

SUMMARY OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED LEGAL AND TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP OF THE ICCM AND INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS ON PREPARATIONS FOR ICCM-2: 21-24 OCTOBER 2008

The first meeting of the Open-ended Legal and Technical Working Group (OELTWG) of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) and informal discussions on preparations for the second meeting of the ICCM (ICCM-2), was held from 21-24 October 2008, in Rome, Italy. The meeting was attended by over 200 participants, representing governments, UN agencies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

The OELTWG discussed the rules of procedure for the ICCM, using the rules of procedure for the preparatory committee for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) as a guide. Protracted debate ensued in plenary on Tuesday and Wednesday, in contact groups throughout the week and in plenary on Friday, in an attempt to agree on the rules of procedure. Although some progress was made on the composition of the Bureau, delegates were unable to reach agreement on the entire text, and as several delegates stated "nothing is agreed, until everything is agreed." As such, negotiations will continue at ICCM-2 in May 2009.

The informal discussions included preparatory dialogue on issues to be considered at ICCM-2 including: emerging policy issues; modalities for SAICM reporting; financial and technical resources for SAICM implementation, including evaluating the performance of financing of SAICM; review and update of SAICM; and the relationship between the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) and SAICM. Delegates also agreed on a way forward for addressing emerging policy issues, which includes a section on immediate actions to select emerging issues to be addressed by ICCM-2.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SAICM

The issue of chemicals management and the idea of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management have been discussed by the United Nations Environment Programme

Governing Council (UNEP GC) and reflected in various forms since 1995, including in:

- UNEP GC decision 18/12 of May 1995, which invites UNEP's Executive Director to convene an expert group to consider and recommend further measures to reduce risks from a limited number of chemicals;
- an expert group meeting in April 1996, which made recommendations in four areas, namely: inadequate capacity of developing countries to handle hazardous chemicals and pesticides; disposal of unwanted stocks of pesticides and other chemicals;
- insufficient information for chemicals management decision making and action;
- the possible need to ban and phase out certain chemicals; and
- UNEP GC decision 19/13 of February 1997, which seeks out options for enhanced coherence and efficiency among international activities related to chemicals.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE

DEVELOPMENT: The Summit was convened from 26 August-4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa, and delegates adopted the Johannesburg Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). The JPOI's chemicals-related targets include:

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- the aim to achieve, by 2020, the use and production of chemicals in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment;
- the development, by 2005, of a SAICM based on the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) Bahia Declaration, and Priorities for Action Beyond 2000; and
- the national implementation of the new Globally Harmonized System of classification and labeling of chemicals, with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008.

IFCS FORUM IV: The fourth session of the IFCS (Forum IV) took place from 1-7 November 2003, in Bangkok, Thailand, under the theme “Chemical Safety in a Vulnerable World.” In response to GC decisions SS.VII/3 and 22/4, Forum IV discussed the further development of SAICM and forwarded a non-negotiated compilation report on its work to SAICM PrepCom-1, addressing, *inter alia*: life-cycle management of chemicals since Agenda 21; new and ongoing challenges; gaps in life-cycle chemicals management; and resources for capacity building and implementation.

PREPCOM-1: SAICM PrepCom-1 took place from 9-13 November 2003, in Bangkok, Thailand. Participants provided initial comments on potential issues to be addressed during the development of SAICM, examined ways to structure discussions, and considered possible outcomes of the SAICM process. There was widespread agreement among participants that the overarching objective of SAICM should be to achieve, by 2020, the use and production of chemicals in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment, as agreed in the JPOI. There was also broad support for a three-tiered approach for SAICM, which would comprise: a global programme of action with targets and timetables; an overarching policy strategy; and a high-level or ministerial declaration.

PREPCOM-2: SAICM PrepCom-2 was held from 4-8 October 2004, in Nairobi, Kenya. Delegates discussed elements for an overarching policy strategy for international chemicals management, made progress in developing a matrix of possible concrete measures to include in the global plan of action, and provided comments on an initial list of elements for a high-level political declaration.

2005 WORLD SUMMIT: The 2005 World Summit was held at UN headquarters in New York from 14-16 September. Regarding chemicals management, delegates resolved to promote the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle, including hazardous wastes, with the aim 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.” They resolved to implement a voluntary strategic approach to international management of chemicals, and to support developing countries in strengthening their capacity for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes.

PREPCOM-3: SAICM PrepCom-3 was held from 19-24 September 2005, in Vienna, Austria. Delegates discussed the SAICM high-level declaration, overarching policy strategy, and global plan of action, but did not reach agreement on several elements in the three documents, including: principles and

approaches; the description of SAICM as “voluntary”; financial considerations; and the timing and frequency of future ICCM sessions.

ICCM-1: The first International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-1) was held from 4-6 February 2006, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Delegates completed negotiations and adopted SAICM, including an overarching policy strategy and global plan of action. The Dubai Declaration on International Chemicals Management was also adopted. In the Declaration, participants committed to strengthening the capacities of all concerned in order to achieve the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes at all levels, and to continue mobilizing national and international financing from public and private sources. They also reaffirmed the goal to minimize the significant adverse effects on human health and the environment by 2020.

FORUM V: This meeting was held in Budapest, Hungary, from 25-29 September 2006. The main agenda item at Forum V was consideration of the future of the IFCS in light of the final agreements on SAICM. Agreement was reached to establish a working group to draft a decision on the future of IFCS to be presented at IFCS-VI.

FORUM VI: This meeting took place from 15-19 September 2008 in Dakar, Senegal. The main agenda item for the meeting was the future of the IFCS. Discussions were based on three options identified by the Working Group on the Future of the IFCS, created by Forum V in light of agreement of SAICM in 2006. After debating the three options and whether to maintain the institutional independence of the IFCS, delegates agreed to invite the ICCM to integrate the Forum into the ICCM as an advisory body, as stated in the Dakar Resolution on the Future of IFCS. They also reached consensus on the three functions and key elements for operation of the Forum, and decided that its role is to provide an open, transparent and inclusive forum for considering new and emerging issues related to sound chemicals management.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

On Tuesday morning, 21 October, Matthew Gubb, SAICM Secretariat, welcomed participants to the first meeting of the Open-Ended Legal and Technical Working Group. He thanked the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat for cooperating on travel arrangements and noted this facilitated increased participation in the OELTWG. Peter Kenmore, Chief, Plant Protection Service, UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), welcomed delegates on behalf of the Director-General of the FAO, praised the SAICM Secretariat for their excellent preparatory work, and highlighted FAO’s activities in implementing SAICM. He said the key to SAICM’s success is the strengthening of national actions and the creation of synergies.

