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Sound management of chemicals and waste*

**Submitted by the European Union and its member States, the African Group
and Switzerland**

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recalling the 2030 Agenda target 12.4 to "By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water, and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment",

Emphasizing the cross-cutting relevance of the sound management of chemicals and waste to achieve numerous goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, including those on health,

Expressing strong concern over the present situation, trends and challenges, as reflected in the Global Chemicals Outlooks, the Global and Regional Waste Management Outlooks, the Global Mercury Assessment 2018, and the Global Environment Outlook 6, which show insufficient progress and that it is unlikely that target 12.4 will be achieved by 2020,

Aware that the production and use of chemicals in the world is expected to increase threefold and that the global use of materials has been estimated to more than double by 2050,

Recalling the need for effective implementation of the global chemicals and wastes conventions and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM); and emphasising the importance of the SAICM Overall Orientation and Guidance for achieving the 2020 goal, as endorsed by the International Conference on Chemicals Management,

Emphasizing the importance of strengthening the science-policy interface and the global evidence base for chemicals,

Stressing the urgent need to strengthen the science-policy interface at all levels to support and promote science-based local, national, regional and global action on sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020; use of science in monitoring progress; priority setting and policy making throughout the life cycle of chemicals and waste, taking into account the gaps and scientific information in developing countries,

Noting the initiatives under the Basel Convention and the activities conducted by the Basel and Stockholm Regional Centres to address the pressing issue of marine plastic litter and microplastics,

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

1. *Urges* Governments, industry and the private sector, civil society, the scientific and academic community and all other relevant stakeholders to intensify and prioritise efforts on the sound management of chemicals and waste, towards the achievement of target 12.4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

2. *Emphasizes* the need for urgent and resolute action at all levels to implement the 2030 Agenda on these matters, including through an improved enabling framework for the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long term, in line with UNEA resolutions 1/5, 2/7 and 3/4; and welcomes the initiative of the High Ambition Alliance on Chemicals and Waste in this regard;

3. *Highlights* the importance of minimizing and preventing when feasible hazardous substances in material cycles and managing chemicals in products throughout their lifecycle, from the design to the waste phases, in order to adapt production and consumption models to achieve sustainable consumption and production, including but not limited to circular economy and other sustainable economic models;

4. *Underlines* the importance of waste prevention and minimization at source through, *inter alia*, the minimization of packaging materials and the discouragement of planned obsolescence of products, as well as improving products reusability and recyclability and resource efficiency through, *inter alia*, better design and use of secondary raw material;

5. *Welcomes* the Global Chemicals Outlook-2; and highlights its potential to contribute to the chemicals science-policy interface in the future;

6. *Looks forward* to the upcoming Global Waste Management Outlook-2, including its information on and consideration of the product, chemicals and waste interface; as well as the complementarity and interlinkages with relevant developments and policies, for example in relation to plastics and marine litter;

7. *Welcomes* the analysis of best practices in sustainable chemistry by the United Nations Environment Programme and recognises the value to develop a better understanding of sustainable chemistry opportunities globally;

8. *Also welcomes* the evaluation of the implementation of the integrated approach to address the financing of the sound management of chemicals and waste; notes with appreciation the establishment and operation of the Special Programme, encourage member states in a position to do so, especially developed countries to scale up financing and encourages countries to promote and further increase mainstreaming in national budgets and sector policies as well as the involvement of industry and the private sector and the allocation of responsibilities to them;

9. *Encourages* the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including industry, in strengthening the science-policy evidence in this area, including consideration of relevant socioeconomic aspects;

10. *Underlines* the importance of cooperation and coordination between the secretariat of the Minamata Convention and the joint secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions as appropriate and agreed by their respective COPs for the sound management of chemicals and waste;

11. *Welcomes* the decisions on coordination and cooperation between the Minamata Convention and the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions taken by the Conferences of the Parties to these conventions, including Minamata Convention decision 2/7, which *inter alia* requested the Executive Director to present a proposal for a stable framework on the sharing of services between the secretariats of these conventions, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention, and invited the BRS COPs to also consider such proposal.

