



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

FIFTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
Provisional agenda item 19

A59/41
11 May 2006

Collaboration within the United Nations system and with other intergovernmental organizations, including United Nations reform process

Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

Report by the Secretariat

1. As requested by resolution WHA56.22 on participation of global health partners in the development of the strategic approach, the completed Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management is herewith submitted to the Health Assembly for consideration. The Strategic Approach was completed and adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management (Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 4-6 February 2006), whose participants included representatives of 151 governments, nine organizations of the United Nations system, eight intergovernmental organizations and 47 nongovernmental organizations. The Conference commended the Strategic Approach to the attention of the governing bodies of relevant intergovernmental organizations. The Governing Council of UNEP, at its 9th Special Session (Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 7-9 February 2006) adopted a decision endorsing the completed Strategic Approach and the role and activities of UNEP in relation to its implementation.

Overview of the Strategic Approach

2. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management comprises three core texts (see annexes 1-3): the Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management, the Overarching Policy Strategy and the Global Plan of Action. Among the resolutions adopted by the conference were decisions on implementation arrangements, the Quick Start Programme and the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety.

3. The Strategic Approach aims inter alia to meet the concern that chemicals continue to contaminate the environment worldwide, impairing the health and welfare of millions. It responds to the stated need to assess and manage chemicals more effectively in order to achieve the 2020 goal, articulated in paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,¹ for the sound management of chemicals. The scope of the Strategic Approach includes (a) environmental, economic, social, health and labour aspects of chemical safety and (b) agricultural and industrial chemicals, with a view to promoting sustainable development and covering chemicals at all stages of their life-cycle, including in products. It does not cover products to the extent that the health and environmental

¹ Adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa, September 2002).

aspects of the safety of the chemical and products are regulated by a domestic food or pharmaceutical authority or arrangement. The Strategic Approach is not a legally-binding instrument. The Global Plan of Action contains activities that may be undertaken voluntarily by stakeholders, according to their applicability, in order to pursue the commitments and objectives expressed in the High-level Declaration and the Overarching Policy Strategy.

4. The Conference will be reconvened in 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2020 in order periodically to review progress in the implementation of the Strategic Approach, and will be served by a UNEP-based secretariat. Other institutional arrangements to support implementation and taking stock of progress on the Strategic Approach will include national focal points, national coordination (inter-ministerial processes are recommended), regional focal points, regional meetings (as appropriate), and, at the international level, a periodic review process. In addition, the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals¹ was requested to continue to perform a coordinating function for intergovernmental organization activities and work programmes. WHO currently acts as the administering organization for this Inter-Organization Programme. In addition, it was decided that future sessions of the Conference should be held back-to-back with meetings of the governing bodies of relevant intergovernmental organizations, where appropriate.²

5. The objective of the Quick Start Programme, which includes establishment of a Trust Fund, is to support activities to enable initial capacity-building and implementation in developing countries, least developed countries, small island developing States and countries with economies in transition. The Conference invited the representatives of the seven participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals and UNDP, to form an implementation committee for projects financed by the Quick Start Programme Trust Fund and decided to establish the Quick Start Programme Executive Board, consisting of two government representatives from each of the United Nations regions and all the bilateral and multilateral donors and other contributors to the Programme.

The main outcomes for the health sector

6. The main outcomes of the negotiations on the Strategic Approach for the health sector, including WHO, relate to: inclusion of all the priorities expressed by the health sector (which were contained in the progress report on implementation of resolution WHA56.22 on the Strategic Approach noted by the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly³ – see below); confirmation that the Strategic Approach is multisectoral; institutional arrangements that enable participation of the health sector; recognition of the important role of the health sector in implementation; confirmation of WHO's lead role on health matters in the secretariat of the Strategic Approach; and inclusion of WHO in the trust fund implementation committee. In relation to the secretariat, the Conference welcomed a potential offer from WHO of a professional staff member.

7. The priorities developed by the health sector and which are fully reflected in the Strategic Approach text are:

¹ The participating organizations are ILO, FAO, WHO, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, UNEP, UNIDO and OECD, with UNDP and the World Bank as observers.

² Overarching policy strategy, paragraph 25. Document UNEP/GCSS.IX/6/Add.1.

³ Document WHA58/2005/REC/3, summary record of the eleventh meeting of Committee A.

- actions to improve ability to access, interpret and apply scientific knowledge
- filling of gaps in scientific knowledge
- elaborating globally harmonized methods for chemical risk assessment
- devising better ways to determine impacts of chemicals on health, to set priorities for action and to monitor progress of the Strategic Approach
- building capabilities of countries to deal with poisonings and chemical incidents
- formulating strategies directed specifically at the health of children and workers
- promoting alternatives to highly toxic and persistent chemicals
- formulating strategies aimed at prevention of ill-health and disease caused by chemicals

Possible next steps for the health sector

8. The next steps fall into two main categories: health-focused implementation activities and institutional arrangements. The health sector, including WHO, has an established track-record of work in the high-level health-sector priority areas. The next step would involve focusing implementation efforts on those activities of the Strategic Approach of most relevance to the health sector at country, regional and international levels. The Conference encouraged the governing bodies of relevant intergovernmental organizations to endorse or otherwise appropriately acknowledge the Strategic Approach with a view to incorporating its objectives into their programmes of work within their mandates and to report thereon to the International Conference on Chemicals Management. For WHO, the Strategic Approach could be taken into account in future programmes of work. In addition, the priority activity of formulating strategies for the health of workers is also within the mandate of ILO, with which WHO has an established joint programme of cooperation.

9. Given that resolution WHA56.22 provided a mandate for the Director-General to facilitate health-sector input to the development of the Strategic Approach, a similar arrangement could be made for its implementation. In view of the Strategic Approach's institutional arrangements, the next steps for the health sector at country level would include engagement in the national and regional processes that are being established. There should be one national focal point for official contact with the secretariat of the Strategic Approach and some governments may wish to nominate such focal points from the health sector. In any case, a network of national health contacts would aid WHO in facilitating the implementation activities of the health sector, through its regional offices as appropriate.

