



SUMMARY OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT: 9-13 NOVEMBER 2003

The first session of the Preparatory Committee for the Development of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM PrepCom1) took place at the United Nations Conference Center in Bangkok, Thailand, from 9-13 November 2003. PrepCom1 is the first substantive step in the SAICM process, which will culminate in a final "International Conference on Chemicals Management." Convened jointly by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), PrepCom1 brought together more than 400 participants representing over 120 countries, 14 UN bodies, four intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), 24 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other observers.

During the course of the meeting, delegates provided initial comments on potential issues to be addressed during the development of a SAICM, examined ways to structure discussions on the SAICM, and considered possible outcomes of the SAICM process. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Committee adopted the report of PrepCom1, which comprises: a summary of discussions held during the session; an addendum containing issues to be addressed during the development of a SAICM; and several annexes containing items to be forwarded to PrepCom2 and a proposal for intersessional activities.

While many delegates expressed commitment to the SAICM with calls for an ambitious objective and scope, the future of the process and when PrepCom2 will convene ultimately depends on financial support from all stakeholders. Minimizing the adverse effects of chemicals on human health and the environment is a universally critical objective, but its achievement will require significant political commitment and a paradigm shift over the coming years.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SAICM

The concept of a SAICM has been discussed by the UNEP Governing Council (GC) 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 issues of hazardous chemicals and pesticides; disposal of unwanted stocks of pesticides and other chemicals; insufficient information for chemicals management decision-making and action; and possible need to ban and phase out certain chemicals; and
- UNEP GC decision 19/13 of February 1997, which requests a report on options for enhanced coherence and efficiency among international activities related to chemicals.

21ST UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL: At its 21st session in 2001, the UNEP GC adopted decision 21/7, which requests UNEP's Executive Director, in consultation with governments, the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), IFCS and others, to examine the need for a SAICM.

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of the SAICM.....	1
PrepCom1 Report	2
Rules of Procedure	3
Report of Existing Work Related to the SAICM.....	4
Further Development of a SAICM	4
Preparations for PrepCom2.....	8
Other Matters	8
Closing Plenary.....	8
A Brief Analysis of SAICM PrepCom1	8
Things to Look For	10

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Paula Barrios <paula@iisd.org>, Tamilla Gaynutdinova <tamilla@iisd.org>, Fiona Koza <fiona@iisd.org>, and Prisma Nuengsigkapien <prisna@iisd.org>. The Digital Editor is David Fernau <david@iisd.org>. The Editor is Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org> and the Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the Government of the United States of America (through the Department of State Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs), The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Canada (through CIDA, DFAIT and Environment Canada), the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), the United Kingdom (through the Department for International Development - DFID and Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs - DEFRA), the European Commission (DG-ENV), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Government of Germany (through the German Federal Ministry of Environment - BMU, and the German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation - BMZ). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2003 is provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Government of Australia, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Swan International, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES), the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (through the Global Industrial and Social Progress Research Institute - GISPRI), and the Ministry for Environment of Iceland. The opinions expressed in the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-212-644-0217 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA.



SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION: In February 2002, at its seventh special session, the UNEP GC agreed in decision SS.VII/3 that the further development of a SAICM was needed, and requested UNEP's Executive Director to develop such an approach with the *IFCS Bahia Declaration and Priorities for Action Beyond 2000* as its foundation. This process was to entail an "open-ended consultative meeting involving representatives of all stakeholder groups" jointly convened by UNEP, IFCS and IOMC.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (WSSD): The WSSD convened from 26 August to 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa, and adopted, among other outcomes, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). The JPOI is a framework for action to implement the commitments made at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development, and includes a number of new commitments. The issue of chemicals management in the JPOI is addressed primarily in Chapter III on Changing Unsustainable Patterns of Production and Consumption, which reflects a renewed commitment to the sound management of chemicals. Chemicals-related targets contained in the JPOI include:

- 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 *Bahia Declaration* and *IFCS Priorities for Action Beyond 2000*; and
- the national implementation of the new globally harmonized system for the classification and labeling of chemicals (GHS), with a view to having the system fully operational by 2008.

22ND UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL: The 22nd session of the UNEP GC, held in February 2003, adopted decision 22/4 endorsing the concept of an international conference, with preparatory meetings, as the basis for developing a SAICM. In its decision, the UNEP GC also recognized the need for an open, transparent and inclusive process for developing the approach. The decision further requests UNEP to compile possible draft elements of a SAICM for consideration by PrepCom1, and invites governments, relevant international organizations and other stakeholders to contribute to this work.

SAICM INFORMATION MEETING: A stakeholder information and consultation meeting took place on 29 April 2003, in Geneva, Switzerland. Representatives from 38 Governments, 11 IGOs, and 11 NGOs attended the meeting. Participants heard a briefing on the background of the SAICM process, an outline of the preparatory process, and perspectives from organizations in the SAICM Steering Committee, comprising: IFCS, FAO, ILO, OECD, UNEP, UNIDO, UNITAR, WHO, UNDP and the World Bank. Participants also heard an update by UNEP on PrepCom1 documents, and a presentation on the progress concerning the compilation of possible draft elements for a SAICM.

56TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY: The WHO's World Health Assembly at its 56th session in May 2003, adopted resolution 56.22, which supported UNEP GC decision 22/4, and recognized the need for health interests at the country level to be reflected in, and addressed by, the SAICM. The decision urges Member States to take full account of the health aspects of chemical safety in the further development of a SAICM and requests the WHO Director-General to, *inter alia*, contribute to the SAICM

through submission of possible health-focused elements, and submit a progress report to the Assembly before the SAICM process is concluded.

91ST SESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE: The ILO's International Labor Conference at its 91st session in June 2003, adopted conclusions calling on the ILO to contribute to the further development of a SAICM, to ensure full participation of employers' and workers' organizations in this process so that their views and interests are duly taken into account, and to present the final outcome of the SAICM process to the ILO decision-making bodies for their consideration.

