

ICCM-3 HIGHLIGHTS: 17 SEPTEMBER 2012

ICCM-3 opened on Monday, 17 September 2012, in Nairobi, Kenya. In the morning, delegates met in plenary to hear opening statements from dignitaries and delegates. In the afternoon, plenary resumed with discussions on the evaluation and progress in implementing the SAICM, including regional progress reports, emerging policy issues and addition of activities under the GPA.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

Welcoming delegates to ICCM-3, Chirau Ali Makwere, Kenyan Minister for the Environment and Mineral Resources, underscored his country's commitment to the implementation of SAICM to promote the sound management of chemicals. He welcomed the consultative process on financing for chemical and waste management, and expressed support for the implementation of SAICM at the national, regional and international levels.

Via a video message, Tomaž Gantar, Slovenian Minister of Health, and President of ICCM-3, noted that although much has been achieved in the area of sound chemicals management at the global level, including an endorsement by delegates at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (also known as Rio+20), many challenges still remain. He highlighted important issues on the agenda, including the need to address emerging policy issues such as nanotechnologies and manufactured nanomaterials, and the future of financing SAICM.

Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director (ED) reported on UNEP's Global Chemicals Outlook (GCO), which describes the economic burden caused by chemical hazards, including the cost of pesticide poisoning in Africa, which exceeds the global investment on health for the continent excluding AIDS expenditure. He further called on delegates to dispel the myth that only countries with a high GDP can achieve sound chemicals management.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Eisaku Toda (Japan), Vice-President of ICCM-2 for the Asia-Pacific region, presided over the session on behalf of ICCM-2 President Ivan Erzen (Slovenia).

Delegates elected Johanna Lissinger-Peitz (Sweden), for the Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG), as ICCM-3 President. President Peitz drew attention to the UNEP GCO report, which she said alerts stakeholders to the nature and size of chemicals-related challenges and opportunities. She said SAICM, as a multi-stakeholder forum, was in a unique position to strengthen international chemicals management and contribute to the transition towards an inclusive green economy.

President Peitz invited regional groups to submit their nominations for the ICCM-3 Bureau representatives, and NGOs to submit their nominations for representatives to attend Bureau meetings. She said the following vice-presidents had been replaced during the intersessional period: Marta Giraj (Slovenia) replaced Tomž Gantar (Slovenia) for the Central

and Eastern Europe Group; Francisco Javier Espinosa (Chile) replaced Osvaldo Alvarez (Chile) for the Latin America and the Caribbean group (GRULAC); and Ndeye Fatou Fatou Ndiaye (Senegal) replaced Cheikh Ndiaye Sylla (Senegal) for the African group.

Delegates agreed to submit their nominations by the end of Wednesday.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: Delegates adopted the agenda (SAICM/ICCM.3/1) without amendment.

APPOINTMENT OF A CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE: The Conference requested the Bureau to review representative's credentials and report back to the plenary after completion of its work.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK: The Conference agreed to discuss all agenda items in plenary, and to convene contact or drafting groups as necessary.

GENERAL STATEMENTS

Denmark, for the EU and its 27 Member States, and CROATIA, said SAICM should focus on sustainable development aspects of chemicals management and further develop implementation reporting and called for ICCM-3 to respond positively to the UNEP ED's proposal on chemicals and waste financing.

Zambia, for the AFRICAN GROUP, called for the QSP to be sufficiently financed and extended until a permanent long-term financial mechanism is established and requested assistance to build capacity to deal with endocrine-disruptors.

Egypt, for the ARAB GROUP, stressed the importance of resolving SAICM short- and long-term financing, the common but differentiated responsibilities principle, and the need for securing the transfer of technologies adapted to the needs of Arab countries.

Jamaica, for GRULAC, welcomed the opportunity to discuss the UNEP ED's proposal and was interested in discussing the role of industry, but called for extending the QSP until a stable, independent and long-term financing mechanism is operationalized.

Slovenia, for the CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE GROUP, said SAICM should focus on sustainable development and green economy aspects and called for more SAICM work on agricultural chemicals.

MEXICO underscored the need for international cooperation and further exploration of possible new and emerging issues. CHINA stressed that priority for resource allocation should be given to developing economies and economies in transition. NIGERIA underscored the need for sustainable financial arrangements for SAICM. IRAQ noted that the success of the QSP must be assessed. PAKISTAN reaffirmed its commitment to SAICM and its goals.

The PESTICIDE ACTION NETWORK INTERNATIONAL (PAN) lamented insufficient action to achieve the 2020 goal, and urged increased political will to ensure the goal is reached.



The International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) welcomed industry collaboration with governments and NGOs to strengthen SAICM at all levels.

IMPLEMENTATION OF SAICM

EVALUATION OF AND GUIDANCE ON IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW AND UPDATE OF THE STRATEGIC APPROACH: Evaluation and progress in implementation of SAICM: The Conference considered reports from regional focal points on regional intersessional work carried out since ICCM-2 (SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/36).

Japan, for the ASIA-PACIFIC GROUP, said that diversity among countries in the region has created difficulties in developing common implementation plans or priority activities, but there is common understanding on major themes. Poland, for CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, outlined differing capacities for implementing chemicals legislation in the region. He said Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) implementation is one of the region's highest priorities.

Jamaica, for GRULAC, outlined key outputs for the region, including: identifying priority chemicals and broad thematic work areas; developing national and sub-regional implementation plans; and designation of health contact points in 16 countries.

The US, for WEOG, noted that individual country reports will be presented. He outlined US implementation efforts, including on: generation of health and environment data for nanomaterials; voluntary phase-out of perfluorocarbons (PFCs); reduction of lead exposure by children; and promotion of safer alternatives to chemicals of interest.