10. The presence of WHO in the trust fund implementation committee will allow due weight to be given to health considerations in funding decisions

ACTION BY THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

11. The Health Assembly is invited to consider the following draft resolution:

The Fifty-ninth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management¹;

Recalling the request in resolution WHA56.22 on the participation of global health partners in the further development of the strategic approach to international chemicals management for the completed strategic approach to be submitted to the Health Assembly for consideration;

Recalling the first principle of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, namely, that “Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature”;²

Recalling paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation³ adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development on 4 September 2002, and paragraph 56 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 2005,⁴ in which heads of State and Government resolved to promote such a strategic approach;

Welcoming the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, consisting of the Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management, the Overarching Policy Strategy and the Global Plan of Action, as adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 6 February 2006;

Noting the endorsement of the Strategic Approach by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme at its 9th Special Session, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 9 February 2006;

Welcoming the multisectoral nature of the Strategic Approach and the spirit of coordination and cooperation between the participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, and the important role of UNEP in the development and implementation of the Strategic Approach;

Noting the active participation of the health sector, including WHO, in the development of the Strategic Approach, that comprises the priorities developed by the health sector, as noted by the Fifty-eighth World Health Assembly;⁵

¹ See Document Number A59/41.

² Document A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I), Principle 1.

³ Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August - 4 September 2002 (United Nations publications, Sales no. E.03.II.A1) chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

⁴ Resolution 60/1.

⁵ Document WHA58/2005/REC/3, summary record of the eleventh meeting of Committee A.

Mindful of WHO's role in providing international leadership on the human-health aspects of the sound management of chemicals;

Mindful also of WHO's contribution to the sound management of chemicals through the International Programme on Chemical Safety, a cooperative venture between ILO, WHO and UNEP, and the established joint programme of cooperation between WHO and the ILO on workers' health;

Recognizing the need for health interests at country level to be addressed in the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management,

1. ENDORSES the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management as contained in the Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management, the Overarching Policy Strategy and the Global Plan of Action;¹

2. URGES Member States:

(1) to take full account of the health aspects of chemical safety in national implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management;

(2) to participate in national, regional and international efforts to implement the Strategic Approach, including the International Conference on Chemicals Management;

(3) to nominate a national Strategic Approach focal point from the health sector, where appropriate, in order to maintain contact with WHO;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to facilitate implementation by the health-sector of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, focusing on human health-related elements, and to establish a network of national Strategic Approach focal points for this purpose;

(2) to provide support for implementation of the Strategic Approach by working with partners in the Inter-Organization Programme on the Sound Management of Chemicals and the International Programme on Chemical Safety, and with ILO on workers' health as related to in the Strategic Approach;

(3) to inform, on behalf of the Health Assembly, the International Conference on Chemicals Management of progress in implementing its resolution.²

¹ Document UNEP/GCSS.IX/6/Add.1.

² Resolution 1, paragraph 3, in document UNEP/GCSS.IX/6/Add.1, Annex III.

ANNEX I

[UNEDITED ADVANCE FINAL]**Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management¹**

We, the ministers, heads of delegation and representatives of civil society and the private sector, assembled at the International Conference on Chemicals Management in Dubai from 4 to 6 February 2006, declare the following:

The sound management of chemicals is essential if we are to achieve sustainable development, including the eradication of poverty and disease, the improvement of human health and the environment and the elevation and maintenance of the standard of living in countries at all levels of development;

Significant, but insufficient, progress has been made in international chemicals management through the implementation of chapter 19 of Agenda 21² and the International Labour Organization Conventions No. 170 on Safety in the Use of Chemicals at Work and No. 174 on the Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents, , the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, as well as in addressing particularly hazardous chemicals through the recent entry into force of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and the adoption of the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;

The private sector has made considerable efforts to promote chemical safety through voluntary programmes and initiatives, such as product stewardship and the chemical industry's Responsible Care programme;

Non-governmental public health and environmental organizations, trade unions and other civil society organizations have made important contributions to the promotion of chemical safety;

Progress in chemicals management has not, however, been sufficient globally and the environment worldwide continues to suffer from air, water and land contamination, impairing the health and welfare of millions;

The need to take concerted action is accentuated by a wide range of chemical safety concerns at the international level, including a lack of capacity for managing chemicals in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, dependency on pesticides in agriculture, exposure of workers to harmful chemicals and concern about the long-term effects of chemicals on both human health and the environment;

The global production, trade and use of chemicals are increasing, with growth patterns placing an increasing chemicals management burden on developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in particular the least developed among them and small island developing States, and presenting them with special difficulties in meeting this challenge. As a result, fundamental changes are needed in the way that societies manage chemicals;

We are determined to implement the applicable chemicals management agreements to which we are Party, strengthen the coherence and synergies that exist between them and work to address, as appropriate, existing gaps in the framework of international chemicals policy;

¹ Document UNEP/GCSS.IX.6/Add. 1, Annex I.

² *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

We commit ourselves in a spirit of solidarity and partnership to achieving chemical safety and thereby assisting in fighting poverty, protecting vulnerable groups, and advancing public health and human security;

We commit ourselves to respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms, understanding and respecting ecosystem integrity and addressing the gap between the current reality and our ambition to elevate global efforts to achieve the sound management of chemicals;

We are unwavering in our commitment to promoting the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes throughout their life-cycle, in accordance with Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,¹ in particular paragraph 23. We are convinced that the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management constitutes a significant contribution towards the internationally agreed development goals set out in the Millennium Declaration. It builds upon previous international initiatives on chemical safety and promotes the development of a multi- and cross-sectoral and participatory strategic approach. ;

We therefore adopt the Overarching Policy Strategy, which, together with the present declaration, constitutes our firm commitment to the Strategic Approach and its implementation;

We recommend the use and further development of the Global Plan of Action, to address current and ever-changing societal needs, as a working tool and guidance document for meeting the commitments to chemicals management expressed in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,² Agenda 21, the Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety,³ the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the 2005 World Summit Outcome⁴ and this Strategic Approach;

We are determined to realize the benefits of chemistry, including green chemistry, for improved standards of living, public health and protection of the environment, and are resolved to continue working together to promote the safe production and use of chemicals;

We are committed to strengthening the capacities of all concerned to achieve the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes at all levels;

We will continue to mobilize national and international financing from public and private sources for the life-cycle management of chemicals;

We will work towards closing the gaps and addressing the discrepancies in the capacity to achieve sustainable chemicals management between developed countries on the one hand and developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the other by addressing the special needs of the latter and strengthening their capacities for the sound management of chemicals and the development of safer alternative products and processes, including non-chemical alternatives, through partnerships, technical support and financial assistance;

We will work towards effective and efficient governance of chemicals management by means of transparency, public participation and accountability involving all sectors of society, in particular striving for the equal participation of women in chemicals management;

¹ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

² *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

³ Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety, third session, Forum III final report (IFCS/Forum III/23w), annex 6.

⁴ General Assembly resolution 60/1.