IFCS FORUM IV: The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS Forum IV) took place from 1-7 November 2003, in Bangkok, Thailand. Approximately 630 participants representing over 100 governments, IGOs, NGOs and industry were in attendance. Convening under the theme "Chemical Safety in a Vulnerable World," Forum IV took stock of the progress achieved on the commitments and recommendations made at Forum III in 2000, and focused on topics relating to: children and chemical safety; occupational safety and health; hazard data generation and availability; acutely toxic pesticides; and capacity building. Delegates also considered and took decisions on illegal traffic and the GHS.

In response to decisions SS.VII/3 and 22/4 IV of the UNEP GC, Forum IV discussed the further development of a SAICM, and forwarded the outcome of its deliberations to SAICM PrepCom1 in the form of the *Report on SAICM-Related Work at IFCS Forum IV* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/INF/3). This non-negotiated, compilation report contains a preface, a summary, and sections on:

- centrality of chemicals in a modern world;
- life-cycle management of chemicals since Agenda 21;
- new and ongoing challenges;
- chemicals management regimes;
- gaps in life-cycle chemicals management;
- resources for capacity development and implementation; and
- increased coordination and linkages.

It also contains an overview of the main discussion points raised in Forum IV, and an annex containing tables that identify key themes in the *Bahia Declaration* and *IFCS Priorities for Action Beyond 2000*.

PREPCOM1 REPORT

SAICM PrepCom1 commenced on Sunday, 9 November 2003, with an opening session and consideration of procedural matters.

In his opening address, Prapat Panyachatraksa, Thailand's Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, stressed that chemical safety requires cooperation among all stakeholders. He called for further action on the harmonization of classification and labeling of chemicals and on illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products, and expressed hope that the SAICM will address gaps in these and other chemicals management priorities.

Kim Hak-Su, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), emphasized the need to link chemicals-related conventions to sustainable development, and highlighted initiatives undertaken by ESCAP to this end.

Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, said the SAICM is a truly multisectoral endeavor, which requires multi-stakeholder cooperation and leadership. Commending the achievement of the



WSSD target concerning the ratification of the Rotterdam Convention and the progress made on the development of the GHS, he said these successes reflect the feasibility of the WSSD's chemicals-related goals. He stressed the role of the SAICM in reaching the WSSD goal of achieving 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. Thanking the donors who made SAICM PrepCom1 possible, he urged provision of financial resources for the future and suggested the creation of a "SAICM Club" of donors. In closing, he said SAICM achievements could include: mobilization of resources; integration of chemicals management into the wider sustainable development agenda; and increased funding for capacity building, waste disposal and clean-up operations.

Zoltan Csizer, IOMC Chair, emphasized the need for financial and technical support for the SAICM, and urged building upon existing international agreements and national actions and initiatives. He urged recognition of the role of the chemical industry, noting the need for corporate social responsibility, and called for approaches that reduce risks for all, rather than transferring risks to those least able to address them.

Suwit Wibulpolprasert, IFCS President, highlighted that the multi-stakeholder approach of the IFCS helps mobilize the political, financial, social and spiritual contribution of all stakeholders involved in chemicals management. He stressed the need to: involve stakeholders at all stages in efforts toward chemical safety; act collectively on issues that affect the most vulnerable groups, particularly children; and radically rethink current practices and behavior in both the public and private sectors.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: Delegates elected the Bureau by acclamation. Halldor Thorgeirsson (Iceland) was elected President of the SAICM preparatory committee. The elected Vice Presidents were: Abiola Olanipekun (Nigeria) for the African Group; Ivana Halle (Croatia) for the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) Group; Chalerm Sak Vanichsombat (Thailand) for the Asia and the Pacific Group; and Federico Perazzo (Uruguay) for the Latin America and the Caribbean Group (GRULAC). On Monday, the Bureau selected Olanipekun as Rapporteur.

The Plenary also adopted the *Provisional Agenda* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/1), and considered the *Scenario Note for the First Session of the PrepCom* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/INF/2).

Delegates provided initial comments on the further development of a SAICM on Sunday and Monday. On Tuesday, delegates discussed possible ways to structure deliberations on the SAICM, and considered potential action items to be considered in the SAICM. On Wednesday and Thursday, delegates focused on the possible organization of issues to be addressed during the development of a SAICM. The meeting concluded on Thursday afternoon with the adoption of the session's report. The following report summarizes the discussions that took place during the meeting.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

On Sunday morning, the Secretariat outlined the *draft Rules of Procedure* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/3), prepared in consultation with the inter-organization SAICM Steering Committee. The Secretariat said the draft rules used as a starting point the rules of procedure of the UNEP GC and the IFCS terms of reference, and drew attention to three areas where their rules diverged: stakeholder participation; bureau composition; and voting requirements.

Ecuador questioned the need for new rules of procedure, and suggested adhering to existing UN rules. The Secretariat clarified the differences between UN General Assembly and UNEP GC rules, and said that the proposed draft rules were based on the latter. Supporting multi-stakeholder participation in the SAICM process, Nigeria suggested an Expanded Bureau. Australia expressed concern that new rules could set a precedent for future processes, and suggested a reference clarifying that the new rules would be confined to this process.

A contact group chaired by Cam Carruthers (Canada) met on Monday and Tuesday to further discuss this matter. Deliberations in the contact group focused on, *inter alia*, the possibility of an expanded Bureau to include non-governmental participants, multi-stakeholder participation, quorum and decision making. A document containing draft revised rules of procedure (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.4) was circulated on Wednesday.

On Thursday, Carruthers briefed participants on the outcome of the contact group's discussions, noting that the group had reached agreement. He thanked Thailand for stressing the importance of an open, transparent and inclusive process with participations of all stakeholders, and noted that while intergovernmental and non-governmental stakeholders were considered participants, several restrictions apply, including on the right to vote and on Bureau membership.