Addressing organizational matters, delegates agreed to proceed on the basis of the Rules of Procedure of the Preparatory Committee for the development of SAICM, *mutatis mutandis*. The US clarified that consensus should be the basis of decision making. The Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), supported by Switzerland, agreed the OELTWG should

strive for consensus, but supported keeping voting provisions. Noting the two approaches, the Secretariat proposed, and delegates agreed, to set aside the issue in brackets.

Delegates agreed to broaden the Bureau to five members, one from each UN region, and elected Abiola Olanipekun (Nigeria), Kateřina Šebková (Czech Republic), Barry Reville (Australia) and Mohammed Khashashneh (Jordan). Osvaldo Alvarez (Chile) was elected as OELTWG Chair. Delegates also adopted the agenda (SAICM/OELTWG.1/1/1) without amendment.

During the week, delegates met in a formal session to discuss the rules of procedure and in an informal session to discuss preparations for ICCM-2. This summary is organized into two sections on the OELTWG and informal discussions, respectively.

PREPARATION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ICCM AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

The Secretariat introduced discussion on preparation of the rules of procedure of the ICCM and its subsidiary bodies (SAICM/OELTWG.1/2; SAICM/OELTWG.1/3; and INF/1) on Tuesday morning and discussion on this item continued throughout Tuesday and Wednesday in plenary and contact groups, as delegates completed an initial “read through” of the rules of procedure to highlight positions on controversial issues.

On Wednesday, Chair Alvarez introduced a paper containing the compilation of ideas on the rules of procedure, prepared by the Secretariat (SAICM/OELTWG.1/CRP.1) and delegates began negotiating the non-controversial issues, chapter by chapter. Contact groups continued negotiations throughout Thursday evening and the item was reopened in plenary on Friday afternoon. On Friday afternoon, delegates attempted to finalize the outstanding rules of procedure (SAICM/OELTWG.1/CRP.1/Rev.1), but negotiations could not be completed. The partially negotiated rules of procedure will be annexed to the report of the meeting and forwarded to ICCM-2, where negotiations will continue.

GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS: In an exchange of views in plenary, the US drew attention to SAICM/OELTWG.1/INF/2, its proposal for the rules of procedure of the ICCM, and, with Canada and Uruguay, suggested it provided a good basis for discussion. Switzerland, Brazil, France, on behalf of the European Union (EU), Cuba, Tanzania, on behalf of the African Group, Qatar and others preferred to develop rules of procedure using those of the SAICM preparatory committee (SAICM/OELTWG.1/2), as a basis for deliberation, referring to the US proposal in parallel. Delegates agreed to the Chair’s proposal to work based on SAICM/OELTWG.1/2, with the US intervening to bring pertinent points from its proposal. Chair Alvarez clarified that the details of the US proposal could be studied in regional group meetings.

I. INTRODUCTION: This chapter contains Rule 1 on the objective. New Zealand, Romania and CIEL supported the US proposal that the rules of procedure should apply to any meeting of the ICCM. CIEL suggested and delegates agreed that the name of the chapter should be “introduction” instead of “objective,” which was the equivalent chapter title in the Prepcom rules of procedure.

II. DEFINITIONS: This chapter contains Rule 2. Mali proposed including definitions for a subsidiary body and an expanded Bureau. Iran noted that changes to the rules

need to be coherent with future debates on the text. The EU suggested a reference to international regional organizations. The US proposed a separate definition for “regional economic integration organizations” and called for clarity in the use of “meetings” or “sessions.” The Secretariat clarified that “session” and not “meeting” was the established terminology to use under SAICM. Jamaica underscored that regional economic integration organizations could also be subregional. In defining “non-governmental participants,” CIEL said national NGOs that deal with international chemical management should not be excluded.

Delegates agreed on definitions of governmental participants, governmental participants present and voting, intergovernmental participants, participant and President. The definition of non-governmental participant was not agreed, owing to divergent views on whether the expertise and responsibilities of NGOs should be “relevant to” or “consistent with” the purpose and objectives of SAICM. Iran and China supported “consistent with” and the section remains bracketed.

III. PARTICIPATION: This chapter contains Rule 3. The US proposed adding reference to all participants being entitled to take part in sessions of the Conference “and subsidiary bodies in accordance with Rule 18 on subsidiary bodies.”

Delegates agreed to the US addition and also that intergovernmental and/or non-governmental participants shall be excluded from the consideration of all or part of the agenda if decided by a two-thirds majority of the governmental participants present and voting.

IV. VENUE, DATES AND NOTICE OF SESSIONS: This chapter contains Rules 4 and 5. Regarding meetings (Rule 4), the US proposed stipulating dates of the Conference meetings as 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2020. Brazil, Qatar and Syria stated this was premature and that the Conference should be sovereign to decide meeting dates. Delegates agreed not to include this reference.

Switzerland, supported by Norway, proposed deleting reference to “and meetings of its subsidiary bodies.” Citing financial implications, the Inter-Organizational Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) preferred to retain this, but agreed to delete the reference on the condition that this would be mentioned in the sections on subsidiary bodies.

Delegates agreed that the venue and dates of each session of the Conference shall be decided by the governmental participants after consulting the Secretariat and inviting comments by intergovernmental and non-governmental participants. Delegates agreed to the Secretariat notifying all participants of the venue and dates of a session of the Conference at least eight weeks before it is due to commence (Rule 5), without amendment.

V. AGENDA: This chapter contains Rules 6, 7 and 8. Delegates agreed that the Secretariat would prepare the agenda in consultation with the Bureau (Rule 6). Delegates debated how many languages to translate official documents into, and whether to distribute them six or eight weeks prior to each session. They agreed that official documents, but not information documents, would be translated into the six official UN languages, six weeks before the session. They also agreed

that the Secretariat would, with the consent of the Bureau, include any supplementary items proposed by participants to the provisional agenda.

Delegates discussed the US proposal to add a paragraph to Rule 6 providing direction on how to prioritize agenda items. The EU, Norway, IOMC and Brazil opposed it, underscoring a need for flexibility, while Qatar and Jamaica supported it. Switzerland noted the Bureau and the President can structure the agenda in response to needs. Australia and New Zealand added the agenda needs to be sensible. Guinea questioned the criteria for determining the “important and urgent” nature of agenda items. Delegates discussed a US proposal relating to priorities for the inclusion of items on the agenda. Many participants suggested the agenda for future conferences should be based on the priorities contained in the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy (OPS), while others questioned whether this precluded the possibility of discussing new matters. The US proposed language specifying the need to prioritize the outcomes of regional meetings, to focus on the priorities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and to consider issues not adequately addressed in other forums. Debate on this matter was continued in the contact group on participants, accreditation/credentials and decision-making, but was not resolved.