We will engage actively in partnerships between Governments, the private sector and civil society, including strengthening participation in the implementation of the Strategic Approach by small and medium-sized enterprises and the informal sector;

We stress the responsibility of industry to make available to stakeholders such data and information on health and environmental effects of chemicals as are needed safely to use chemicals and the products made from them;

We will facilitate public access to appropriate information and knowledge on chemicals throughout their life cycle, including the risks that they pose to human health and the environment;

We will ensure that, consistent with applicable law, confidential commercial and industrial information and knowledge are protected to stimulate innovation in the development of new and safer alternative products and processes, but reconfirm that information on the health and safety of humans and the environment should not be regarded as confidential;

We recognize the need to make special efforts to protect those groups in society that are particularly vulnerable to risks from hazardous chemicals or are highly exposed to them;

We are determined to protect children and the unborn child from chemical exposures that impair their future lives;

We will endeavour to prevent illegal traffic in toxic, hazardous, banned and severely restricted chemicals and chemical products and wastes;

We will promote the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste as a priority in national, regional and international policy frameworks, including strategies for sustainable development, development assistance and poverty reduction

We will strive to integrate the Strategic Approach into the work programmes of all relevant United Nations organizations, specialized agencies, funds and programmes consistent with their mandates as accorded by their respective governing bodies;

We acknowledge that as a new voluntary initiative in the field of international management of chemicals, the Strategic Approach is not a legally binding instrument;

We collectively share the view that implementation and taking stock of progress are critical to ensuring success and that, in this regard, a stable and long-term fully participatory and multi-sectoral structure for guidance, review and operational support is essential;

We are determined to cooperate fully in an open, inclusive, participatory and transparent manner in the implementation of the Strategic Approach..

ANNEX II

[UNEDITED ADVANCE FINAL]**Overarching Policy Strategy¹****I. Introduction**

1. The present Overarching Policy Strategy flows from the commitments expressed in the High-level Declaration on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management developed in the context of the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The structure of the strategy is as follows:

- I. Introduction
- II. Scope
- III. Statement of needs
- IV. Objectives
 - A. Risk reduction
 - B. Knowledge and information
 - C. Governance
 - D. Capacity-building and technical cooperation
 - E. Illegal international traffic
- V. Financial considerations
- VI. Principles and approaches
- VII. Implementation and taking stock of progress

2. The involvement of all relevant sectors and stakeholders, including at the local, national, regional and global levels, is seen as key to achieving the objectives of the Strategic Approach, as is a transparent and open implementation process and public participation in decision-making, featuring in particular a strengthened role for women. The main stakeholders in the Strategic Approach are understood to be Governments, regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals involved in the management of chemicals throughout their life-cycles from all relevant sectors, including, but not limited to, agriculture, environment, health, industry, relevant economic activity, development cooperation, labour and science. Individual stakeholders include consumers, disposers, employers, farmers, producers, regulators, researchers, suppliers, transporters and workers.

II. Scope

3. The Strategic Approach has a scope that includes:
- (a) Environmental, economic, social, health and labour aspects of chemical safety,
 - (b) Agricultural and industrial chemicals, with a view to promoting sustainable development and covering chemicals at all stages of their life-cycle, including in products.¹

¹ Document UNEP/GCSS.IX.6/Add. 1, Annex II.

4. The Strategic Approach should take due account of instruments and processes that have been developed to date and be flexible enough to deal with new ones without duplicating efforts, in particular the efforts of forums dealing with the military uses of chemicals.

III. Statement of needs

5. A major driving force for the establishment of the Strategic Approach has been the recognition of the growing gaps between the capacities of different countries to manage chemicals safely, the need to improve synergies between existing instruments and processes and the growing sense of urgency regarding the need to assess and manage chemicals more effectively to achieve the 2020 goal articulated in paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.² There is also the need for countries to have more effective governance structures to help make the Strategic Approach a lasting success.

6. Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, at which the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 were adopted, much has been done to improve chemicals management. Regulatory systems have been introduced or strengthened; much more information has been made available about chemicals; many chemicals have been assessed at the national level and internationally; a wide range of risk management measures have been introduced; and new tools such as the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and pollutant release and transfer registers have been taken up and developed. New international instruments and programmes have been created. Industry has developed and extended its own programmes to contribute to better chemicals management, and there are now in many countries active and well informed public interest movements promoting awareness and good practices with regard to chemicals. It is, however, recognized that:

(a) The existing international policy framework for chemicals is not completely adequate and needs to be further strengthened;

(b) Implementation of established international policies is uneven;

(c) Coherence and synergies between existing institutions and processes are not completely developed and should be further improved;

(d) There is often limited or no information on many chemicals currently in use and often limited or no access to information that already exists;

(e) Many countries lack the capacity to soundly manage chemicals at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;

(f) There are inadequate resources available to address chemical safety issues in many countries, particularly to bridge the widening gap between developed countries on the one hand and developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the other.

7. Risk reduction (including preventing, reducing, remediating, minimizing and eliminating risks) is a key need in pursuing the sound management of chemicals throughout their entire life cycle including, where appropriate, products and articles containing chemicals. It is recognized that:

(a) Risk assessment and management strategies, supported by improved scientific understanding of the role and behaviour of substances, addressing product life-cycles, are central to achieving risk reduction;

¹ The Strategic Approach does not cover products to the extent that the health and environmental aspects of the safety of the chemical and products are regulated by a domestic food or pharmaceutical authority or arrangement.

² A copy of paragraph 23 is set out in the appendix.

(b) Risk reduction measures, appropriately informed by scientific methods and consideration of social and economic factors, are needed to reduce or eliminate the harmful effects of chemicals and their inappropriate uses;

(c) Risk reduction measures need to be improved to prevent the adverse effects of chemicals on the health of children, pregnant women, fertile populations, the elderly, the poor, workers and other vulnerable groups and susceptible environments;

(d) The development of safer alternatives, including alternatives to chemicals of concern, and affordable sustainable technologies should be accelerated;

(e) Developing countries and countries with economies in transition need better access to affordable, safer technologies and alternatives, which will also assist in reducing illegal traffic in hazardous chemicals.

8. Knowledge, information and public awareness are basic needs for decision-making for the sound management of chemicals, including products and articles containing chemicals. It is recognized that:

(a) Technological information, the results of hazard and risk assessments, socio-economic methodologies and the tools to develop and apply science-based standards, harmonized risk assessment and management principles are not available to all actors, and the pace of scientific research in these areas needs to be accelerated;

(b) There is a lack of clear, accessible, timely and appropriate information on chemicals for ready use by local populations.

