



SAICM PREPCOM2 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2004

Participants provided comments on draft documents elaborating the elements of the overarching policy strategy, and briefly discussed elements for a high-level political declaration. A small drafting group met to deliberate on financial considerations.

PLENARY

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF A SAICM: Jean-Louis Wallace (Canada), Chair of the drafting group on scope, informed participants that following consultations with the G-77/CHINA, the document on scope had been revised to specify that SAICM should not duplicate efforts, in particular those of forums dealing with military uses of chemicals (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.10/Rev.1). The document was adopted in Plenary, as amended.

The Chair of the contact group on concrete measures, Jamidu Katima (Tanzania), reported that the group had completed its work on including all activities and identifying main actors for concrete measures in the matrix.

High-level declaration: Participants provided initial comments on a high-level declaration, commenting on President Bohn's proposal to include reference to: the chemicals-related goals set out in Agenda 21 and in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI); the beneficial and yet detrimental role of chemicals; a commitment to achieving the 2020 goal; other chemical conventions; multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral participation, including the role of women; transparency and openness; financing; the inclusion of the goals of SAICM in all relevant organizations and financial institutions; implementation and taking stock of process; and adoption of the overarching policy strategy.

NIGERIA and URUGUAY, supported by SWITZERLAND, suggested the inclusion of input from regional consultations. The SOUTH AFRICAN CHEMICAL WORKERS UNION supported the inclusion of occupational safety.

The EU suggested extending the reference to women to include other vulnerable groups. The INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU), BURUNDI, HAITI and THAILAND suggested adding a reference to children as a vulnerable group. THAILAND also proposed adding the elderly. WOMEN IN EUROPE FOR A COMMON FUTURE (WECF) called for including women in decision making.

EGYPT, for the G-77/CHINA, supported by the EU and NORWAY, suggested the inclusion of a commitment to implement the SAICM global plan of action. SWITZERLAND said the declaration should reflect the global plan of action and the overarching policy strategy, and suggested postponing discussions until consensus had been reached on these two elements. CANADA, supported by NORWAY, SWITZERLAND, NIGERIA and NIGER, suggested that President Bohn draft the high-level declaration for consideration at PrepCom3.

Overarching policy strategy: Plenary returned to discussions on elements of the overarching policy strategy, based on draft compilation text prepared by the Secretariat.

On the statement of needs, participants provided comments on a synthesis of views provided by the Secretariat (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.16). CROATIA, for CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE and NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES, noted the omission of a reference to countries with economies in transition in a subparagraph on bridging the widening gap between developed and developing countries. SOUTH AFRICA added the implementation of international initiatives and the inclusion of chemical issues in poverty reduction strategies. MEXICO, for the LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN GROUP (GRULAC), proposed adding the development of financial mechanisms. AUSTRALIA called for a more detailed review of the gaps in chemicals-related policies and programmes. BRAZIL suggested adding references to the need for 'updated' chemical databases, and the development, adaptation, dissemination and transfer of sound, clean and sustainable technologies. In the context of chemicals management and trafficking, the SOUTH AFRICAN CHEMICAL WORKERS UNION said references to building capacities, legislation, control systems and infrastructure in developing countries should be included. ICFTU underlined the need to provide information on hazards to workers and managers. He proposed adding references to: highly exposed groups; the involvement of municipal and government enterprises in the sound management of chemicals and wastes; disease prevention; and national coordination. The RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES called for an emphasis on prevention.

LIBERIA proposed text on gaps in capacity at the sub-regional level. IRAN proposed text on an international response mechanism for chemical accidents, and on international cooperation for the remediation of chemicals-related accidents, including those resulting from war. EGYPT noted the need to include a reference to diseases resulting from chemical accidents.

Noting that chemicals producers are mainly located in developed countries, BURKINA FASO stressed joint responsibility between governments, manufacturers and users for ensuring safe chemicals use. He proposed text indicating that producers are responsible for manufacturing safe chemicals and ensuring the safe use of chemicals in the field. The INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHEMICAL ASSOCIATIONS (ICCA) recognized their shared responsibility in safe chemicals management and, supported by the INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MINING AND METALS, urged reference to sound science.

MALI stressed public private partnerships and communication. SWITZERLAND urged the recognition of gaps in governance. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION noted the lack of databases for current chemicals. The CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL LAW proposed text on the equitable allocation of the environmental and human costs of chemicals use,



including through liability. THAILAND suggested that compensation for chemicals-related harm be included. KENYA agreed, and proposed capacity building on economic tools to facilitate compensation. HAITI stressed the need for continuity in implementing SAICM's objectives. Noting that reference to the chemicals-related objectives of JPOI would be better placed in the high-level declaration, NEW ZEALAND cautioned against duplication in the three outputs of PrepCom2. FIJI said the statement of needs should provide for the inclusion of new and emerging issues. GHANA said the provision of statistics on chemicals-related problems could encourage governments to seriously engage in safe chemicals management. INDIA raised the issue of chemical waste disposal. WECF proposed text on phasing out the most hazardous chemicals. IRAN proposed a reference to affordable technologies, and noted that capacity building is a global, as well as national and regional, need. GREENPEACE suggested text on the implementation of sustainable technologies and, calling for a balance between the responsibilities of developed and developing countries, proposed text on the need for developed countries to work toward safe chemicals management.