On Friday in plenary, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (GRULAC), CIEL, the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) and Switzerland favored deleting “and items not addressed in other forums.” This was opposed by the US. Chair Alvarez said the language would be removed and the US reserved its right to return to the matter at ICCM-2.

On the adoption of the agenda for the session (Rule 7) and revising the agenda (Rule 8), delegates agreed the rules referred to the session “of the Conference.”

The US proposed an additional Chapter IV*bis* on representation and credentials, using language from the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions. The EU, Ghana, Agenda for Environment and Responsible Development, CIEL and the IOMC questioned the necessity for this and highlighted the need for SAICM to retain its flexible nature. Delegates agreed on the inclusion of a new chapter that states, *inter alia*, that: intergovernmental and non-governmental participants shall be duly accredited, and a responsible official of such participants shall submit to the Secretariat the names of those who represent it at the conference.

VI. OFFICERS: This chapter contains Rules 9 to 14. Discussion on election of the Bureau (Rule 9) and Bureau meetings (Rule 10) was taken up in a contact group throughout the week. Results of the deliberations were presented to plenary on Friday afternoon.

Regarding election of the Bureau (Rule 9), the US, supported by Switzerland, suggested the Bureau should remain in office until after ICCM-3. Brazil added that Bureau membership should be for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

On election of the Bureau (Rule 9), delegates agreed that the Bureau would comprise the President and four Vice-Presidents and that they would be elected by and from among the governmental participants present at the session. On composition of the Bureau (Rule 10), delegates agreed that the Bureau shall

meet as necessary and that in light of the multi-stakeholder character of SAICM, the President shall invite four NGO representatives and one representative from an intergovernmental organization (IGO) to participate in discussions and during meetings. One representative of each of health, industry, trade unions, and public interest group NGO participants shall be elected at ICCM-2 by and from representatives present from each group. The elected representatives shall remain in that capacity until the end of ICCM-3.

On Bureau meetings (Rule 10), the US added that the Bureau could meet either in person or by teleconference. Switzerland, supported by International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Georgia and CIEL, proposed adding a reference to the concept of an expanded Bureau. CIEL, supported by Brazil, stressed Bureau members should have a role in the implementation of SAICM. The IOMC highlighted that a defining characteristic of SAICM that needs to be maintained is inclusiveness.

On actions carried out by the President (Rule 11), delegates agreed that he/she would preside at sessions of the Conference and at meetings of the Bureau. On putting questions to the vote and announcing decisions, Brazil expressed concern that this did not reflect the principle of first striving for consensus. Debate ensued on the wording and the text remains bracketed.

On presidential participation (Rule 12), delegates agreed the rule refers to sessions of the Conference as opposed to the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom), and in the absence of a President (Rule 13), delegates agreed the President shall designate a Vice-President.

Delegates discussed how to replace a resigning officer of the Bureau (Rule 14). The US, opposed by the EU, Mali and Nigeria, proposed that the replacement be named by the government of the participant concerned. Australia proposed compromise text coming from the PrepCom rules of procedure to the effect that “a replacement governmental participant from the same government shall be provided by that government as soon as possible.” GRULAC, CIEL and Japan agreed. Senegal, opposed by Argentina, suggested SAICM focal points should be consulted, but supported Australia’s proposal. Switzerland noted that the proposal should not preclude replacements from other governments. Delegates agreed to Australia’s amendment.

VII. SECRETARIAT: This chapter contains Rules 15 to 17. Discussions focused on the UNEP Executive Director providing and directing the staff of the Secretariat (Rule 15), servicing the Conference and subsidiary bodies, and consulting with the Steering Committee. The US proposed deleting the reference to consultation with the Steering Committee, while the EU suggested replacing the reference to “Steering Committee” with the Bureau. Delegates agreed to remove the references to subsidiary bodies and the Steering Committee.

On the distribution of documents (Rule 16), delegates agreed distribution should occur at least six weeks in advance of sessions.

Delegates also agreed that the Secretariat would perform other tasks the Conference may require in relation to its functions (Rule 17).

VIII. SUBSIDIARY BODIES: This chapter contains Rule 18. Regarding the application of the rules of procedure *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of any subsidiary body, Uruguay, on behalf of GRULAC, and CIEL suggested adding “unless the Conference decides otherwise.” Iran noted that there was objection to the IFCS VI resolution that recommended the IFCS become a subsidiary body of SAICM, as not all countries participated in IFCS VI. Switzerland, supported by Nigeria and IOMC, said subsidiary bodies need to be able to elaborate their own rules of procedure and, urging participants to focus on SAICM, noted the Dakar Resolution on the Future of the IFCS is expected to be taken up at ICCM-2.

On Friday in plenary, delegates attempted to resolve the issue of such bodies. CIEL suggested removing the brackets around the paragraph on the establishment of subsidiary bodies. China asked to reserve the right to keep the brackets. Canada, supported by the US, said two options were available and supported the second in that subsidiary bodies would carry out specific objectives, as may be agreed upon at a session of the Conference. CIEL noted that the first option, on establishing subsidiary bodies as necessary for the effective discharge of the functions of the Conference, came from the PrepCom and the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. Switzerland, the EU and Nigeria supported CIEL.

Australia proposed compromise text to the effect that the governmental participants, IGO and NGO participants, “establish subsidiary bodies to carry out such objectives as may be agreed upon at a session of the Conference.” Switzerland, Canada and CIEL supported Australia’s proposal, but the US only supported it provisionally, pending finalization of the decision-making process of the Conference.

No agreement was reached on who should decide on establishing subsidiary bodies. Several delegates, including China and Canada, preferred stipulating “the governmental participant,” with others preferring more general language. Delegates were unable to resolve the issue of subsidiary bodies and the section remains bracketed.

The US proposed an additional rule on regional networks (Rule 18*bis*). The EU and Brazil opposed the rule, stating there was no need to organize the functioning of regional groups and also that such a discussion was premature. The US addition remains bracketed.

IX. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS: This chapter contains Rules 19 to 27. Plenary moved quickly through the second reading of the document, adopting language, with only minor amendments on: speaking protocol (Rule 20), precedence for chairs and rapporteurs of subsidiary bodies (Rule 21), raising points of order (Rule 22), introducing proposals or motions (Rule 25), and withdrawal of proposals or motions (Rule 26).

All other rules in this chapter were referred to the contact group on participants, accreditation/credentials and decision-making, chaired by Jamidu Katima (Agenda for Environment and Responsible Development).