9. Governance is an important issue that needs to be addressed through a multi-sector and multi-stakeholder approach in pursuing the sound management of chemicals. There is therefore a need to recognize:

(a) That in many countries some stakeholders, particularly women and indigenous communities, still do not participate in all aspects of decision-making related to the sound management of chemicals, a situation which needs to be addressed;

(b) That implementation of the present international regime for the sound management of chemicals, including binding instruments and other relevant initiatives, is uneven, a situation which needs to be addressed. There are gaps, overlaps and duplication in chemicals management activities and there is a need in many countries for enhanced coherence, consistency and cooperation to ensure efficient and effective use of available resources at the national, regional, and international levels. Many countries have not ratified or implemented regional and global legally binding instruments and other relevant initiatives, addressed gaps in national chemicals regimes or developed national mechanisms for coordinating chemicals activities;

(c) That the mechanisms used to address the social and economic impacts of chemicals on human health, society and the environment, including liability, compensation and redress, need to be improved in some countries;

(d) That chemicals issues are only sometimes featured in relevant national policy documents, including development assistance plans or strategies, sustainable development strategies and, as appropriate, poverty reduction strategies;

(e) That there is a need to promote the role of all sectors of civil society and the private sector in the implementation of the Strategic Approach.

10. Capacity-building and technical assistance in relation to all aspects of the sound management of chemicals are among the essential elements for the successful implementation of the Strategic Approach:

(a) The widening gap in capacity between developed countries on the one hand and developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the other should be bridged in order to make progress towards the goal articulated in paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of

Implementation. Some developed countries, however, also face capacity issues in striving to meet this goal;

(b) There is a need for enhanced cooperation aimed at strengthening the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes and promoting adequate transfer of cleaner and safer technology to those countries.

11. Illegal international traffic in hazardous substances and dangerous products is a pressing problem for many countries, especially for developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

12. One of the challenges that will be faced by many countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in pursuing the goal articulated in paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation is to obtain access to the considerable financial and other resources needed to achieve the sound management of chemicals.

IV. Objectives

13. The overall objective of the Strategic Approach is to achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment. The objective will be achieved, among other ways, through the implementation of activities set out in the Global Plan of Action.

A. Risk reduction

14. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to risk reduction are:

(a) To minimize risks to human health, including that of workers, and to the environment throughout the life cycle of chemicals;

(b) To ensure that humans and ecosystems and their constituent parts that are especially vulnerable or especially subject to exposure to chemicals that may pose a risk are taken into account and protected in making decisions on chemicals;

(c) To implement transparent, comprehensive, efficient and effective risk management strategies based on appropriate scientific understanding, including of health and environmental effects, and appropriate social and economic analysis aimed at pollution prevention, risk reduction and risk elimination, including detailed safety information on chemicals, to prevent unsafe and unnecessary exposures to chemicals;

(d) To ensure that, by 2020,

(i) Chemicals or chemical uses that pose an unreasonable and otherwise unmanageable risk to human health and the environment¹ based on a science-based risk assessment and taking into account the costs and benefits as well as the availability of safer substitutes and their efficacy, are no longer produced or used for such uses, and

¹ Groups of chemicals that might be prioritized for assessment and related studies include: persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances (PBTs); very persistent and very bioaccumulative substances; chemicals that are carcinogens or mutagens or that adversely affect, inter alia, the reproductive, endocrine, immune, or nervous systems; persistent organic pollutants (POPs), mercury and other chemicals of global concern; chemicals produced or used in high volumes; those subject to wide dispersive uses; and other chemicals of concern at the national level.

- (ii) Risks from unintended releases of chemicals that pose an unreasonable and otherwise unmanageable risk to human health and the environment¹ based on a science-based risk assessment and taking into account the costs and benefits, are minimized;
- (e) Appropriately to apply the precautionary approach, as set out in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, while aiming to achieve that chemicals are used or produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.
- (f) To give priority consideration to the application of preventive measures such as pollution prevention;
- (g) To ensure that existing, new and emerging issues of global concern are sufficiently addressed by means of appropriate mechanisms;
- (h) To reduce the generation of hazardous waste, both in quantity and toxicity, and to ensure the environmentally sound management of hazardous waste, including its storage, treatment and disposal;
- (i) To promote the environmentally sound recovery and recycling of hazardous materials and waste;
- (j) To promote and support the development and implementation of, and further innovation in, environmentally sound and safer alternatives, including cleaner production, informed substitution of chemicals of particular concern and non-chemical alternatives.

B. Knowledge and information

15. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to knowledge and information are:

- (a) To ensure that knowledge and information on chemicals and chemicals management are sufficient to enable chemicals to be adequately assessed and managed safely throughout their life cycle;
- (b) To ensure, for all stakeholders:
 - (i) That information on chemicals throughout their life cycle including, where appropriate, chemicals in products, is available, accessible, user friendly, adequate and appropriate to the needs of all stakeholders. Appropriate types of information include their effects on human health and the environment, their intrinsic properties, their potential uses, their protective measures and regulation;

¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

- (ii) That such information is disseminated in appropriate languages by making full use of, among other things, the media, hazard communication mechanisms such as the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and relevant provisions of international agreements;
- (c) To ensure that, in making information available in accordance with paragraph 15 (b), confidential commercial and industrial information and knowledge are protected in accordance with national laws or regulations or, in the absence of such laws or and regulations, are protected in accordance with international provisions. In the context of this paragraph, information on chemicals relating to the health and safety of humans and the environment should not be regarded as confidential;
- (d) To make objective scientific information available for appropriate integration into risk assessments and associated decision-making relating to chemicals policy, including in relation to assessment of chemical hazards and risks to human health, especially vulnerable sub-populations such as children, and to the environment, particularly vulnerable ecosystems;
- (e) To ensure that science-based standards, risk assessment and management procedures and the results of hazard and risk assessments are available to all actors;
- (f) To make objective scientific methods and information available to assess the effects of chemicals on people and the environment, particularly through the development and use of indicators;
- (g) To accelerate the pace of scientific research on identifying and assessing the effects of chemicals on human beings and the environment, including emerging issues, and to ensure that research and development are undertaken in relation to chemical control technologies, development of safer chemicals and cleaner technologies and non-chemical alternatives and technologies;
- (h) To promote implementation of the common definitions and criteria contained in the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals;
- (i) To make widely available, for consideration and implementation, the range of existing risk reduction and other tools from various participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC)¹ such as the Mutual Acceptance of Data system of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) database on chemical safety information from intergovernmental organizations (INCHEM), in order to promote best practices in chemicals management, harmonization and burden-sharing;
- (j) To develop knowledge and information on the estimated current and projected financial and other impacts on sustainable development associated with the unsound management of chemicals of concern on a global basis.