Highlighting the uniqueness of the SAICM process and the need to involve all stakeholders, Tanzania recommended adoption of the rules. Following a request by GRULAC, the Committee adopted the rules *ad referendum*.

Final Text: The rules of procedure for the SAICM process (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.4) apply to the preparatory meetings of the open-ended consultative process to develop a SAICM. It contains rules on: definitions; participation; venue, dates and notice of sessions; agenda; officers; Secretariat; subsidiary bodies; conduct of business; adoption of decisions; public and private sessions; languages; and amendments.

With regard to quorum, at least one-third of those participating need to be present before the President may declare a meeting open and allow the debate to proceed. The presence of two-thirds of the participants shall be required for any consensus to be taken, and the presence of two-thirds of the governmental participants are required for any vote to be taken.

The rules define participants as any governmental, intergovernmental or non-governmental participant. With regards to matters of participation, the rules state that intergovernmental and/or non-governmental participants shall be excluded from the consideration of all or part of the agenda if so decided by a two-thirds majority of the governmental participants present and voting. The rules also state that the Bureau would be elected by governmental participants from among representatives of governmental participants.



REPORT OF EXISTING WORK RELATED TO THE SAICM

On Sunday, the Secretariat presented its note on the *Background and Mandate for the Development of a SAICM* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/2). William Sanders (US) presented the *Report on SAICM-Related Work at IFCS Forum IV* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/INF/3), highlighting the Forum's decisions on children and chemical safety, occupational safety and health, and addressing the widening gap among countries in following chemical safety policies.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF A SAICM

INITIAL COMMENTS: Delegates presented their initial views on the further development on a SAICM on Sunday and Monday, after the Secretariat introduced a number of relevant background documents:

- *Tabular Compilation of Main Points in Submissions Concerning Possible Draft Elements for a SAICM* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/4);
- *Thematic Summary of the Main Points in Submissions Concerning Possible Draft Elements for a SAICM* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/5);
- *Compilation of Original Submissions Concerning Possible Draft Elements for a SAICM* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/INF/4); and
- *Proposed Structure of the SAICM Report for Consideration by the Preparatory Committee* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/6).

During these two days of initial comments, participants shared their positions on what the framework of a SAICM could encompass, its possible draft elements, and the proposed structure of its report.

There was broad support for the idea that the SAICM adopt a three-tier approach, which would comprise: a global programme of action with targets and timetables; an overarching policy strategy; and a high-level or ministerial declaration to adopt the former two. Many delegates stressed that the SAICM should avoid duplication with other international agreements, and called for implementation of, and synergies among, existing chemicals-related agreements. Other issues that were discussed included:

- monitoring of progress;
- prioritization of issues;
- dissemination of information;
- the precautionary approach/principle;
- corporate liability and accountability; and
- the role of science in risk assessments.

Several participants stressed that the SAICM should be a political statement, and not encompass legally-binding agreements. Some delegates supported leaving open the option of adopting future legally-binding commitments. The need for transparency and full stakeholder participation was also stressed by many participants.

Many delegates underscored the importance of addressing the widening gap among countries in following chemical safety policies, and the need to mainstream chemical safety into other policy areas, particularly poverty reduction. In addition, many participants stressed the need to provide capacity building and financial assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition (CEITs) to ensure the achievement of the SAICM's objectives. It was generally agreed that the SAICM's objectives

should be linked to the WSSD 2020 target. Many delegates stressed the relationship between the SAICM and IFCS, and emphasized that the SAICM build on the outcomes of IFCS Forum IV.

On Tuesday morning, participants focused on the way forward, discussing possible ways to structure discussions on the SAICM. President Thorgiersson tabled a proposal on the *Possible Headings for SAICM* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.3), which contained five headings: policy aspects; coordination aspects; capacity building, development assistance and related aspects; implementation aspects; and further development of the SAICM as an open, transparent and inclusive process. Switzerland also circulated a proposal on a *Possible Structure for a SAICM* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.1), and Australia tabled its *Non-paper on SAICM Working Groups* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.2). There was general support for the President's proposal. Switzerland noted that its paper focuses on the SAICM's outcome, while the President's organizes discussions on the SAICM. Switzerland also requested that its paper be annexed to the report of the meeting.

POSSIBLE ORGANIZATION OF ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SAICM:

On Wednesday morning, President Thorgiersson introduced a proposal on the *Possible Organization of Issues to be addressed during the Development of a SAICM* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.7). The proposal, which aimed at structuring discussions on the SAICM, comprises ten headings:

- statement of political strategic vision;
- statement of needs;
- goals and objectives;
- principles and approaches;
- scope;
- scientific activities in support of decision-making;
- concrete measures;
- coordination;
- capacity, resources and development; and
- implementation and taking stock of progress.

Discussion during the remainder of the session, and the addendum to the report of the meeting (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/L.1/Add.1), were organized around these ten headings.

Statement of Political Strategic Vision: This issue was raised during the initial comments, but the Committee did not have sufficient time to discuss it and it was agreed that it would be taken up at PrepCom2.

Statement of Needs: This heading was considered on Wednesday. Delegates discussed a possible explanatory note that would clarify the purpose of the SAICM, and the specific needs that the SAICM should address.

Mauritius drew attention to the vulnerability of small island States. Slovenia raised the issue of pregnant women. Australia recommended identifying gaps in the existing framework for chemical safety. Canada identified the need to address newly developed chemicals. Kenya recommended considering current gaps and the SAICM's added value. The US recommended taking stock of progress, and identifying and prioritizing areas of concern. The International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) noted tension between society's demand for chemicals and the need to meet consequent environmental and health challenges. Switzerland proposed focusing on the need for: a framework for a comprehen-



sive international regime; a programme of action with concrete actions, targets and timetables; and adequate capacity and commitment to implement them.