Regarding conduct of business and the issue of quorum (Rule 19) the US, opposed by the EU, proposed language referring to a “consensus decision” as opposed to a “vote.” IOMC, supported

by ITUC and IPEN, stressed that government-only decision-making is inconsistent with the principles of SAICM. References to “vote” and “decision” remains bracketed.

Regarding competence of the Conference (Rule 23), the US said decisions on competence are important and proposed that such decisions be taken by consensus. The EU and CIEL disagreed. References to “vote” and “decision” remain bracketed.

Regarding permitting discussion on items not previously circulated (Rule 24), Brazil proposed deleting reference to the President permitting discussion on such items. CIEL explained this is a standard provision, and, with the support of IOMC and Argentina, said it was an essential component of the workability of a meeting. Brazil clarified that such decisions should be proposed by the President, but decided by states, and delegates agreed.

On reconsidering proposals that have been adopted or rejected (Rule 27), the US suggested replacing text on a two-thirds majority vote with consensus of the governmental representatives. The IOMC, supported by ITUC, emphasized the multi-stakeholder nature of SAICM, while Switzerland added that it favored majority decision-making procedures.

X. ADOPTION OF DECISIONS: This chapter contains Rules 28 to 34. Mali recalled earlier requests to define and agree on the consensus-building process, while several participants stressed that all rules of procedure should allow the ICCM sufficient flexibility to conduct business as effectively as possible (Rule 28). Uruguay, on behalf of GRULAC, supported by Norway, the EU and others, noted that while every effort should be made to reach consensus, the voting option is an important fall-back position. The African Group noted that consensus can be abused, hence the need for a clear definition of what constitutes a majority. The US suggested that the ICCM should require consensus based decision-making of governmental participants on substantive issues, while for procedural matters, voting may be necessary to expedite the progress of a meeting.

On the issue of defining who should participate, CIEL, supported by ITUC, IOMC and IPEN, reiterated the need for an inclusive process, while the EU clarified that different majorities would be called for depending on the nature of the discussion.

On reaching agreement (Rule 28), China underscored the importance of garnering political will and obtaining consensus. CIEL agreed with China that lessons should be drawn from other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), and highlighted that the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer strives for consensus, but also has a voting provision, and is often cited as one of the most successful MEAs. This rule was not agreed and several sections remain bracketed. These include what to do if agreement is not reached by consensus and if decisions should be taken by a two-thirds majority vote by government participants.

The US proposed a new rule (Rule 28*bis*) on a participant wishing to explain its position in a conference report, with Switzerland, Argentina, the EU and CIEL noting it might not be necessary to explicitly detail a process that occurs without being stated in the rules of procedure. Rule 28*bis* remains bracketed.

Regarding voting on a single proposal, language relating to a roll-call vote remains bracketed (Rule 30).

Rules relating to amendments (Rule 29), vote of each government participant (Rule 31), no interruptions during voting (Rule 32) and ballot procedures for elections in the absence of consensus (Rule 33), were adopted without amendment.

XI. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SESSIONS: This chapter contains Rules 35 and 36. Delegates agreed that the plenary sessions of the Conference shall be held in public unless government participants decide otherwise (Rule 35).

The US, supported by the EU and Indonesia, proposed deleting reference to holding meetings of subsidiary bodies in public (Rule 36), noting this was covered in Rule 18. The African Group preferred to retain the text until the contact group on participants, accreditation/credentials, decision-making, deliberated on the matter. Delegates eventually agreed that the meetings of subsidiary bodies shall be held in public, unless government participants decide otherwise.

XII. LANGUAGES: With regard to Chapter XII on languages, the rules on official languages (Rule 37), interpretation of official languages (Rule 38), and official documents (Rule 39) were adopted without amendment.

XIII. AMENDMENTS TO RULES OF PROCEDURE: A final decision on Rule 40, which refers to consensus of the governmental participants, was deferred pending the outcome of contact group discussions. Delegates agreed that amendments to rules of procedure shall be adopted by consensus of the governmental participants.

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR ICCM-2

On Thursday morning, the Secretariat opened the meeting and presented the annotated agenda for the informal discussions on preparations for ICCM-2 (SAICM/InfDisc/1/Add.1). The EU said the outputs from both the informal and formal sessions were to be considered equally important and referred delegates to its information paper elaborating this (SAICM/InfDisc/INF/10). The US introduced a document (SAICM/InfDisc/INF/8) describing its vision on the Strategic Approach and ICCM-2, underscoring its differences with MEAs and its potential as a capacity-building opportunity. The African Group highlighted the provision of a sustainable financial mechanism, and ensuring technical and financial resources for SAICM implementation, as a key concern. Senegal called for the full participation of all developing countries, NGOs/IGOs and other stakeholders.

Delegates elected two Co-Chairs Babajide Alo (Nigeria) and Kateřina Šebková (Czech Republic) by acclamation, and the agenda and organization of work proposed by the Secretariat were adopted without amendment.

PREPARATORY DISCUSSIONS ON ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED BY ICCM-2: Emerging policy issues:

Co-Chair Šebková introduced the discussion on emerging policy issues, and the Secretariat presented its note on emerging policy issues (SAICM/InfDisc/2) and a compilation of submissions received from stakeholders in response to the questionnaire on emerging policy issues (SAICM/InfDisc/INF/3).

The Secretariat drew attention to three stages under the proposed elements of a nomination process (contained in SAICM/InfDisc/INF/1/Add.1): nomination of issues; selection of issues for further consideration; and development of recommended response measures. Switzerland suggested three

categories: new and emerging in the scientific sense, such as endocrine disruptors; distinguishing between producers and downstream users, such as in the case of nanomaterials; and new on the political agenda, such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Environmental Health Fund (EHF) suggested adding to the list issues that have not received sufficient attention but are harmful to health and the environment. On prioritization, he suggested grouping issues, such as by electronic waste or heavy metals. Senegal delivered a statement on the IFCS' work, noting the issues considered to be emerging. The EU introduced its proposal on emerging policy issues (SAICM/InfDisc/CRP.1), noting the importance of developing a selection process. Canada concurred on the need to develop a process to identify and screen emerging issues, but underscored the importance of a shared definition of what constitutes an emerging issue. Japan agreed with the EU to not spend excessive time on a definition but rather on the selection criteria. Argentina drew attention to a Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) and International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) proposal on the need for a scientific advisory body for ICCM.

SETAC and IUPAC presented their proposal (SAICM/InfDisc/INF/9) to support the work of SAICM by establishing an arms-length, scientific and non-political advisory forum.