¹ The participating organizations of IOMC are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the World Health Organization.

C. Governance

16. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to governance are:

- (a) To achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle by means of appropriate national, regional and international mechanisms, as needed, that are multi-sectoral, comprehensive, effective, efficient, transparent, coherent and inclusive and ensure accountability, taking into account the circumstances and needs of countries, especially developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- (b) To promote the sound management of chemicals within each relevant sector and integrated programmes for sound chemicals management across all sectors;
- (c) To provide guidance to stakeholders in identifying priorities for chemicals management activities;
- (d) To strengthen enforcement and encourage the implementation of national laws and regulations regarding chemicals management, including those that serve to implement international agreements;
- (e) To promote relevant codes of conduct, including those relating to corporate environmental and social responsibility;
- (f) To promote close international cooperation among concerned institutions, including among customs services, in different countries for the exchange of relevant information aimed at preventing all illegal international traffic in dangerous chemical products;
- (g) To promote and support meaningful and active participation by all sectors of civil society, particularly women, workers and indigenous communities, in regulatory and other decision-making processes that relate to chemical safety;
- (h) To ensure equal participation of women in decision-making on chemicals policy and management;
- (i) To ensure that national institutional frameworks address the prevention of illegal international traffic in chemicals;
- (j) To support coordinated assistance activities at the international level in accordance with the implementation of the Strategic Approach;
- (k) To promote mutual supportiveness between trade and environmental policies;
- (l) To provide and support enabling frameworks for businesses to develop and improve products that advance the objectives of the Strategic Approach;
- (m) To enhance synergies between the activities of Governments, international institutions, multilateral organization secretariats and development agencies in pursuit of the sound management of chemicals;
- (n) To enhance cooperation on the sound management of chemicals between Governments, the private sector and civil society at the national, regional and global levels.

D. Capacity-building and technical cooperation

17. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to capacity-building and technical cooperation are:

(a) To increase the capacity for the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle in all countries as needed, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

(b) To narrow the widening gap in capacities between developed countries on the one hand and developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the other hand;

(c) To establish or strengthen partnerships and mechanisms for technical cooperation and the provision of appropriate and clean technology to and among developing countries and countries with economies in transition, maximizing synergies with the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building;

(d) To develop and implement sustainable capacity-building strategies in developing countries and countries with economies in transition and to promote cooperation between all countries;

(e) To promote coordination of and access to information on capacity-building for the sound management of chemicals and to enhance transparency and accountability;

(f) To include capacity-building for the sound management of chemicals as a priority in social and economic development strategies, including national sustainable development strategies, poverty reduction strategy papers and country assistance strategies, and to make chemicals an important part of national policy;

(g) To encourage stakeholders to develop and promote programmes on chemical safety and scientific research and analysis and to assist with capacity-building programmes in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

(h) To encourage and facilitate appropriate use by developing countries and countries with economies in transition of work already done and chemicals management models already established by other countries and international organizations;

(i) To promote the awareness of donors, multilateral organizations and other relevant actors of the relevance of chemical safety for poverty reduction and sustainable development.

E. Illegal international traffic

18. The objectives of the Strategic Approach with regard to illegal international traffic are:

(a) To prevent illegal international traffic in toxic, hazardous, banned and severely restricted chemicals, including products incorporating these chemicals, mixtures and compounds, and wastes;

(b) To strengthen mechanisms and domestic and regional implementation supporting existing multilateral agreements that contain provisions relating to the prevention of illegal international traffic;

(c) To promote information sharing and to strengthen the capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition at the national and regional levels for the prevention and control of illegal international traffic.

V. Financial considerations

19. The Strategic Approach should reflect national, regional and global efforts to advance the sound management of chemicals recognizing Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. This Approach should call upon existing and new sources of financial support to provide additional resources and should build upon, among other things, the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-Building. It should also include the mobilization of additional national and international financial resources, including through the Quick Start Programme and other measures set out in this paragraph, to accelerate the strengthening of capabilities and capacities for the implementation of the Strategic Approach objectives. The extent to which developing countries, least developed countries, small-island developing States and countries with economies in transition can make progress towards reaching the 2020 goal depends, in part, on the availability of financial resources provided by the private sector, bilateral, multilateral and global agencies or donors. Financial arrangements for the Strategic Approach include, among others:

- (a) Actions at the national or sub-national levels to support financing of Strategic Approach objectives, including by:
- (i) Integrating Strategic Approach objectives in relevant programmes, plans and/or strategies at various levels;
 - (ii) Assessing current laws, policies and regulations to identify changes that may be needed to advance implementation of the Strategic Approach objectives, including an assessment of funding needs where appropriate;
 - (iii) Assessing and where necessary adopting appropriate policies at the national and sub-national levels, which could include economic instruments, that can help to cover the cost of sound chemicals management;
 - (iv) Where appropriate, assessing and adopting at the national and sub-national levels economic instruments intended to internalize the external costs of chemicals, bearing in mind that such instruments need careful design, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.
 - (v) Governments and other stakeholders exchanging information on experience and studies in the national use of economic instruments and submitting this information to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to make it broadly available;
- (b) Enhancing industry partnerships and financial and technical participation in the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives, including by inviting industry:
- (i) To review and strengthen current voluntary industry initiatives to address the considerable challenges associated with the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives;

- (ii) To develop new initiatives, including in partnership with foundations, academia and non-governmental organizations, for the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives;
 - (iii) To provide resources, including in-kind contributions, for the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives, continuing and building upon its initiatives on good corporate social and environmental responsibility;
- (c) Integration of the Strategic Approach objectives into multilateral and bilateral development assistance co-operation, including by:
- (i) Developing countries and countries with economies in transition, where necessary with the technical support of donors, considering the integration of Strategic Approach objectives into relevant national documents that influence development assistance cooperation;
 - (ii) Donors responding to requests by, and working in partnership with, developing countries and countries with economies in transition by recognizing Strategic Approach objectives as an important element of bilateral aid agency cooperation in support of sustainable development;
 - (iii) Inviting United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes and other intergovernmental organizations to include Strategic Approach objectives within their activities, as appropriate;
- (d) Making more effective use of and building upon existing sources of relevant global funding, including by inviting the Global Environment Facility and the Montreal Protocol and its Multilateral Fund within their mandates to consider whether and how they might support implementation of appropriate and relevant Strategic Approach objectives and to report;
- (e) Supporting initial capacity-building activities for the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives by establishing a Quick Start Programme. The Programme will contain a voluntary, time-limited trust fund and may include multilateral, bilateral and other forms of cooperation. The trust fund will be administered by UNEP;
- (f) Inviting Governments and other stakeholders to provide resources to enable the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to fulfil the tasks set out in paragraph 28, including by:
- (i) Inviting UNEP to arrange for the adaptation and reinforcement of the existing voluntary trust fund to support these tasks;
 - (ii) Inviting all countries and regional economic integration organizations to contribute;
 - (iii) Inviting the private sector, including, industry, foundations and other non-governmental organizations, to also contribute.