In Plenary on Thursday, delegates agreed to incorporate a summary of these discussions in the addendum of the final report.

Final Text: The final report reflects a summary of discussions that occurred under this heading, and notes a suggestion by the President that the Committee, in future discussions, consider what has not been addressed and how SAICM can respond and add value.

Goals and Objectives: This heading was considered in Plenary on Wednesday and Thursday. Discussions focused on the WSSD 2020 target as the over-arching goal of the SAICM, and more specific strategic objectives to achieve that goal. Drawing on a survey conducted during the meeting, Greenpeace International said there was strong support among delegates on the need for: phasing out certain chemicals; data on the environmental and health effects of new chemicals as a precondition for their production and use; and liability and accountability mechanisms. Norway, supported by Switzerland, proposed elimination by 2020 of releases of the most hazardous substances, particularly endocrine disruptors, certain heavy metals, and substances that are persistent bioaccumulative and toxic (PBTs), and carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic to reproduction (CMRs). The ICCA recommended considering the WSSD 2020 target in the context of other elements contained in paragraph 23 of the JPOI.

Australia, the US and Switzerland expressed concerns about listing concrete actions in the same section as “goals and objectives.” Egypt called for defining hazardous chemicals, and addressing their full life cycle. Australia noted that the Stockholm Convention and the Montreal Protocol phase out particular chemicals on the basis of specific criteria. China underscored the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The Environmental Health Fund and others proposed objectives that can be easily understood by those not involved in chemicals management. The EU, Switzerland, Egypt and others said the goal should be to protect human health and the environment from the harmful effects of chemicals, and proposed that the SAICM provide a framework for global action and coordination. Switzerland and others drew attention to a proposal on the possible structure of the SAICM (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.1), which notes that the goal of the SAICM is to promote the safe and sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle all over the world.

On Thursday, delegates agreed to the summary of discussions as included in the draft final report, but deleted a reference to the WSSD 2020 target as an “aspirational goal.”

Final Text: The final report says that the over-arching goal of the SAICM should be to use and produce chemicals in a way that causes no adverse effect on human health or the environment by 2020, as stated in paragraph 23 of the JPOI. It also refers to possible specific objectives, including reduction of risks posed by chemicals to human health and the environment with a focus on measurable indicators, and the elimination of production and use of hazardous chemicals, such as PBTs, endocrine disruptors, CMRs and heavy metals.

Principles and Approaches: This issue was briefly considered on Wednesday and Thursday. Several delegations suggested adding principles to the list contained in the President’s proposal (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.7). Israel proposed adding public education, and risk communication. The EU suggested adding producer responsibility, and Papua New Guinea the principle of “duty of care.” President Thorgeirsson suggested forwarding the list to PrepCom2, with a note stating that the Committee did not consider it, and that delegates had indicated interest in adding other principles to the list.

On Thursday, it was agreed that the list would be incorporated to the final report, so that it could be discussed at PrepCom2.

Final Text: The preliminary list of principles and approaches includes: precaution, substitution, prevention, polluter pays, right-to-know, life-cycle approach, partnership approach, and liability and accountability.

Scope: This issue was briefly addressed in Plenary on Wednesday and Thursday. Stressing the need for a manageable process, the US called for the exclusion of pharmaceuticals from the SAICM’s scope. Egypt urged exclusion of military uses. Uganda stressed that the key issue should not be deciding which sectors to exclude, but identifying which chemicals are dangerous to human health and the environment. The EU recommended that the scope cover the full life-cycle of chemicals. It was agreed that the issue should be further discussed at PrepCom2.

Final Text: The text in the PrepCom1 report briefly summarizes the proposals presented by delegates, including proposals to: incorporate a broad scope which addresses all stages of the life cycle of chemicals in a “cradle-to-cradle” and “cradle-to-grave” manner; exclude pharmaceuticals, military uses, and food additives; and consider all potentially harmful chemicals, without exclusion.

Scientific Activities in Support of Decision Making: This issue was raised in Plenary during the initial comments, and further discussed on Wednesday and in a contact group on Wednesday afternoon.

On Monday in Plenary, many delegates stressed the need to base decisions on science-based risk assessments, considering the precautionary approach. Delegates also noted the need for industry responsibility in ensuring chemical safety, including through additional research on the hazards posed by chemicals. Mexico urged research on safer products and technologies, and cooperation between scientific centers to improve knowledge on chemicals.

On Wednesday in Plenary, President Thorgeirsson proposed that the PrepCom consider: assessment and monitoring of exposure and impacts, and of levels of contaminants in the environment; study of chemicals’ characteristics; development of transparent science-based risk assessment and management procedures; and addressing data gaps.

Stating that industries often choose risk assessment procedures that serve their interests, the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN) called for transparent, participatory, and precautionary risk assessments. Delegates also stressed the importance of: life-cycle assessment as a tool for decision making; available and accessible hazard data; and improving developing countries’ understanding of risk assessment and management. Some delegates urged reliable and efficient laboratory support to developing countries. Israel outlined its proposal for using indicators for quan-



titative evaluations of exposure and monitoring of progress, contained in *Health Indicators of Adverse Effects from Toxic Chemicals* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.12).

In the afternoon, a contact group chaired by Vibeke Bernson (Sweden) met to discuss the list of activities contained in the President's proposal and raised in Plenary. The group added, *inter alia*: references to the precautionary principle/approach; provisions on using comparative assessments to find safer alternatives; and the role of science in all areas.

In Plenary on Thursday, delegates heard a report (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.16) from the contact group, and decided to annex it to the PrepCom's report. They also discussed the relevant sections of the addendum of the final report (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/L.1/Add.1) and agreed to, *inter alia*, add a reference to the entire text of the chapeau of paragraph 23 of the JPOI, delete a reference to the polluter pays principle, and note the importance of biological and environmental monitoring of chemicals and the development of environmental and health indicators.

