



SAICM PREPCOM2 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2004

Participants continued to provide comments for the SAICM overarching policy strategy in Plenary. They discussed SAICM objectives with regard to: knowledge and information; governance; and capacity building and technical cooperation. They also considered financial considerations, principles and approaches, and implementation and taking stock of progress. Meanwhile, the contact group on concrete measures continued its work on the matrix for organizing concrete measures.

PLENARY

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF A SAICM: Plenary mandated the Secretariat to prepare a synthesis of comments and proposals on the statement of needs, and objectives to be included in the overarching policy strategy. Delegates also decided to add "illegal international traffic" to the list of objectives for SAICM's overarching policy strategy (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.9).

Jean-Louis Wallace (Canada), chair of the drafting group on the scope of SAICM, presented the results of the group to Plenary (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.10). Jamidu Katima (Tanzania), chair of the contact group on concrete measures, reported progress in consolidating concrete measures in a single document.

Objectives: Plenary continued discussions on knowledge and information, under the heading of objectives for the SAICM overarching policy strategy. The INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION called for free access to clear information on chemicals. CROATIA, for Central and Eastern Europe and Newly Independent States, stressed the need for national points for data collection. AUSTRALIA, supported by the EU and CANADA, highlighted the importance of adequate knowledge of chemicals and their behavior, and information sharing. ARGENTINA, supported by KENYA, called for fostering exchange of information and experiences, and highlighted the role of the Information Exchange Network on Capacity Building for the Sound Management of Chemicals (INFOCAP). CANADA proposed including information on best practices and the development of scientific information on chemical risks as objectives. COMOROS, supported by KENYA, urged awareness raising for children through the education system, and training doctors to diagnose chemical poisoning. The INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHEMICAL ASSOCIATIONS (ICCA) called for the protection of confidential commercial information.

The ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FUND called for a goal of "no data, no market" by 2020. MEXICO, supported by HAITI, called for a regional focus, and information on the composition of chemicals and products containing chemicals. IRAN highlighted the exchange, availability, accessibility and harmonization of information as well as transparency. KENYA said more informa-

tion is needed on industrial chemicals. The GAMBIA called for including information on chemical sources, uses, risks, impacts, alternatives, and the interaction between chemicals. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by CANADA, called for regulations on the adequacy of information. SIERRA LEONE called for poison control centers and public health and forensic laboratories. SENEGAL proposed national committees to engage stakeholders in chemicals management. IRAN proposed a new subheading on training. BURKINA FASO called for provision of information on pesticides to those who are illiterate.

On the governance objective, SWITZERLAND, supported by the EU, AUSTRALIA and the INTERNATIONAL POPs ELIMINATION NETWORK (IPEN), said the SAICM should support the comprehensive, effective and sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle. NORWAY, supported by the EU, AUSTRALIA and IPEN, proposed, *inter alia*: policy integration and partnerships; transparency in risk assessment; and effective public participation in decision-making. The EU, supported by IPEN, called for meaningful public participation in regulation and decision-making, stressing the role of women. IPEN described as premature a proposal by the EU that UNEP is best placed to function as a steering body, and said a steering body should relate independently to relevant inter-governmental organizations and ministries. AUSTRALIA, supported by IPEN and CANADA, proposed a 2020 target for national systems for chemicals management and compliance with all legal regimes.

CANADA proposed establishing efficient working arrangements for a coherent and efficient international governance regime. He called for the integration of chemical safety into poverty reduction and other policies. The DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO called for support for developing countries to implement good governance in the face of resistance from some chemicals companies. THAILAND supported transparency, accountability and inclusiveness. KENYA called for the participation of the poor in health and safety committees in local enterprises.

On the objective of capacity building and technical cooperation, MALAYSIA suggested, *inter alia*, assistance for identifying capacity building needs, appropriate technologies at affordable prices, and training. The INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON CHEMICAL SAFETY highlighted a document on capacity building assistance for chemical safety (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.3). The EU recommended the effective use of resources and tools under existing agreements. CHILE called for stronger institutions at the regional level. AUSTRALIA and SOUTH AFRICA proposed including objectives addressing the widening gap, and ensuring proper training for those dealing with chemicals. The SOUTH AFRICAN CHEMICALS WORKERS UNION urged training those directly exposed to chemicals. ICCA, with



NEW ZEALAND, called for a new partnership between stakeholders to promote chemical safety. SOUTH AFRICA said both donors and recipients should recognize chemical safety as a priority. NORWAY and SWITZERLAND proposed adding an objective to create effective national laws, and adequate infrastructure to implement them. HAITI urged training for illiterate people. URUGUAY, with SWITZERLAND and NEW ZEALAND, called for using existing regional and subregional mechanisms. CANADA said capacity building should be addressed in: regulatory frameworks; risk assessment and management; and development assistance and poverty reduction and, with the INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU) and MOROCCO, stressed the importance of building capacity to implement existing instruments. ICFTU urged training of workers and capacity building in the informal sector, and COMOROS called for training of chemists. KENYA said capacity building should include legislators, curriculum developers, trainers and tutors at all levels of the education system, and called for the adoption of simple methods for evaluating chemical safety. UGANDA urged addressing the need for chemical poison control centers, and monitoring risk management.