VI. Principles and approaches

20. In developing and implementing the Strategic Approach and the Global Plan of Action, Governments and other stakeholders should be guided by:

- (a) Principles and approaches in the following:
 - (i) Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment and, in particular, Principle 22;
 - (ii) Rio Declaration on Environment and Development;
 - (iii) Agenda 21, in particular chapters 6, 8, 19 and 20;
 - (iv) United Nations Millennium Declaration;
 - (v) Bahia Declaration on Chemical Safety;
 - (vi) World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation; and
- (b) The following agreements, where applicable to them:
 - (i) Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer;
 - (ii) Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal;
 - (iii) Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade;
 - (iv) Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants;
 - (v) ILO Convention No. 170 concerning Safety in the Use of Chemicals at Work.

VII. Implementation and taking stock of progress

21. Institutional arrangements to support implementation and taking stock of progress on the Strategic Approach will include national coordination and, as appropriate, regional processes and, at the international level, a periodic review process facilitated by a secretariat.

22. Implementation of the Strategic Approach could begin with an enabling phase to build necessary capacity, as appropriate, to develop, with relevant stakeholder participation, a national Strategic Approach implementation plan, taking into consideration, as appropriate, existing elements such as legislation, national profiles, action plans, stakeholder initiatives and gaps, priorities, needs and circumstances. Strategic Approach regional implementation plans may be developed, as appropriate, in a similar fashion. Subsequent implementation phases should focus on implementing specific action plans. In parallel, intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions and private actors are encouraged to support these activities and to consider the development of their own action plans as appropriate. Partnerships among stakeholders should be pursued in support of implementation.

23. To sustain an integrated approach to managing chemicals, each Government should establish arrangements for implementing the Strategic Approach on an inter-ministerial or inter-institutional basis so that all concerned national departmental and stakeholder interests are represented and all relevant substantive areas are addressed. To facilitate communication, nationally and internationally, each Government should designate a Strategic Approach national focal point to act as an effective conduit for communication on Strategic Approach matters, including invitations to participate in meetings and information dissemination. The Strategic Approach national focal point should be a representative of the country's inter-ministerial or inter-institutional arrangements, where such arrangements exist.

24. The International Conference on Chemicals Management (hereafter referred to as the Conference) will undertake periodic reviews of the Strategic Approach. The functions of the Conference will be:

- (a) To receive reports from all relevant stakeholders on progress in implementation of the Strategic Approach and to disseminate information as appropriate;
- (b) To evaluate the implementation of the Strategic Approach with a view to reviewing progress against the 2020 target and taking strategic decisions, programming, prioritizing and updating the approach as necessary;
- (c) To provide guidance on implementation of the Strategic Approach to stakeholders;
- (d) To report on progress in implementation of the Strategic Approach to stakeholders;
- (e) To promote implementation of existing international instruments and programmes;
- (f) To promote coherence among chemicals management instruments at the international level;
- (g) To promote the strengthening of national chemicals management capacities;
- (h) To work to ensure that the necessary financial and technical resources are available for implementation;
- (i) To evaluate the performance of the financing of the Strategic Approach;
- (j) To focus attention and call for appropriate action on emerging policy issues as they arise and forge consensus on priorities for cooperative action;
- (k) To promote information exchange and scientific and technical cooperation;
- (l) To provide a high-level international forum for multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral discussion and exchange of experience on chemicals management issues with the participation of non-governmental organizations in accordance with applicable rules of procedure;
- (m) To promote the participation of all stakeholders in the implementation of the Strategic Approach.

25. Where appropriate, sessions of the Conference should be held back-to-back with meetings of the governing bodies of relevant intergovernmental organizations in order to enhance synergies and cost-effectiveness and to promote the Strategic Approach's multi-sectoral nature. Sessions of the Conference should be held in 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2020, unless otherwise decided by the Conference.

26. It will be essential that implementation of the Strategic Approach continue effectively between meetings of the Conference, building on its open, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral methods. There will be a number of elements for achieving this:

(a) Regional meetings have played a significant role in the development of the Strategic Approach, and it will be important to build on this commitment and expertise, taking into account the needs of developing countries, in particular the least developed among them, countries with economies in transition and developed countries. Regional meetings will facilitate input on Strategic Approach activities, preparation for future meetings of the Conference and exchange of regional expertise and exchange of information. As with the Conference itself, such meetings could be held back-to-back with relevant regional or global intergovernmental organization meetings, subject to extrabudgetary funding;

(b) The functions of the regional meetings will include:

- (i) To review progress on implementation of the Strategic Approach within the regions;
- (ii) To provide guidance on implementation to all stakeholders at a regional level;
- (iii) To enable technical and strategic discussions and exchange of information to take place;

(c) The implementation of the Strategic Approach will depend in significant part on the activities of relevant intergovernmental organizations. In order to help ensure that these activities are coordinated properly, IOMC should continue to perform a coordinating function for intergovernmental organization activities and work programmes.

27. The Conference should have a bureau with functions in accordance with the rules of procedure.

28. The functions to be performed by the secretariat will be:

(a) To facilitate meetings and intersessional work of the Conference, as well as regional meetings, with maximum multi-stakeholder participation, and to disseminate the reports and recommendations of the Conference;

(b) To report to the Conference on implementation of the Strategic Approach by all participants;

(c) To promote the establishment and maintenance of a network of Strategic Approach stakeholders at the national, regional and, in the case of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, international levels;

(d) To facilitate the development and dissemination of guidance materials to support implementation of the Strategic Approach by stakeholders;

(e) To provide guidance to stakeholders in the initiation of project proposals;

(f) To provide information clearing-house services such as provision of advice to countries on implementation of the Strategic Approach, referral of requests for information to relevant sources, and facilitation of access to information and expertise in support of specific national actions;

- (g) To ensure that recommendations from the Conference are conveyed to relevant global and regional organizations and institutions;
- (h) To promote the exchange of relevant scientific and technical information;
- (i) To establish and maintain a working relationship with participating organizations of IOMC in order to draw upon their sectoral expertise.