Final Text: The report of the contact group states that a strategic approach to the strengthening of the scientific basis of risk assessment and management should be an integral part of a SAICM and lists some examples of scientific activities in support of decision making, including:

- assessment and monitoring of exposure and impacts on health and the environment;
- assessment and monitoring of levels of contaminants in the environment;
- generation and provision of information on the inherent hazards of all chemicals in commerce to the public;
- further development of methodologies and use of science-based risk assessment and management procedures taking into account the precautionary principle/approach;
- comparative assessment of alternative products and practices;
- improvement of the information base, particularly in developing countries;
- life cycle analysis;
- further development of the contribution of science to sustainable development;
- assessment and monitoring of particularly vulnerable populations;
- training;
- establishment of regional reference laboratories;
- setting priorities and sharing burdens; and
- development of reliable and practical analytical techniques to monitor substances in the environment.

Concrete Measures: This issue was addressed on Tuesday and Wednesday in a contact group chaired by Nicholas Kiddle (New Zealand), and on Thursday in Plenary. On Tuesday, the group deliberated on possible items to be considered in a global programme of action for the SAICM. Delegates generated a preliminary list of action items, and agreed that the Secretariat would synthesize relevant items from various documents, including the:

- *Executive Summary of IFCS Forum IV* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/INF/10);
- *Report on SAICM-Related Work at IFCS Forum IV* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/INF/3);
- *Proposed Structure of the SAICM Report* (SAICM/

PREPCOM.1/6);

- *Further Input on Health Aspects of Chemical Safety* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/INF/8);
- conference room papers tabled by Switzerland (CRP.1), Australia (CRP.2) and the Chair (CRP.3); and
- a report from the health sector (CRP.14).

On Wednesday, the group briefly considered a new proposal by the Chair on *Concrete Measures: Possible Elements* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.8). They also considered a matrix proposed by UNIDO to structure the action items (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.10), and discussed how to forward the group's work to PrepCom2.

On the new proposal, delegates called for: an introductory paragraph; delineation of action items under illegal traffic; reference to the IFCS *Priorities for Action Beyond 2000* and a preamble for each programme area; and reference to gaps in life-cycle chemicals management, as contained in the *Report on SAICM-related work at IFCS Forum IV*.

The matrix was supported by many as a tool for organizing discussions on the action items. Participants also emphasized the need to define how, when and by whom the action items would be implemented. Many urged consideration of: different classes of chemicals; very persistent and very bioaccumulative chemicals; elimination and criteria for elimination; capacity building; and the IFCS and women as stakeholders.

On the way to move forward, several delegates supported annexing the list of elements to the final report, with a request to keep the list open, since it was only briefly discussed and needs refinement. Delegates also discussed options for advancing the work during the intersessional period, and requested the opportunity to consider and provide feedback to a revised list and a pilot matrix before PrepCom2.

On Thursday in Plenary, delegates agreed to annex to the PrepCom1 final report:

- a revised version of *Concrete Measures: Possible Elements* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.8/Rev.1);
- a proposal by the African Region on *Building Concrete Measures* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.15);
- *Structure for Mapping Action Items – a proposal by UNIDO* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.10); and
- *SAICM: Health Sector Input* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.14).

It was also agreed that the Secretariat would further revise the list of actions, elaborate a pilot matrix, and circulate both documents to participants for comments before PrepCom2.

Final Text: The recommendation lists a number of action items under the following headings:

- children and chemical safety;
- occupational safety and health;
- hazard data generation and availability;
- acutely toxic pesticides;
- GHS;
- prevention of illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products;
- addressing the widening gap;
- capacity building;
- gaps and emerging issues;
- life-cycle;
- waste management and minimization;
- industry aspects;



- cleaner production;
- best available technologies and best environmental practices (BAT/BEP);
- environment;
- pollutant release and transfer registers;
- environmental problems associated with transportation;
- response measures;
- good agricultural practices;
- international agreements;
- legal aspects;
- liability and compensation;
- interagency coherence;
- risk analysis;
- research and monitoring;
- education and training;
- information management and dissemination; and
- PBTs, CMRs, endocrine disruptors, heavy metals and very persistent/bioaccumulative chemicals.

Coordination Aspects: On Tuesday afternoon in Plenary, delegates considered coordination aspects at the international, regional and national levels, stressing the importance of synergies among multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), inter-institutional cooperation, coordination between trade and environment issues, and coordination at the national level. Australia suggested that the Secretariat present information on the outcomes of the International Environmental Governance process. The US recommended considering the future role of the IFCS within the SAICM.

Delegates also recommended:

- greater use of the Basel Convention Regional Centers network;
- the consideration of a possibility to incorporate regional agreements under the umbrella of the SAICM;
- concrete mechanisms to ensure coordination among the focal points of various MEAs at the national level;
- development of guidelines and checklists on existing development strategies;
- coordination among MEAs to implement the SAICM; and
- the creation of subregional and national coordination bodies to ensure cooperation among different ministries.

Switzerland recommended integrating chemicals issues in national development and poverty eradication strategies and organizing more back-to-back meetings to maximize resources and enhance coherence. He suggested creating a chart to identify potential areas for enhancing coherence and cooperation among all institutions, including ILO and WHO.

Egypt explained how a committee on chemicals-related activities could help to ensure synergies at the national and, consequently, international level. UNITAR briefed participants on its relevant ongoing activities. The Montreal Protocol Secretariat described the Protocol's possible contribution to the SAICM. The Russian Federation questioned whether the PrepCom had a mandate to consider coordinating functions for existing MEAs. Some delegates said the mandate given to the PrepCom by the JPOI and UNEP GC implicitly included matters of coordination.