The EU outlined its implementation efforts since ICCM-2, including: new regulations for biocides; and registration of over 5,000 substances under the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH) regulation.

Zambia, for the AFRICAN GROUP, mentioned key themes addressed by the region, including implementation plans and priorities, and sources of assistance for regional activities.

Following the regional reports, the Secretariat introduced the documents on the agenda item on reporting according to the 20 indicators of progress, including the SAICM implementation summary (SAICM/ICCM.3/4), the baseline estimates report (SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/5), the 2009-10 progress report (SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/6), and reports from the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) (SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/9), the ICCA (SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/7), and the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) (SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/8). The Secretariat also briefly summarized the pre-meeting technical briefing.

The International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) recalled its 23 commitments to fulfill SAICM objectives. The EU underscored the importance of regular implementation reporting in planning future activities. KENYA suggested a review of the reporting indicators to modify or replace those "that have been overtaken by time." The Secretariat responded that the 20 indicators agreed upon at ICCM-2 allows flexibility to accommodate minor changes.

The UN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO), speaking for IOMC, noted the updated IOMC guide to resources, guidance and training materials, and its new online "toolbox" for chemicals management decision-making.

SWITZERLAND called for making regular implementation reporting permanent and ensuring that the reporting is efficient, realistic and contributes to assessing progress toward the 2020 goal. SWITZERLAND's comments on the effective and realistic reporting and contribution to other MEAs will be noted in the report of the meeting.

IPEN called for accelerating the pace of SAICM implementation and for ICCM-3 to produce a roadmap for its implementation up to 2020. PAN highlighted ongoing campaigns for prohibiting and restricting the practice and the promotion of agro-ecological production. IRAQ called for simplifying reporting mechanisms.

Addition of activities to the GPA: President Peitz opened discussion on addition of activities for hazardous substances in electrical and electronic products to the GPA (SAICM/ICCM.3/3; SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/4/Rev.1; SAICM/ICCM.3/INF/4/Rev.1/Add.1). BRAZIL called for addressing existing activities in the GPA as opposed to including new ones. CHILE said that the

potential synergies with the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions should also be referenced. The EU, supporting the AFRICAN GROUP, cautioned against duplication of efforts.

EMERGING POLICY ISSUES: Lead in paint: On lead in paint (SAICM/ICCM.3/14), the AFRICAN GROUP introduced a proposal that takes into consideration the need to provide policymakers with adequate information on the issue, and urges governments and other stakeholders to contribute to the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead in Paints business plan.

The US, supported by the ICCA, opposed additional discussion on this issue, and called on ICCM-3 to adopt the OEWG draft proposal. CHINA, with IRAN, noted their support for the OEWG draft proposal, with CHINA calling for more time to eliminate lead in paint. IPEN clarified that at the time of the OEWG meeting, the Global Alliance did not have a business plan, and noted that the African proposal establishes a central point for all information on lead in paint.

Chemicals in products: On chemicals in products (SAICM/ICCM.3/15), the EU and CROATIA lauded the Chemicals in Products (CiP) Project workshops, as well as the discussion on this issue at the OEWG, and introduced a draft proposal (SAICM/ICCM.3/3). The US, NORWAY and IPEN supported using this draft proposal as a basis for discussion. AUSTRALIA, with SWITZERLAND, supported looking at both proposals in a contact group. GREENPEACE EAST ASIA prioritized setting up a global network for information sharing and creating a "chemicals in products catalogue."

Hazardous substances in electrical and electronic products: On hazardous substances in electrical and electronic products (SAICM/ICCM.3/16), the AFRICAN GROUP, with SWITZERLAND and the EU, urged including issues and activities aimed at enhancing the environmentally sound management of hazardous substances in the life cycle of e-products. The EU called for emphasis on transboundary transport of waste. NIGERIA, with JAMAICA, supported the inclusion of hazardous substances in electrical and electronic products in the GPA. IPEN urged for a UN agency to coordinate intersessional work on this issue. CANADA cautioned against duplication of efforts undertaken in other fora. Responding to a query from AUSTRALIA, Peitz explained that the agenda item was addressing emerging policy issues but proposals made for activities to be included under the GPA will also be noted.

A contact group was established on emerging issues including on lead in paints, chemicals in products and hazardous substances in electrical and electronic products, co-chaired by Marcus Richards (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) and Cheryl Beillard (Canada). The group was mandated to: review the OEWG draft proposal as well as the new proposal by the African group on lead in paint; consider the EU proposal in chemicals in products; and address the proposals made by the African group on hazardous substances in electrical and electronic products.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates converged in Nairobi for ICCM-3 full of energy and calls for frank and constructive discussions, mindful of the many important decisions to be taken in Nairobi to make sure SAICM has a chance of achieving its key objectives. Many delegates felt emboldened by the renewed commitment to SAICM made at the Rio+20 conference, as well as new data on the costs of inaction identified by UNEP's recently released Global Chemicals Outlook. At the top of everyone's list was financing, both short- and long-term, with most calling for an extension of the QSP until a stable, predictable and sustainable funding mechanism can be agreed upon and made operational. "How we deal with the QSP or other financing mechanism will determine the fate of chemicals management now and in the future," confided one delegate. Some predicted that the proposal by the UNEP ED for chemicals and wastes financing will lead to significant discussion, since reactions to the proposal seemed to range from full support as key outcome of ICCM-3, to "interest in discussing it." In the end, one civil society representative mused, it will all come down to political will: political will to make sound chemicals management a high priority; political will to differentiate among the needs of different countries; political will to regulate industry; and political will to accept the real sense of urgency that the 2020 deadline imposes.