The US concurred with the Secretariat's definition of emerging issues and tabled its proposal for a three-stage screening process to prioritize emerging issues to be addressed at ICCM 2 that echoes the EU proposal. The first stage would entail initial administrative screening by the Secretariat, followed by consideration by regional focal points, and finally consultation of regional focal points and Bureau members to reflect on feedback from stakeholders in the region.

Mali called for a flexible approach, while China underlined the need for the ICCM to focus on assessing the implementation of SAICM. Noting that ICCM-2 would be held back-to-back with the World Health Assembly (WHA), the International Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE) suggested that the World Health Organization (WHO) organize a special event to bring ICCM outputs to the WHA. Basel Convention Regional Coordination Centres (BCRCCs) suggested that leaving out issues listed in the Global Plan of Action (GPA) and actions addressed by other MEAs would help reduce the list of priority areas.

Indonesia supported Brazil's proposal to identify success stories in handling emerging issues. UNEP and Canada welcomed the offer by IUPAC and SETAC to provide scientific backstopping to SAICM and to help identify and respond to gaps in capacity building.

Participants further welcomed the proposal by Co-Chair Šebková to prepare a Chair's summary reflecting the discussions and to suggest a roadmap to deal with emerging issues during the intersessional period and at ICCM-2 for discussion on Friday. Canada and Nigeria asked that the summary incorporate the papers on emerging issues tabled by Brazil, the EU, the US and others.

On Friday morning, Co-Chair Šebková introduced her proposal on the way forward on emerging policy issues (SAICM/InfDisc/CRP.5). She said an approach was necessary to manage the 36 emerging issues currently on the table for ICCM-2.

Co-Chair Šebková explained her proposal contained sections on, *inter alia*, immediate actions and actions at ICCM-2, and future considerations. She highlighted that the paper proposed a simple procedure for the Secretariat to screen emerging issues in order to select a group of issues to be dealt with at ICCM-2.

Argentina, supported by Nigeria and CIEL, proposed the results of the Secretariat's screening be circulated to the Friends of the Secretariat. CIEL highlighted the need to integrate the core functions of the IFCS into SAICM. The US opposed Argentina's proposal. Australia preferred not to refer to any particular body but suggested a compromise on "an advisory mechanism" that could include the establishment of a subsidiary body.

Regarding the need for ICCM-2 to consider a longer-term procedure, Argentina proposed reference to the possible need to establish an advisory or subsidiary body to consider those issues that require technical and scientific input and debate.

Brazil said further discussion on how to decide priorities was required and that it was premature to select specific issues for ICCM-2, given the short time frame.

Regarding actions at ICCM-2, the EU proposed that prioritized emerging policy issues could be included in a resolution on further actions to be taken.

Co-Chair Šebková presented the revised Co-Chairs' summary on emerging policy issues for discussion at ICCM-2 (SAICM/InfDisc/CRP.5/Rev.1), incorporating all substantive comments received. In the ensuing discussions, Switzerland, opposed by Brazil, asked that references to revised criteria be removed. At the Co-Chairs' request, the two delegations provided compromise text mentioning that ICCM-2 would develop clear criteria for priority setting on emerging issues. A request by China for more explicit reference to the role of governments in screening emerging policy issues was included. The document was adopted with these and several minor amendments. Delegates agreed to attach the proposal (SAICM/InfDisc/CRP.5/Rev.1) to the final meeting report as a proposal of the meeting on emerging issues.

Modalities for reporting on the implementation of the SAICM: Co-Chair Šebková acknowledged Canada's support in developing a pilot reporting mechanism and invited participants to report on their experiences in implementing the trial questionnaire. Belarus proposed further piloting at the national level and urged Canada to continue to facilitate this process. ITUC praised Canada for welcoming multi-stakeholder participation.

Nigeria said five African countries had participated in the pilot SAICM exercise and that the SAICM African regional meeting in Dar es Salaam had deliberated issues arising from the process. Key recommendations included making the questionnaire more user-friendly and providing support for information gathering to facilitate effective reporting. The EU and UNITAR noted Canada's reporting tool should be discussed and negotiated at ICCM-2 with a view to adopting and integrating it as part of a non-bureaucratic reporting approach. The EU noted the benchmarking exercise highlighted the complexity of the indicators currently in use, hence the instrument needed to be reviewed and honed to help assess the decision-making process in SAICM. The US expressed concern at the complexity of

the current indicators, calling for a reduction in the number of entries, simpler questions and avoiding duplication by building on existing resources and instruments.

The International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) called for an industry version of the questionnaire, but noted that an analysis had revealed duplication and the tendency for subjective responses to the current questionnaire.

EHF added that the governmental reporting process could benefit from the inclusion of multi-sectoral viewpoints and a focus on priority actions and constraints encountered. With regard to NGO input, he called for a consolidated report organized in terms of priority areas, as is the case under the Stockholm Convention.

Colombia called for capacity building at the regional level to boost national implementation. Indonesia highlighted the need to validate information and said electronic databases would be useful to track information. Iran said detailed reporting by different sectors was counterproductive.

Switzerland stressed the need for a pragmatic approach and to consider national compliance. Uruguay underscored the importance of indicators to evaluate progress.

Chair Šebková summarized the discussion and said the indicators were complex and should be simplified. She proposed, and delegates agreed, that the international project steering committee should reconvene and develop a simplified version prior to ICCM-2. The US called for existing information to be used and suggested a meeting concurrent with the next meeting of the Quick Start Programme (QSP) to look into the issue. The Secretariat said international project steering committee members would reinitiate the discussion, simplify the current proposal and have a final version ready by January to go to ICCM-2.

Financial and technical resources for implementation of the SAICM, including evaluation of the performance of the financing of the SAICM: On behalf of an informal financial group of 12 donor countries, Sweden introduced a thought starter paper on options for SAICM's long-term financing, developed at the financial group's second meeting in February 2008 (SAICM/InfDisc/CRP.2). She noted that additional background documentation is needed on funding modalities and offered the outcome of the informal meeting as an input to this process. Norway called for improved awareness raising on the links between chemicals management, health, environment and activities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

EHF stressed that ICCM-2 should develop a sustainable financial mechanism to achieve its 2020 goal, noting that while the QSP had got off to a good start, its donor base was too narrow. He supported exploring a chemicals management funding window under the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and suggested adding this to the ICCM-2 high-level round-table agenda.

Argentina, supported by the African Group, stressed that more funding is required than is currently envisioned in the donor thought starter paper and called on ICCM-2 to establish a concrete, stable and specific funding mechanism, including contributions from the chemical industry. Uruguay stressed that for SAICM to be relevant, ICCM-2 must take a decision on its long-term financing.