In Plenary on Thursday, Canada stressed that the SAICM should encourage convergence of regulatory systems, as well as cooperation between States and other actors. The addendum of the final report reflects the outcome of discussions.

Final Report: The report suggests that future discussions on coordination aspects be organized under the following headings:

- cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies at the national level, including a coherent approach to international cooperation in chemicals-related areas and a strategic approach to chemicals management at the national level;
- cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies at the regional level, including regional centres and networks and regional coordination; and
- cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies at the international level, including MEAs, UN agencies and other IGOs (including the IFCS's future role in the SAICM), voluntary initiatives, and international trade aspects.

Capacity, Resources and Development: This issue was first raised in Plenary on Monday, and addressed on Tuesday and Wednesday, with a contact group meeting on Wednesday afternoon. On Monday, the US recommended focusing on addressing the widening gap among countries in sound chemical management, and with others stressed the need to integrate chemicals into the broader sustainable development agenda.

On Tuesday, many developing countries said the SAICM should prioritize capacity building concerns and called for resources to bridge the widening gap among countries in sound chemicals management, and the transfer of clean technologies to developing countries. The Russian Federation emphasized support for CEITs. Canada called for greater collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and said the SAICM should address cross-cutting issues identified by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Many delegates emphasized the importance of integrating chemicals management into the development agenda and prioritizing chemical safety by recipients and donors. Finland announced its financial contribution to the SAICM.

On Wednesday, the Plenary discussed the list of cross-cutting issues related to capacity, resources and development contained in President's outline of possible issues to be addressed the development of the SAICM (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.7). The list included: chemicals and poverty eradication; addressing the widening gap; institutional and legislative development; a concerted global approach for development assistance in the area of chemicals management; and technology transfer.

Delegates stressed that the SAICM should build on IFCS outcomes on capacity building, with the US highlighting Forum IV's work on the widening gap. The World Bank outlined its report on the *Global Pursuit of the Sound Management of Chemicals*. Delegates also: discussed the private sector's role in capacity building; reiterated the importance of transfer, development and adaptation of technology and institutional development; emphasized the need for poison centers; and recommended utilizing existing resources, noting relevant work by UNITAR.

The EU recommended creating a database of ongoing and planned activities, and utilizing the Information Exchange Network on Capacity Building for the Sound Management of Chemicals (INFOCAP).

Several countries stressed the need for coordination among financial mechanisms, and some called for a financial mechanism for the SAICM. Many developing country delegates, with Australia, emphasized the need to address the migration of polluting technologies to developing countries. UNIDO explained



how public-private partnerships could help in tackling this problem, and Iran suggested that a mechanism based on the prior informed consent of host countries could help address this issue. ICCA stressed the need for governments to support voluntary industry initiatives.

IPEN emphasized that the cost of sound chemicals management should be borne by the producers, and not by consumers in developing countries. Argentina stressed the need for synergies in capacity building among all relevant international instruments, including the Chemical Weapons Convention. Indonesia and Peru stressed building capacity to dispose of chemicals stockpiles. The Philippines called for empowerment of marginalized groups.

On Wednesday afternoon, a contact group chaired by Mohamed Fakhry (Egypt) briefly discussed possible amendments to the list of issues contained in the President's outline and agreed to, *inter alia*, include a reference to the WSSD JPOI and IFCS Forum IV's work on capacity building, and recommended that the Secretariat prepare a summary of the issues raised in Plenary.

On Thursday, the Committee considered the relevant sections of the final report, adding text on, *inter alia*, communities' and workers' right to know, and the need to ensure that the SAICM is kept abreast of the GEF's developments, particularly on strategic approaches to capacity building. Delegates also agreed to append the report of the contact group (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.17) to the report of the PrepCom (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/L.1).

Final Report: The contact group's report notes the contribution of IFCS Forum IV outcomes and the report on capacity building by the CSD as providing overarching policy statements that form the essential framework into which SAICM capacity building could fit. The report recommends that the chapeau of this heading emphasizes: the importance of a wide range of stakeholders requiring, or able to provide, capacity building; the cross cutting nature of capacity building for chemical safety; and the importance of mainstreaming chemical safety within the development agendas and country assistance strategies of developing countries and CEITs.

It further recommends adding the following items to the list of issues proposed in the President's outline (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.7): corporate social responsibility; changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and development; and public awareness, health and education.

On mechanisms, the report emphasizes the importance of, *inter alia*: recognizing chemical safety as a priority issue in donor and recipient countries; building upon existing capacity building mechanisms and initiatives; and the WSSD model of partnership for capacity building.

Implementation and Taking Stock of Progress: The Committee did not have time to consider this issue, and it was agreed that it would be taken up at PrepCom2.

PREPARATIONS FOR PREPCOM2

On Thursday morning, the Secretariat informed participants of the costs of financing future meetings and called for financial support from all participants. He noted that financial support and the desired level of participation and conference services would determine whether PrepCom2 would take place in the second half of 2004, or in 2005. Switzerland and Sweden expressed their commitment and financial support to the process. The GEF noted that while it cannot provide conference support, it can contribute

through its enabling activities and capacity-building efforts in dealing with persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and other chemicals. He stressed the need for synergies and cooperation to ensure that these efforts are not compartmentalized.

Noting the need to ensure that the work undertaken by PrepCom1 is not lost, Switzerland, supported by the CEE, the African Group, Iran and others, proposed requesting the Secretariat to: compile the strategic elements, headings and subheading under the relevant sections of *Possible Organization of Issues to be addressed during the development of a SAICM* (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/CRP.7), integrate these elements into a single document, and circulate the document to participants of PrepCom1 for written comments during the intersessional period. He suggested the same process for concrete actions, as proposed by the contact group on concrete measures. The Committee agreed to this proposal.