29. The Executive Director of UNEP will be requested to establish the Strategic Approach secretariat. UNEP and the World Health Organization (WHO) will take lead roles in the secretariat in their respective areas of expertise in relation to the Strategic Approach, with UNEP assuming overall administrative responsibility. The Strategic Approach secretariat will be co-located with the UNEP chemicals and waste cluster in Geneva, and take full advantage of existing synergies. In order to reflect the multi-sectoral nature of the Strategic Approach, the secretariat will work in coordination and/or cooperation with the participating organizations of IOMC, the UNDP and the World Bank as well as with other intergovernmental organizations, as appropriate. The secretariat will report to the Conference.

Appendix to the draft Overarching Policy Strategy

Text of paragraph 23 of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation

The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation is a key political commitment underlying the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy. In the Plan, it was agreed that “governments, relevant international organizations, the private sector and all major groups should play an active role in changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns.” This would include the actions at all levels set out in paragraph 23 of the Plan:

“23. Renew the commitment, as advanced in Agenda 21, to sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and of hazardous wastes for sustainable development as well as for the protection of human health and the environment, inter alia, aiming to achieve, by 2020, that chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, using transparent science-based risk assessment procedures and science-based risk management procedures, taking into account the precautionary approach, as set out in principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and support developing countries in strengthening their capacity for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes by providing technical and financial assistance. This would include actions at all levels to:

“(a) Promote the ratification and implementation of relevant international instruments on chemicals and hazardous waste, including the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent Procedures for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade so that it can enter into force by 2003 and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants so that it can enter into force by 2004, and encourage and improve coordination as well as supporting developing countries in their implementation;

“(b) Further develop a strategic approach to international chemicals management based on the Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action beyond 2000 of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety by 2005, and urge that the United Nations Environment Programme, the Intergovernmental Forum, other international organizations

dealing with chemical management and other relevant international organizations and actors closely cooperate in this regard, as appropriate;

“(c) Encourage countries to implement the new globally harmonized system for the classification and labelling of chemicals as soon as possible with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008;

“(d) Encourage partnerships to promote activities aimed at enhancing environmentally sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes, implementing multilateral environmental agreements, raising awareness of issues relating to chemicals and hazardous waste and encouraging the collection and use of additional scientific data;

“(e) Promote efforts to prevent international illegal trafficking of hazardous chemicals and hazardous wastes and to prevent damage resulting from the transboundary movement and disposal of hazardous wastes in a manner consistent with obligations under relevant international instruments, such as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal;

“(f) Encourage development of coherent and integrated information on chemicals, such as through national pollutant release and transfer registers;

“(g) Promote reduction of the risks posed by heavy metals that are harmful to human health and the environment, including through a review of relevant studies, such as the United Nations Environment Programme global assessment of mercury and its compounds.”

ANNEX III

Global Plan of Action¹**Executive summary****Introduction**

1. The Global Plan of Action of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management has been structured into work areas and associated activities that may be undertaken voluntarily by stakeholders in order to pursue the commitments and objectives expressed in the High-level Declaration and the Overarching Policy Strategy. These reaffirm the commitment expressed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation that by 2020 chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.² The plan should be regarded as a guidance document to be reviewed, as appropriate, and the activities should be considered and implemented, as appropriate, by stakeholders during the implementation of the Strategic Approach, according to their applicability.
2. The present executive summary aims to give policy-makers a brief overview of the structure of the Global Plan of Action and the list of actions that can be undertaken to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Approach. Within the Global Plan of Action, possible work areas and their associated activities, actors, targets and timeframes, indicators of progress and implementation aspects are grouped according to five categories of objectives contained in the Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach, namely, risk reduction, knowledge and information, governance, capacity-building and technical assistance, and illegal international traffic. For the purposes of the present executive summary, an additional heading, "Improved general practices", is used in order to present cross-cutting measures that appear under more than one objective.
3. Three tables follow this executive summary. Table A provides a summary list of the work areas and the numbers of the possible activities associated with them. Table B lists the work areas together with the possible activities associated with them and suggested actors, targets and timeframes, indicators of progress and implementation aspects, set out in five separate sections corresponding to the five categories of objectives listed in paragraph 2 above. Although each work area is listed under a single principal category in the summary table A, it may appear under several objectives in the detailed table B. The columns dealing with suggested actors, targets and timeframes, indicators of progress and implementation aspects were not fully discussed and sufficient time was not available to achieve agreement. However, stakeholders might find them useful in their implementation of the relevant activities. A table listing acronyms and abbreviations used in table B is appended as well.
4. Participants were unable to conclude their discussions on a number of activities, as reflected in table C of document SAICM/ICCM.1/4, which can be found at the website <http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm>. Bearing in mind that the Global Plan of Action is an evolving tool to assist in achieving the objectives of the Strategic Approach, stakeholders may wish to

¹ Document UNEP/GCSS.IX.6/Add. 2, Annex IV pp. 1-4; Tables A-C (pp. 5-67), referred to therein, are not reproduced here.

² *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.I. and corrigendum) chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

discuss these items. In the period between the first and second sessions of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, activities such as regional meetings could be pursued.

5. The various categories of objectives, together with their corresponding work areas, are closely interconnected. Thus, numerous risk reduction actions are needed to protect human health and the environment from the unsound management of chemicals. A large number of these risk reduction actions will need to be supported by extensive improvements in our knowledge and information on chemicals, governance arrangements (including institutional coordination, regulatory frameworks and public policy) in all sectors involved with chemicals, and general practices associated with the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycles. Furthermore, meaningful and timely capacity-building and technical assistance in support of the actions of developing countries and countries with economies in transition are essential to making substantive improvements in reducing the risks to human health and the environment caused by the unsound management of chemicals.

6. The Global Plan of Action also serves as guidance to all stakeholders at the global, regional, national and local levels, including when assessing the current status of their actions in support of the sound management of chemicals and identifying priorities to address gaps in such management. It is emphasized that priorities and timeframes will differ between countries, reflecting, for instance, the current state of chemicals management and the capacity to carry out a given measure in a given country. It is anticipated that Governments and other stakeholders will adopt flexible programmes to build and sustain adequate and comprehensive capabilities for the sound management of chemicals consistent with national circumstances and the Strategic Approach objectives.