The EU noted that the scope of SAICM underscores the need for differentiated funding approaches, including existing bilateral and multilateral programmes, enhanced coordination, and new mechanisms. He called on the Secretariat to prepare adequate background documentation to prioritize activities to be funded under the Strategic Approach and noted that the GEF is a natural candidate for capacity building and projects relevant to the Strategic Approach.

Brazil noted that while the QSP was an attempt to earmark funding for SAICM implementation, it is limited in scope, time frame and geographical coverage. He called for a specific instrument for the implementation of chemicals management activities.

Jamaica stressed synergies between activities in the GPA and activities under some MEAs, and highlighted the need to increase the profile of chemicals management within donor agencies.

Noting that financing is a major issue, the US highlighted the importance for developing countries to prioritize chemicals management in negotiations with donors. He cautioned however that opening a GEF window for chemicals would not guarantee greater available funds through the GEF.

Noting that the chemicals industry derives significant profit from chemicals, IPEN stressed it was an important source for funds and that its contribution in managing chemical impacts would be welcomed. ICCA pledged the chemical industry's commitment to improving chemicals management, particularly in the fields of technical innovation.

Switzerland echoed the urgent call for funding for SAICM, but expressed disappointment that several issues could not be addressed in the informal discussions because of lack of financing for full participation. He said refusal to discuss issues did not send a good signal.

ISDE praised SAICM's efficiency and said the QSP was more accessible than other funds.

On Friday morning, Co-Chair Alo introduced a document compiled by the Secretariat containing additional documents requested for ICCM-2 (SAICM/InfDisc/CRP.4). Switzerland said consulting with stakeholders in the preparation of a document outlining possible actions to be taken by ICCM-2 might be too complicated. The US and Brazil questioned whether such a document should include elements of a draft resolution.

Argentina stressed the importance of the document on the possible future role of the GEF as a financial mechanism for implementing the Strategic Approach, but questioned the usefulness of the other documents listed, worrying about the workload. Norway questioned whether the GEF is being utilized to its full potential for SAICM and noted such a document should be explicit about the procedures for changing and adjusting to the GEF.

Argentina, Brazil and the EHF noted that a report on obstacles to potential donors should focus on avoiding and resolving obstacles. Norway noted it should be a fact-finding document.

The US favored having one paper rather than several papers, suggesting building on the proposed background document to support the three categories of activities relating to the funding of the Strategic Approach, bringing in the GEF and looking in depth at the various options. Norway noted some of the issues

could be dealt with in one paper, but other documents might be prepared in parallel. IPEN supported a diversity of papers and asked for clarification on whether the paper presenting the qualitative assessment of needs would take into account all stakeholders needs. The EU suggested prioritizing the different documents, with the one on the future role of the GEF topping the list and possibly being combined with the one on the three categories of activities relating to funding.

On an information note on GEF replenishment, the US noted replenishment discussions would start in December, while the EHF said such a note would break new ground and be useful to bridge the two bodies.

The Secretariat said it would take into account delegates' interventions and undertake intersessional work to prepare, *inter alia*, papers on the possibility of SAICM adopting the GEF as its financing mechanism, a brief information note on the GEF replenishment discussions, and a report on obstacles to potential donors.

Review and update of the SAICM: Co-Chair Alo introduced the review and update of the Strategic Approach on Thursday. Norway, the EHF and Switzerland stressed the critical nature of the task, underscoring how outcomes of the discussion would impact on ICCM-2 products and deliverables. Norway said ICCM-2's conclusions on the future strategy, programming and prioritization should be based on the evaluation, taking into account emerging policy issues.

Evaluation of implementation of the SAICM and possible strategic decisions to ensure effective implementation in the future: The EHF identified two parameters to evaluate SAICM: the implementation of the GPA compared to national plans; and investigating if the technical and financial resources have been sufficient to meet country obligations under the 2020 target. Jamaica proposed using the outcomes of the QSP to take stock before updating the Strategic Approach. Switzerland noted SAICM was a living document and that ICCM-2 could pick up on easily-identifiable problems such as financing. ITUC highlighted the review and update in accordance with OPS Paragraph 24 as crucial, and pointed to nanotechnology as an emerging issue to be taken up by ICCM-2. The US stressed that the focus should be on implementation. Canada recalled that there is no consensus on using the GPA as a measure of progress, preferring to use the OPS. China stressed the need to evaluate before adding new activities to the list of 273 items in the GPA.

Process for the possible addition of new activities to the Global Platform of Action: The EU suggested developing a reporting mechanism to present to ICCM-2 and drew attention to its proposed thought-starter on possible guidelines for the identification of new activities for inclusion in the GPA of the Strategic Approach (SAICM/InfDisc/5). Switzerland said the GPA should be a toolkit to help countries choose and implement activities and, with ITUC and New Zealand, backed the EU proposal. The US questioned the need to embark on new additions to the GPA and, with Canada, opposed the EU proposal. The Secretariat closed the item and noted comments would be taken on board during the intersessional period.

Relationship of the IFCS to SAICM: Consideration of this issue generated a lengthy discussion. IFCS President Ndiaye Cheikh Sylla (Senegal) presented the outcome of the 6th session

of IFCS (SAICM/InfDisc/6) held in September and highlighted that the Forum had demonstrated a multidisciplinary, inclusive and informal approach in its work that could be of value to SAICM. CIEL, supported by the African Group, Argentina, Iran and IOMC, called for the ICCM to operationalize these functions by adopting the IFCS as one of its subsidiary bodies. Opposing this proposal, the US, supported by Canada, Yemen and the ICCA, stated that it does not see value added in making IFCS an ICCM subsidiary body, especially in light of the limited funding arrangements for SAICM, and questioned the need for a permanent, intersessional body. Following the lack of agreement on this point, Co-Chair Alo informed the meeting that the Secretariat had made note of the interventions for inclusion in the agenda for ICCM-2.

ORGANIZATION OF ICCM-2: With Co-Chair Šebková presiding, the meeting considered arrangements for ICCM-2, taking into account input from the EU (SAICM/InfDisc/INF/8) and the US (SAICM/InfDisc/INF/10), on Friday.

Matthew Gubb, SAICM Secretariat, reported that ICCM-2 will take place from 11-15 May 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland, back to back with the 62nd WHA and the Fourth Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention. With regard to the theme of ICCM-2, there was broad support for the focus on the interlinkages between chemical management, public health and environmental protection, to maximize synergies with the WHA and the presence of health ministers in Geneva.