The CEE proposed establishing an Internet SAICM network, inviting UNITAR to be involved in this effort. Supported by the African Group, GRULAC and others, she further proposed that IFCS be actively involved in SAICM-related work at the regional level. Senegal and GRULAC stressed the need for regional intersessional meetings, and the US suggested that IFCS facilitate such meetings through its existing mechanism.

OTHER MATTERS

This agenda item was taken up on Thursday afternoon. The Secretariat thanked the SAICM Steering Committee, in particular UNIDO, FAO and WHO, for their support toward PrepCom1. Canada requested reflecting the discussion on financial implications of future meetings in the report of the meeting.

CLOSING PLENARY

On Thursday afternoon, the Committee considered the final report and the addendum on a section-by-section basis. Following minor amendments, delegates adopted the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Development of a SAICM (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/L.1), its addendum (SAICM/PREPCOM.1/L.1/Add.1), and annexes.

Many delegates expressed their appreciation to President Thorgersson for his chairmanship and guidance, the Secretariat for its support, and the host country for its hospitality. President Thorgersson called on the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* to harvest all the metaphors that blossomed over the course of meeting, while participants were planting the seeds of SAICM. The meeting gavelled to a close at 5:04 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF SAICM PREPCOM1

THE SAICM ELEPHANT

An Indian fable tells the story of six blind men who encounter an elephant for the first time, and in turn, they attempt to answer the question "What is an elephant?" Each one touches a different part of the elephant and draws a unique conclusion. During PrepCom1, many delegates used this same metaphor to frame their disparate views of a SAICM.

Since no one knows exactly what a SAICM is, delegates communicated their interpretations of the "SAICM elephant" throughout the five-day meeting. As the week came to a close,



although delegates still did not share a common vision, no one could deny that the “SAICM elephant” is an enormous, engaging and elusive creature.

In an effort to tame this mammoth, this brief analysis will consider the what, who, how and when of the SAICM elephant.

WHAT IS THE SAICM?

Given the broad mandate from the UNEP Governing Council, it is no wonder that delegates arrived at PrepCom1 with widely diverging and hazy ideas of what a SAICM should be. Some envisaged that the SAICM would provide an overarching framework to house the existing international and possibly regional chemicals-related agreements, as well as accommodate the option of including new instruments that might be deemed necessary to address gaps in the current international chemicals regime. Others entered the process under the impression that the primary role of the SAICM would be to improve cooperation, coordination and coherence between existing intergovernmental chemicals-related bodies and agreements.

Throughout the week, each delegation was provided with the opportunity to express its position on the rough shape of the SAICM. However, as there was no attempt or time to reach consensus at PrepCom1, delegates have not come much closer to a common understanding on the approximate shape of an elephant.

WHAT WILL BE ITS OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE?

There was widespread agreement among delegates that the overarching objective of the 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 WSSD Plan of Implementation. This ambitious target provides a clear vision on which delegates can set their sights as they develop the strategic approach.

At PrepCom1, the Committee had the opportunity to briefly consider the scope of the SAICM. Many countries felt strongly that the SAICM should manage chemicals at all stages of their life-cycle, including waste, arguing that waste management and minimization are an integral part of chemicals management and, by extension, the SAICM. On the other hand, others have questioned whether the issue of waste should be addressed within the context of chemicals management, or whether the SAICM should, like the IFCS, limit itself to Chapter 19 of Agenda 21, which deals exclusively with chemicals. One issue that may cause delegates to reassess and constrain the scope of the SAICM will be the level of funding available to tackle all items on the jumbo wish-list.

Although there was no consensus on the scope of the SAICM, by the end of PrepCom1 it was evident that the SAICM elephant could evolve to be a very large animal indeed.

WHO IS DRIVING THE PROCESS?

If financial support to the PrepCom is an indication of commitment, the main champions for the SAICM include some European countries, Canada and UNIDO. In line with this, the European countries were among the most outspoken during the PrepCom in advocating a more far-reaching SAICM. It remains to be seen, however, whether strong commitment to a far-reaching SAICM will endure as the negotiations progress and countries are faced with the difficulties and financial implications of implementing such an approach.

Developing country delegates also revealed considerable enthusiasm for the SAICM and played a significant role in the PrepCom’s discussions. Many were encouraged to see that developing countries are prioritizing chemicals management issues and taking some ownership of the process, as indicated by a number of proposals on the possible structure of a SAICM and health-related issues.

One remaining question is the role of IFCS in the SAICM process. Many countries were gratified that several IFCS outcomes, including the *Bahia Declaration*, *Priorities for Action Beyond 2000*, and *Forum IV Thought Starter Report* were used as a foundation for the SAICM’s work. In addition to providing background information, some countries would like to see the IFCS take on a larger role in the SAICM, and some have even suggested discussing a potential monitoring role for the Forum. Others are hesitant to rely too heavily on the IFCS, emphasizing that the Forum is most useful as an open, informal arena for raising issues, and that it should stay within that mandate.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

The UNEP Governing Council, in decision 22/4, called for active collaboration by a full range of stakeholders in the development of the SAICM. This was actively embraced by the Secretariat, and by the donors who ensured funding for a range of NGOs and developing country delegates to attend the PrepCom. Since chemicals management is a cross-cutting issue, representatives of three different sectors from each developing country were sponsored to participate in the SAICM. Given the multi-sectoral nature of the SAICM, and the active participation that its implementation will require by various stakeholders, this effort was of crucial importance. Unfortunately, a lack of funding for interpretation services in contact groups impeded the full participation of a number of delegates. One cannot help but wonder whether it was an optimal use of resources to fund so many delegates to attend the meeting, but inadvertently limit their ability to participate.

One of the substantial successes of PrepCom1 was the adoption of rules and procedures that many have called “groundbreaking.” The rules ensure, by and large, that NGOs and the private sector are able to participate in the SAICM process on an even footing with governments. As one NGO noted, this “puts meat on the bones” of the Århus Convention. With the adoption of these rules of procedure, albeit *ad referendum*, the SAICM elephant is proving that it will be an inclusive rather than an exclusive creature.

