommendations to the Conference. The report was further revised by another consultant to incorporate additional input from stakeholders, and the unedited final draft of the report was presented to the Executive Board at its seventh meeting, held in Geneva on 7 and 8 May 2012, for its consideration.
- 33. The Executive Board evaluated the Programme on the basis of the evidence contained in the revised final draft report of the midterm review of the Quick Start Programme and drew conclusions and made recommendations for the consideration of the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its third session. The conclusions and recommendations of the Executive Board are set out in document SAICM/ICCM.3/8 and the final report of the midterm review of the Quick Start Programme is contained in the annex to document SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/17.

III. Implementation of the Quick Start Programme business plan

- 34. To measure the success of the programme, the Executive Board adopted a business plan at its second meeting, held on 23 and 24 April 2007. Further updates were made at the third, fourth, fifth and sixth meetings of the Executive Board. The plan sets out a resource mobilization strategy to help ensure the sustainability of the Programme through the replenishment of its trust fund on a steady and equitable basis by broadening its donor base.
- 35. The note by the secretariat on the status of the implementation of the Quick Start Programme business plan (SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/26) summarizes the progress made in reaching the performance indicators set out in the plan, using baseline information contained in the annex to the plan. The business plan was conceived as a living document and a working tool to be regularly updated and re-evaluated at future meetings of the Board. Paragraph 3.7.1 of the business plan stipulates that "the Quick Start Programme Executive Board will monitor progress in implementing the business plan at its annual meetings from 2008 to 2013. The Board will make periodical adjustments to the business plan, including fundraising targets, in the light of progress, and will provide guidance to the secretariat as required. Strategies may require revisiting in the event that targets are not being fulfilled."
- 36. Overall, the Quick Start Programme has demonstrated progress in attaining most targets and strategies, including the use of Quick Start Programme seed money to leverage funds from other sources, and has fallen short of achieving the target of repeat contributions before the third session of the Conference by at least 60 per cent of donors. In addition, two targets regarding the enlarging of the donor base have not been reached, reflecting the challenges faced by the Programme in attracting new donors. The outreach and equitable delivery strategy and targets, which were established to ensure the participation of underrepresented regions and least developed countries and small island developing States, have all been achieved or have progressed satisfactorily.

Annex I

List of Quick Start Programme Executive Board members

Regional representatives

Africa

Burundi

Nigeria

Asia and the Pacific

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Thailand

Central and Eastern Europe

Armenia

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Latin America and the Caribbean

Rarhados

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Western Europe and others

Finland

Switzerland

Donors

Australia

Austria

Belgium

Czech Republic

France

Germany

Hungary

India

Madagascar

Netherlands

Norway

Republic of Korea

Romania

Slovenia

South Africa

Spain

Sweden

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

United States of America

European Commission

Contributors

Canada

Japan

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

United Nations Development Programme

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

World Health Organization

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

International Council of Chemical Associations

The Dow Chemical Company

International POPs Elimination Network

Annex II

Summary of Quick Start Programme Trust Fund approved projects

		Round											
	Total	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII
Total approved projects, including suspended projects	154	8	21	11	17	17	8	10	9	19	23	7	4
1. Civil society projects	16	1	1	2	2	1	1	0	2	2	3	1	0
2. Government projects	134	7	20	9	15	16	7	10	7	17	20	6	4
2.1 Individual	118	4	20	9	12	15	5	6	6	16	20	5	4
2.2 Multi-country	16	3	0	0	3	1	2	4	1	1	0	1	0
Countries involved (Government and civil society projects)	105	20	21	15	21	20	10	21	12	19	24	10	4
Africa	41	10	7	5	2	11	6	11	5	9	6	2	1
Asia and the Pacific	28	2	5	1	9	4	2	6	5	5	6	7	0
Central and Eastern Europe	8	4	1	2	2	0	1	1	1	2	2	0	0
Latin America and the Caribbean	28	4	6	7	8	5	1	3	1	3	10	1	3
Total funding granted (excluding suspended projects) (United States dollars)	31 237 454	1 796 662	1 779 591	1 982 155	3 764 095	3 922 089	1 979 845	2 226 478	1 766 896	4 507 347	5 394 607	1 461 795	655 894
Funding granted to Least Developed Countries and small island developing States (United States dollars)	15 583 150	621 590	867 841	523 022	1 963 818	1 500 000	999 734	1 976 478	763 680	2 819 652	2 727 350	671 152	148 833