Following the adoption of the ICCM-2 Agenda (SAICM/InfDisc/7) with minor amendments, Co-Chair Šebková invited specific comments on the organization of the high-level segment of the meeting (SAICM/InfDisc/7, Annex V). Many delegates endorsed having a high-level segment on the last two days to fit in with the ministerial segment of the WHA, scheduled for the first and second days of the Assembly. This would also provide an opportunity to brief ministers on the outcome of ICCM-2. On the format of the high-level segment, there was broad agreement on holding a plenary segment and round-table discussions, with Switzerland, EHF and others calling for a second round-table on financing modalities for SAICM to complement the focus on public health and chemical management. WHO and ISDE offered to support the SAICM Secretariat in convening a high-level round-table on health, with Norway noting that the outcome should include a declaration on substantive issues and deliverables to be endorsed by ministers. The US underlined the need to maintain an overall focus on the SAICM process and suggested that a final plenary be convened to consider matters arising from the ministerial segment and to chart the way forward during the intersessional period.

On other issues, China stressed the importance for developing countries of exchanges on SAICM on the ground, and best practices in addressing priority issues.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSURE OF INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS: On Friday afternoon, Co-Chair Šebková introduced the report of the informal discussions (SAICM/InfDisc/L.1) and delegates adopted the report with only minor editorial amendments. They also agreed that the proposal on the way forward on emerging policy issues would be annexed to the report.

Co-Chair Šebková thanked participants for their hard work and expressed hope that the work completed would provide guidance and assist ICCM-2 in making progress. She closed the meeting at 4:30 pm.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

In the closing plenary on Friday afternoon, Chair Alvarez noted that as agreement had not been reached on the rules of procedure, some arrangement would need to be made for the process for further consultations during the intersessional period. Nigeria, Switzerland, New Zealand and the EU proposed adopting a limited “informal Bureau” along the lines provisionally agreed in the discussions on the rules of procedure, to ease the planning process towards ICCM-2. Argentina noted, however, that the mandate of the OELTWG does not allow it to establish a Bureau beyond its own meeting and, with the BCRCCs and IOMC, proposed that the Friends of the Secretariat structure be maintained. Nigeria, supported by several delegations, felt that the Friends of the Secretariat was unwieldy and skewed towards developed countries and called for an expanded “informal Bureau,” including regional focal points.

As agreement could not be reached, Chair Alvarez concluded that the Secretariat would identify the most appropriate mechanism to conduct communication until ICCM-2.

On Friday evening, Chair Alvarez introduced the draft report of the OELTWG (SAICM/OELTWG.1/L.1) and explained that the draft rules of procedure (SAICM/OELTWG.1/CRP.1/Rev.1) would be annexed to the report, and that ICCM-2 would continue working on them. The report was adopted with minor editorial amendments. China noted that the work of the OELTWG was incomplete, as the entire rules of procedure had not been agreed, and reserved his country’s position. Chair Alvarez agreed, confirming that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.

In his closing remarks Chair Alvarez thanked participants for their patience and hard work. The Secretariat thanked delegates for the additional guidance and looked forward to ICCM-2. Chair Alvarez gavelled the meeting to a close at 7:07 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE MEETING

THE ROAD TO ROME

The first session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-1) adopted the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) in February 2006 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. SAICM is a policy tool that was endorsed by over 100 governments, as well as environment, labor and health organizations. The overarching goal of SAICM is to change how chemicals are produced and used to minimize their harmful effects on human health and the environment.

The OELTWG held in Rome was the stepping stone to ICCM-2, scheduled for May 2009 and mandated to undertake the first periodic review of SAICM’s implementation. As the body charged with agreeing on the *modus operandi* for ICCM, the OELTWG not only had to agree on the draft rules of procedure and provide guidance for the Secretariat’s work during the intersessional period, it also needed to initiate discussions on the substantive issues to be tackled at ICCM-2 to put the Conference on the right path for achieving its 2020 goal.

Upon arrival, some were hopeful that with the hurdle of the rules of procedure surmounted, ICCM-2 would recall that the unsound management of chemicals impairs health and damages the environment. By the end of the week, however, many delegates were disappointed with the lack of agreement on the rules of procedure and predicted continued intractability over this issue at ICCM-2. This brief analysis looks at the achievements and shortcomings of the meeting, for both its formal and informal segments, and addresses the implications for ICCM-2.

RULES OF PROCEDURE – NOT BUILT IN A DAY

As discussions on the rules of procedure began on Tuesday morning, it became clear that many delegations had come armed with their legal advisers. The controversies regarding rules of procedure closely mirrored those of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) with no agreement on voting rules. Intergovernmental organization representatives, including the Inter-organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), urged delegates to recall the multi-stakeholder nature of SAICM, as well as the fact that it is a voluntary agreement and not an MEA. Nevertheless, negotiations were difficult, particularly over whether NGO and IGO representatives could participate as equal partners on the Bureau and in decision making.

By Friday, one point of contention on the rules of procedure had been resolved, with the composition of the Bureau agreed. NGO representatives stressed that through surrendering all claims to equal participation – they will be allowed to take part in discussions to advise and respond to the Bureau, but will not be able to vote – they had compromised their position significantly in an effort to make progress on the rules of procedure. Indeed, initially some delegations had opposed any form of NGO/IGO participation, voicing underlying fears that the “wrong” non-governmental participants might get in. In practice, this means that “full stakeholder participation” is now skewed towards governments, thus undermining SAICM’s original intent of having a completely participatory nature.

On another point of contention in the rules of procedure, namely the voting versus consensus rules, delegations, including Australia, believed reaching a compromise on the composition of the Bureau had “opened the door” to consensus on decision making rules and wrapping up the rules of procedure. Others warned that voting rules are a serious problem that has plagued other MEAs, including the Rotterdam Convention, where not reaching consensus and not having voting provisions have had a negative impact. Some developing countries went as far as to say that what they would like to see is a redefinition of the term “consensus” to reflect majority opinion, to prevent certain delegations from effectively vetoing decisions that they do not like. However this is unlikely to be progressed at ICCM-2 as it would set a precedent that may have an impact on a number of conventions.

ROMAN FOUNDATIONS

On Thursday and Friday morning, delegates attended the informal session of the OELTWG to address substantial matters related to the preparation for ICCM-2. This unusual break from a formal to an informal setting was requested by GRULAC on the grounds that if funding was unavailable to have one participant

per developing country within the region, then only procedural matters could be addressed in a formal setting. The informal discussions saw progress on dealing with emerging issues and a frank exchange of views on substantive issues to be addressed at ICCM-2.