Financial Considerations: SWITZERLAND, supported by NORWAY, the US, NEW ZEALAND and AUSTRALIA, proposed the use of public, private, domestic and international funds for the implementation of SAICM. NORWAY and the EU urged use of existing financial mechanisms. EGYPT, for G-77/CHINA, supported by the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, called for new and additional financial resources, with clearly defined financial mechanisms.

The ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FUND, on behalf of several non-governmental organizations, invoked the polluter pays principle, suggesting that a small fraction of the profits of the chemical industry could be used to promote chemical safety. AUSTRALIA highlighted the complexities of applying the polluter pays principle to chemicals management. COSTA RICA supported a tax on chemical manufacturers to fund SAICM. ICCA and CROPLIFE INTERNATIONAL said the chemical industry already funds activities for chemical safety. THAILAND, supported by others, called for innovation, adequacy, additionality and sustainability in financing the activities of SAICM, and proposed an appropriate organization be mandated to explore innovative sources of funding.

Principles and approaches: The EU proposed using existing concepts, as appropriate. AUSTRALIA, with the US and NEW ZEALAND, urged caution about using principles not universally agreed upon. CUBA, for GRULAC, supported by NEW ZEALAND, called for SAICM to use the principles of the 1992 Rio Declaration. SWITZERLAND noted developments since the Rio Declaration. SENEGAL, with the EU and NORWAY, underscored the importance of integrated chemicals management. NIGERIA, for the AFRICAN GROUP, with NORWAY, stated that SAICM must specify principles and approaches. NORWAY commended the use of "corporate social and environmental responsibility" and "just transition" as set out in IPEN's document on principles (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/INF/26). JAPAN suggested the Secretariat prepare a document on principles and approaches used in international agreements.

Implementation and taking stock of progress: NIGERIA, for the AFRICAN GROUP, recalled the group's support for a multi-stakeholder forum to monitor implementation, using IFCS as a model. IRAN said IFCS would be a good option if the organization is prepared to change its terms of reference. The EU proposed that SAICM's political declaration include provision for a mid-term review. He said an organizational structure to measure progress is not necessary. NEW ZEALAND noted that chemicals will be on

the agenda of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development in 2010 and 2011. CUBA, for GRULAC, called for a regular review as set out in the report of the group's regional meeting (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/INF/25). AUSTRALIA noted the autonomous nature of the major international organizations involved in chemical safety, citing the example of the IOMC organizations, and commented on the limited mandate, presence and resources of IFCS. He proposed that delegates explore solutions to these challenges, rather than creating new institutions. The IOMC stated that the organization is prepared to use the intersessional period to think about a role in implementing and monitoring SAICM. The IFCS stated it would welcome any role that the preparatory committee might recommend for it and would consider changing its terms of reference to fulfil such a role. It also agreed to prepare a paper on targets for the management of chemicals in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). The EU highlighted a possible role for UNEP, with appropriate input from other relevant international bodies. BRAZIL noted that the determination of IFCS's mandate lies with member states, and said if one organization is to play a role it should be within the UN system, which has universal membership. CANADA proposed using a clearinghouse and repository system with mutual accountability. CHINA expressed concern at addressing implementation issues when concrete measures have not been established. KENYA said that, if any institution should implement SAICM, it should be a strengthened UNEP. THAILAND called for a separation between implementation and monitoring.

CONTACT GROUP ON CONCRETE MEASURES

The contact group continued work on the matrix for organizing concrete measures proposed under SAICM. Rapporteur Wanda Hoskin (Canada) provided a working document and said the concrete measures had been compiled in four tables, one for each of the following four objectives: risk reduction; knowledge and information; governance; and capacity building and technical cooperation. Each table included two columns, one identifying each concrete measure and another listing activities. The group focused on reviewing each concrete measure and the associated list of activities, in order to ensure the inclusion of all pertinent activities and to eliminate duplication. Where additional activities were introduced, participants refrained from drafting new text, but rather drew on relevant meeting documents. Participants also identified the main actors to be involved in implementing activities for each concrete measure. The group established a fifth table on concrete actions to address illegal traffic. The contact group concluded its work, and will report back to Plenary on Thursday morning.

IN THE BREEZEWAYS

Two sets of Plenary discussions spilled on to the corridors on Wednesday. On candidate organizations for a lead role in overseeing the implementation and monitoring of SAICM, a number of experienced organizations have their champions. Some also cautioned against premature decisions. Key issues identified by commentators include the possible structure of a steering body, how to formally allocate and mandate responsibility to organizations which currently enjoy autonomy, how to establish workable relationships with MEA secretariats, and the perennial dilemma of how to avoid turf wars. Some participants also expressed concern over how to guarantee stakeholder participation and ensure transparency.

Meanwhile, chemical industry representatives moved quickly to neutralize a proposal that they donate a fraction of their trillion-dollar turnover to SAICM. One representative said the proposal was no more legitimate than suggesting that Greenpeace sponsor SAICM.