7. In general, priority should be given to activities which:

(a) Focus on narrowing the gap between developed countries on the one hand and developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the other hand in their capacities for the sound management of chemicals;

(b) Facilitate the implementation of existing agreements and work areas;

(c) Target issues not currently addressed in existing agreements and work areas;

(d) Ensure that, by 2020:

(i) Chemicals or chemical uses that pose an unreasonable and otherwise unmanageable risk to human health and the environment¹ based on a science-based risk assessment and taking into account the costs and benefits as well as the availability of safer substitutes and their efficacy are no longer produced or used for such uses;

(ii) The risks from unintended releases of chemicals that pose an unreasonable and otherwise unmanageable risk to human health and the environment² based on a science-based risk assessment and taking into account the costs and benefits are minimized;

(e) Target chemicals that pose unreasonable and unmanageable risks;

(f) Promote the generation of adequate science-based knowledge on health and environmental risks for chemicals and make it available to all stakeholders.

¹ Groups of chemicals that might be prioritized for assessment and related studies include: persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances (PBTs); very persistent and very bioaccumulative substances; chemicals that are carcinogens or mutagens or that adversely affect, inter alia, the reproductive, endocrine, immune or nervous systems; persistent organic pollutants (POPs); mercury and other chemicals of global concern; chemicals produced or used in high volumes; chemicals subject to wide dispersive uses; and other chemicals of concern at the national level.

8. For many of the work areas, it is important to work in a concerted manner in order to be most effective. It is therefore critical for all stakeholders to take appropriate cooperative action on global priorities. These include, among others:

- (a) Integrating chemicals issues into the broader development agenda, including the development of plans for prioritization of action in consultation with stakeholders, including vulnerable groups;
- (b) Promoting ratification and implementation of relevant existing international conventions on health, safety, occupational health and safety and environment;
- (c) Encouraging implementation of existing internationally recognized standards, tools and approaches for environment and health and protection from chemicals, such as the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals and pollutant release and transfer registers;
- (d) Promoting reduction of risks from mercury and other chemicals of global concern so that they are minimized;
- (e) Encouraging the reduction of the quantity and toxicity of hazardous wastes;
- (f) Promoting efforts to prevent illegal traffic in chemicals and hazardous waste;
- (g) Promoting greater coordination among regional and national centres and other stakeholders in order to address the whole spectrum of issues regarding chemicals and hazardous waste;
- (h) Promoting alternatives in order to reduce and phase out highly toxic pesticides;
- (i) Promoting capacity-building, education and training and information exchange on sound management of chemicals for all stakeholders;
- (j) Promoting voluntary industry initiatives and product stewardship in all relevant industries;
- (k) Promoting the phase-out of lead in gasoline;
- (l) Promoting the remediation of contaminated areas.

A. Measures to support risk reduction

9. Under the risk reduction objective, work areas aimed at protecting human health and the environment would include the development of action plans to address priority concerns in relation to groups with specific vulnerabilities. Examples of measures to safeguard the health of women and children are the minimization of chemical exposures before conception and through gestation, infancy, childhood and adolescence. Occupational health and safety for workers would be promoted through measures such as the establishment of national inspection systems and implementation of adequate occupational health and safety standards to minimize workplace hazards from chemicals. Groups of chemicals that might be prioritized for assessment and related studies, such as for the development and use of safe and effective alternatives, include: persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances (PBTs); very persistent and very bioaccumulative substances; chemicals that are carcinogens or mutagens or that adversely affect, *inter alia*, the reproductive, endocrine, immune or nervous systems; persistent organic pollutants (POPs); mercury and other chemicals of global concern; chemicals produced or used in high volumes; chemicals subject to wide dispersive uses; and other chemicals of concern at the national level. Minimization of hazardous wastes would be enhanced by national planning and policies, awareness-raising and protection of handlers, while contaminated sites would be subject to identification and remediation. Pollution prevention measures would include the phasing out of lead in gasoline. Capacities to deal with poisonings and other chemical incidents would be strengthened.

B. Strengthening knowledge and information

10. Measures to strengthen knowledge and information would include improved education, training and awareness-raising activities aimed at those who may be exposed to toxic substances at any stage in the life cycle of chemicals and the generation and dissemination of data on the hazards of all chemicals in commerce, taking account of legitimate commercial confidentiality needs. Among other measures in this area would be stepped-up monitoring of the impacts of chemicals on health and the environment, harmonized risk assessments, efforts to implement the Globally Harmonized System of the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, and the development and publication of national pollutant release and transfer registers.

C. Governance: strengthening of institutions, law and policy

11. Central to the Strategic Approach's governance objectives would be measures to review national legislation in order to ratify and implement existing international agreements dealing with chemicals and hazardous wastes, such as the Basel Convention on the Control of the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the International Labour Organization conventions on the protection of workers, and measures to improve coordination and synergies with respect to chemical safety policy and activities at the national and international levels. Another core area would be measures to ensure the participation of all stakeholders, including women in particular, in the management of the life cycle of chemicals. Measures to integrate chemicals management into strategies for development assistance, sustainable development and poverty reduction papers would be important to underpin the more effective direction of resources to chemical safety activities. Other measures under the governance category would include the development of systems for emergency preparedness and response in the case of chemical accidents, the consideration of chemicals use in protected areas, training in liability and compensation schemes in relation to damage to human health and the environment caused by the production and use of chemicals, and action to prevent and detect illegal trafficking of chemicals and hazardous wastes.

D. Enhancing capacity-building

12. Capacity-building measures include training of personnel in order to provide the necessary skills to support the systematic implementation of the Strategic Approach at the local, national and regional levels in a coordinated way and across the full range of chemical safety needs, including strategic planning, risk assessment and management, testing and research and control of illegal traffic. Use would be made of information exchange mechanisms on capacity-building in order to ensure coordination.

E. Addressing illegal international traffic

13. Actions at the national, regional and global levels are needed to prevent and detect illegal trafficking of chemicals and hazardous wastes, including efforts towards the more effective application of international conventions relating to transboundary movements of chemicals and hazardous waste.

F. Improved general practices

14. The list of work areas contains a number of activities to improve general chemicals management practices, such as the development and implementation of cleaner production methods in accordance with best available techniques and best environmental practices. Similarly, better agricultural methods, including the use of non-chemical alternatives, would be

promoted. Measures associated with improved corporate social and environmental responsibility for the safe production and use of products would include the further development and implementation of voluntary initiatives such as industry's Responsible Care programme and the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

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