Discussions on evaluating implementation of SAICM saw divergence over evaluating progress on activities of the SAICM Global Plan of Action (GPA) or its Overarching Policy Strategy (OPS). Some, notably Canada, the US and China, saw the GPA as a “shopping list” for an undefined recipe, preferring to evaluate SAICM on the basis of Paragraph 24 of the OPS. Others, including the EU, Switzerland, the International Trade Union Confederation and several NGOs, supported undertaking the more extensive task of a thorough review of progress against the GPA.

The issue of integrating the IFCS into SAICM was addressed briefly as part of the discussions on subsidiary bodies and in the informal discussions. In September 2008, the Sixth Forum of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS VI) adopted a resolution proposing that the IFCS be integrated into SAICM, and therefore the fate of IFCS will be decided by ICCM-2. Delegates were acutely aware that rules of procedure on subsidiary bodies would directly pertain to the consideration of IFCS becoming a subsidiary body to SAICM at ICCM-2. It quickly became apparent, however, that some countries, including the US and Canada, had “no interest” in making it a subsidiary body of SAICM, preferring the IFCS to remain a separate, if ailing, forum. This was met by opposition from the EU and several developing countries, who place great value on the role of the IFCS. Many African countries stated that the Forum affords them access to important information, is independent, and plays an essential capacity-building role.

On emerging policy issues, delegates said Co-Chair Šebková did an outstanding job at navigating towards a modality to prioritize the 36 emerging issues currently on the table. This left many hopeful that ICCM-2 would be able to address this topic and avoid protracted debates on what constitutes a high priority emerging issue. Furthermore, by tasking the Secretariat with evaluating the priority emerging policy issues according to the criteria, and consulting regional focal points, delegates openly conferred upon it a good measure of trust.

While no agreement was reached on evaluating SAICM, or on the issue of integrating the IFCS into SAICM, several felt the frank exchange of views was useful, allowing delegations to report back to capitals and reconsider their positions before ICCM-2. More cynical participants quipped that delegates would be just as intractable at ICCM-2 and predicted the stalemate would continue and may get worse.

THE ROAD FROM ROME, LOOKING TOWARDS ICCM-2

While Friday evening saw both the formal and informal segments wrapped up, the lack of agreement on the rules of procedure meant that at least the first day of ICCM-2 will be spent completing the OELTWG’s work. There was also concern that the US stated its right to reserve discussion on several specific rules and China noted that since all rules of procedure were not agreed, it held the right to reopen any rule. Others were cautiously optimistic about the outcome of the week’s efforts, noting that at least the foundations for completion of discussions

at ICCM-2 had been laid. Some, however, expressed frustration and even anger that so little progress had been made and that this did not bode well for ICCM-2 or even the future of SAICM.

Looking ahead to the substantive issues to be considered at ICCM-2, IFCS integration and sustainable financing are likely to be high on delegates' agendas and resolution of these may pave the way to getting SAICM "on track" to becoming a meaningful instrument to improve the management of chemicals. On retaining SAICM's multistakeholder purpose, some postulated that every delegate should refer to the Dubai Declaration and work with their ministers to ensure ICCM-2's high-level segment provides the impetus needed to bring this purpose center-stage. Finally, others concluded that making ICCM-2 action oriented rather than "yet another government talk-fest" would increase the possibility of reaching the 2020 goal to minimize the significant adverse effects of chemicals on human health and the environment, but that sustainable financing and renewed commitment to meaningful stakeholder involvement were necessary to achieve this.

In a closing statement, Senegal reminded delegates of the realities of chemical pollution, explaining that in 2008 alone some 18 children had died from exposure to lead-acid batteries. Many echoed that the need to link chemicals to work on human health was more poignant than ever. Others said it was a stark reminder of the dangers of fiddling while Rome burns.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

FOURTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES TO THE ROTTERDAM CONVENTION (PIC COP-4): PIC COP-4 takes place in Rome, Italy, from 27-31 October 2008. For more information, contact: Rotterdam Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8296; fax: +41-22-917-8082; e-mail: pic@pic.int; internet: <http://www.pic.int>

STAKEHOLDERS' MEETING TO REVIEW THE DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN TO PROMOTE A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPING ALTERNATIVES TO DDT: This meeting will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 3-5 November 2008. For more information, contact: Paul Whyllie, Programme Officer, Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://www.pops.int>

FOURTH POPS INFORMATION WAREHOUSE WORKSHOP IN EAST ASIAN COUNTRIES: This meeting will be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 3-4 November 2008. For more information, contact: Kyunghee Choi, Director, National Institute of Environmental Research, Ministry of Environment; tel: +82-32-560-7206; fax: +82-32-568 2041; e-mail: nierchoi@me.go.kr

MEETING OF THE GLOBAL MONITORING PLAN COORDINATION GROUP: The Global Monitoring Plan Coordination Group will meet from 10-12 November 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland. This meeting will be attended by the nominated coordination group members from all five UN regions. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and agree on: organizing the group's work; facilitating preparation of the global monitoring report; and evaluating the first phase of the global monitoring plan. For more information, contact:

Katarína Magulová, Programme Officer, Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://www.pops.int>

INFORMAL WORKSHOP ON STAKEHOLDERS' INFORMATION NEEDS ON CHEMICALS IN ARTICLES/ PRODUCTS: This informal workshop will be held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 2-4 December 2008. For more information, contact: SAICM Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8532; fax: +41-22-797-3460; e-mail: saicm@chemicals.unep.ch; internet: http://www.chem.unep.ch/unepsaicm/cheminprod_dec08/default.htm

EXPERT MEETING TO FURTHER DEVELOP THE STANDARDIZED TOOLKIT FOR IDENTIFICATION AND QUANTIFICATION OF DIOXIN AND FURAN RELEASES: This expert meeting will be held from 3-4 December 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland, to prepare proposals for Stockholm Convention COP-4 for revising and updating the Toolkit. For more information, contact: Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://www.pops.int>

FOURTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS: COP-4 will be held from 4-8 May 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://www.pops.int>

SECOND SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT: This meeting will convene from 11-15 May 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact SAICM Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8532; fax: +41-22-797-3460; e-mail: saicm@chemicals.unep.ch; internet: <http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/iccm/ICCM2/iccm2.htm>

GLOSSARY

BCRCCs	Basel Convention Regional Coordinating Centers
CIEL	Center for International Environmental Law
EHF	Environmental Health Fund
GPA	Global Platform of Action
ICCA	International Council of Chemical Associations
ICCM	International Conference on Chemicals Management
IFCS	Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety
IOMC	Inter-Organizational Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals
IPEN	International POPs Elimination Network
ISDE	International Society of Doctors for the Environment
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
OELTWG	Open-ended Legal and Technical Working Group
OPS	Overarching Policy Strategy
QSP	Quick Start Programme
SAICM	Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management
WHA	World Health Assembly