On financial considerations, EGYPT presented a G-77/CHINA proposal (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.20). A small drafting group, chaired by Marco Tulio Cabral (Brazil), was given the task of drafting a conference room paper reflecting the discussions on financial considerations.

On illegal international traffic (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.15), NIGERIA, supported by NIGER and BRAZIL, suggested adding text to clarify UNEP's leading role in this issue. NIGER proposed inserting a reference to economic integration organizations. BELARUS proposed adding a reference to countries with economies in transition. Noting that many elements are concrete actions rather than objectives, AUSTRALIA, with NEW ZEALAND and the US, proposed including a single objective to eliminate international illegal traffic. NEW ZEALAND said a reference to prohibit the export of banned chemicals or wastes between developed and developing countries would not be acceptable, since under the Montreal Protocol developing countries are allowed to use certain banned substances, and no agreement has been reached on such trade under the Basel Convention. GREENPEACE stressed agreement on a ban, as reflected in an amendment to the Basel Convention, and emphasized the importance of cleaner production in all countries. EGYPT called for adequate control of exports of hazardous chemicals, wastes and products containing chemicals from developed countries to uninformed recipient countries. The President said discussions would be reflected in a revised document to be included in the final report.

On risk reduction, the Secretariat introduced a compilation of views expressed by participants (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.17). In relation to the proposed goal to ban production, use and release of chemicals that cannot be handled without significant damage to human health and/or the environment, CANADA expressed concern that certain undesirable chemicals, if safely handled, will be considered safe. NORWAY said the intention of the proposed goal was that chemicals that cannot be handled without significant damage be regulated more rigorously. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION said "harm" rather than "significant harm" should be sufficient. The US said the listing of specific chemicals under the proposed goal was premature and, with JAPAN, suggested deleting the list and creating a small expert group to consider lists and categories of "problem" chemicals at PrepCom3. Noting sufficient scientific evidence on the chemicals listed, WECF opposed deleting the list. TUNISIA suggested adding carcinogenic substances to the list. AUSTRALIA, supported by NORWAY and others, proposed introducing preambular text on the overall purpose of SAICM. President Bohn said the Secretariat would prepare a draft for intersessional work.

On governance, delegates provided several comments on a draft prepared by the Secretariat, based on discussions held in Plenary (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.18). AUSTRALIA said the objectives should be general rather than specific, and noted that several elements in the draft should be considered under concrete measures. ICFTU highlighted the need for an effective channel to communicate data and information to all stakeholders to enable their participation in the policy framework. THAILAND suggested the inclusion of transparency, accountability and inclusiveness for good governance. NIGERIA suggested a reference to professional and industrial regulatory bodies. TUNISIA proposed the harmonization of chemical-safety norms among countries.

On sectors requiring the integration of chemicals policy, NORWAY suggested adding development cooperation, and MAURITIUS, environmental policy. The WWF called for consideration and promotion of innovative consultation processes. GREENPEACE identified corporate liability as a key omission from the objectives.

The President invited comments on information and knowledge objectives set out in a synthesis document prepared by the Secretariat (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/CRP.19). ZAMBIA called for a reference to indigenous knowledge. The ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH FUND called on producers and importers to take responsibility for providing information on the intrinsic properties of chemicals. EGYPT underlined the human rights of those vulnerable to chemical exposure. YEMEN underlined the responsibilities of importers. AUSTRALIA called for emphasis on improving knowledge on substitutes and on the burdens of chemicals on populations and the environment. GREENPEACE called for use of existing chemical substitutes, public access to industrial information on chemicals released into the public domain, and the development of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers. ICCA proposed that SAICM's approach to access to information be based on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling. CROATIA emphasized safe disposal of chemical residues and wastes. On workers in hazardous environments, NIGERIA called for a reference to liability and compensation. CANADA proposed introducing new objectives on generating scientific information on chemicals, improved monitoring, and risk management.

The President invited Chair Cabral to report on the drafting group on financial considerations. Cabral said that the group's rapporteur, Wilm Geurts (the Netherlands) had prepared a compilation document for circulation on Friday. He invited the President to take up the proposal that the Secretariat prepare a paper on existing and potential financial mechanisms for further consideration in Plenary.

IN THE BREEZEWAYS

The PrepCom President is expected to lead calls for an expanded Secretariat for PrepCom3. Delegates have described the performance of the Secretariat this week as 'heroic,' and the President has let it be known that the number of staff available this week was 'rather small.' Bohn is also preparing to place a strong emphasis on intersessional work to prepare for PrepCom3, having noted the facilitating role of the African Group and GRULAC in the run up to PrepCom2. She expressed hope that further regional meetings will follow PrepCom2 to deal with issues such as finance. Meanwhile, NGOs report that they have discussed their role in these intersessional activities with President Bohn, and have implored her to address what they regard as an inconsistent approach to rules regarding access to meetings during the PrepCom.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

ENB SUMMARY: The summary issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin's* coverage of SAICM2 will be available at <http://www.iisd.ca/chemical/SAICM/prepcom2/> on Monday, 11 October.