HOW HAS PREPCOM1 ADVANCED THE PROCESS?

Unlike the comparatively straightforward process of treaty negotiations, the SAICM process was complicated by the fact that no one knew exactly what a SAICM would be. By the end of PrepCom1, the majority of delegates seemed relatively satisfied with the progress made during their first attempt at defining the elusive SAICM, noting that the compiled lists of actions and strategic proposals will provide a solid basis for the Committee’s work at the next PrepCom. However, a few participants did not wish to celebrate prematurely, observing that other than the agreement on rules of procedure the PrepCom did not bring country positions any closer together and failed to move significantly beyond work already accomplished by the IFCS. These participants, with their eyes set unwaveringly upon the WSSD 2020 target, are concerned



about the ability of the international community to achieve the target since only baby steps have been taken and elephant leaps may be required.

WHEN WILL PREPCOM2 BE?

One fundamental issue constraining future work on the SAICM is funding. The Secretariat threw a bucket of cold water over the Committee when it announced that PrepCom2 cannot be convened until an injection of over US\$1 million is received. Throughout the week, many delegates expressed staunch commitment to the SAICM with calls for an ambitious objective and scope. However, elephants cannot survive on peanuts alone, and the future of this process now depends upon countries to open their wallets and "put their money where their mouth is." Also of consideration is the fact that money spent on the SAICM might be taken from other areas of chemicals management. Several participants have expressed their preference to seeing the limited funds spent on implementing the existing chemicals-related conventions, rather than putting so much time and money into a non-binding SAICM, while others have called for greater cooperation and synergies in the funding of chemicals-related initiatives.

WHAT NOW?

Bearing in mind the limited finances for organizing future PrepComs, not to mention the need for timely action if the WSSD 2020 target is to be achieved, it is crucial that the intersessional wheels are put in motion. Thus, in addition to financial contributions to the SAICM, delegates can help ensure a productive PrepCom2 by providing submissions to the Secretariat to assist in its intersessional work. Several delegates have also supported a role for the IFCS Regional Groups in the intersessional period, which will provide each region with the opportunity to bring forward particular concerns.

Minimizing the adverse effects of chemicals on human health and the environment is a universally critical objective, but its achievement will require significant political commitment, hard work and a paradigm shift over the coming years. As any zoo-keeper would tell us, caring for an elephant is an immense responsibility, with hefty financial implications and a lot of cleaning required. However, he would also say that enabling the elephant to thrive is well worth the effort.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

PIC INC-10: The tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for an international legally binding instrument for the application of the PIC procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides in international trade will be held from 17-21 November 2003, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: Rotterdam Convention Interim Secretariat, UNEP Chemicals Unit; tel: +41-22-917-8183; fax: +41-22-797-3460; e-mail: pic@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.pic.int/>

GEF COUNCIL MEETING: The GEF Council meeting will convene from 19-21 November 2003, in Washington, DC, US. NGO consultations will precede the Council meeting. For more information, contact: GEF Secretariat; tel +1-202-473-0508; fax: +1-202-522-3240; e-mail: secretariatgef@worldbank.org; Internet: <http://www.gefweb.org>

EU SUSTAINABLE CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT

MEETING: This meeting will take place from 24-25 November 2003, in Brussels, Belgium. It will consider the effects of the REACH Chemical Policy. For more information, contact: EU Conferences Ltd.; tel: +44-1873-830-724; fax: +44-1873-830-692; e-mail: info@euconferences.com; Internet: <http://www.euconferences.com/frachemical.htm>

SECOND MEETING OF THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION EXPERT GROUP ON BAT-BEP: The second meeting of the Expert Group on Best Available Techniques (BAT) and Best Environmental Practices (BEP) is scheduled to meet from 8-12 December 2003, in Chile. For more information, contact: Stockholm Convention Interim Secretariat, UNEP Chemicals Unit; tel: +41-22-917-8191; fax: +41-22-797-3460; e-mail: ssc@chemicals.unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.pops.int>

THEMATIC WORKSHOP ON SYNERGIES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING UNDER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ADDRESSING CHEMICALS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT: Organized by UNITAR in collaboration with several international organizations, this workshop will take place from 1-3 March 2004, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: UNITAR Training and Capacity Building Programmes in Chemicals and Waste Management; tel: +41-22-917-1234; fax: +41-22-917-8047; cwm@unitar.org; Internet: <http://www.unitar.org>

EIGHTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/FIFTH GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM: The eighth Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council/Fifth Global Ministerial Environment Forum will take place from 29-31 March 2004, in Seoul, Republic of Korea. For more information, contact: Beverly Miller, Secretary for UNEP Governing Council; tel: +254-2-623431; fax: +254-2-623929; e-mail: beverly.miller@unep.org; Internet: <http://www.unep.org>

THIRD SESSION OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP OF THE BASEL CONVENTION: This meeting will take place from 26-30 April 2004, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: Basel Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8218; fax: +41-22-797-3454; e-mail: sbc@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.basel.int>

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP-7) TO THE BASEL CONVENTION: Basel COP-7 is tentatively scheduled to convene from 25-29 October 2004, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: Basel Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8218; fax: +41-22-797-3454; e-mail: sbc@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.basel.int>

IFCS FORUM V: This meeting is expected to take place in 2006 in Hungary. For more information, contact: Judy Stober, IFCS Executive Secretary; tel: +41-22-791-3650; fax: +41-22-791-4875; e-mail: ifcs@who.ch; Internet: <http://www.ifcs.ch>

SAICM PREPCOM2: The second session of the preparatory committee for SAICM has not been scheduled. For more information, contact: UNEP Chemicals; tel: +41-22-917-8111; fax: +41-22-797-3460; e-mail: chemicals@unep.ch; Internet: <http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/>