12. *Calls on* governments and all other relevant stakeholders, including United Nations agencies as appropriate, industry and the private sector, civil society and the scientific and academic communities, to:

(a) Take into account the SAICM Overall Orientation and Guidance in efforts towards the achievement of the 2020 goal;

(b) Follow up on the conclusions and recommendations of the Global Chemicals Outlook II, building on the Global Chemicals Outlook 1, the Global Waste Management Outlook 1 and the Regional Waste Management Outlooks completed to date;

(c) Address the importance of the product, chemicals and waste interface in relevant legislation and regulatory frameworks, where appropriate;

- (d) Improve the information of chemicals in products in consumer goods as well as throughout the supply chain;
- (e) Support technical assistance and capacity building for implementation of the integrated approach to financing, for example through contributions to the Special Programme, as part of official development aid or through business to business cooperation;
- (f) Encourage all stakeholders involved in the sound management of chemicals and waste, to seek the establishment of permanent programs of information directed to consumers and the public in general, on the risks generated by chemicals and raise awareness of the responsibilities related to the management;
- (g) Support relevant science-policy interface platforms, including input from academia, and to enhance cooperation in the environment and health areas; and consider at the SAICM OEWG3 and at the intersessional process on the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 ways of strengthening science-policy interface, including its relevance for implementation of multilateral environmental agreements at the national level;
- (h) Engage in the discussions launched following UNEA resolution 1/5 and ICCM resolution IV/4, including the preparation of recommendations for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020;
- (i) Take note of the achievements of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions in contributing to the sound management of chemicals and wastes, and take actions to reduce waste generation at source, manage waste in an environmentally sound manner in the country where it is generated, minimize the transboundary movements of waste, and develop and implement, as appropriate, national legal instruments to control the export and import of chemicals;
- (j) Join in the pursuit of an improved enabling framework for the sound management of chemicals and waste, including through information of and consideration by UN bodies related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such as the High Level Political Forum and the UN General Assembly, as appropriate;
13. *Invites* the SAICM Open-Ended Working Group to prepare the ground for relevant resolutions of the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fifth meeting regarding a crosscutting and holistic approach to the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long term, including enhanced involvement of all relevant stakeholders, taking into account UNEA resolutions 1/5, 2/7 and 3/4;
14. *Requests* the Executive Director, subject to the availability of resources and, where appropriate, in cooperation with the member organizations of the Inter-Organisation Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC), to:
- (a) Step up the technical assistance and capacity building to Member States to meet relevant goals and targets of the 2030 agenda as soon as possible, including for improved access to scientific information strengthening the science-policy interface at the national level, taking into account the SAICM Overall Orientation and Guidance and the multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder nature of the sound management of chemicals and waste;
- (b) Strengthen cooperation and avoid duplication of actions undertaken by each IOMC organisation, under their own mandates, towards the achievement of target 12.4 and all other goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda impacted by the sound management of chemicals and waste, as an essential element to improve the current multilateral framework on this matter;
- (c) Enhance the support to the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management in preparation of the fifth meeting of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, including with sufficient staff and resources for the SAICM Secretariat, in view of its role as decided by the ICCM for the improved enabling framework for the sound management of chemicals and waste;
- (d) Synthesize UNEP's analysis of best practices in sustainable chemistry into manuals on green and sustainable chemistry, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, by UNEA5, and to continue the work on a holistic approach for the sound management of chemicals and waste in the long term, taking into account both the importance of the sound management of chemicals and the potential benefits of chemicals for sustainable development;
- (e) Follow the trends in the design, production, use and release of chemicals and the generation of waste in order to identify issues of concern in future Global Chemicals and Waste Management Outlooks and catalyse sound management actions;

(f) Prepare a report by 30 April 2020 on relevant issues where emerging evidence indicates a risk to human health and the environment identified by SAICM, the GCO and under sub-paragraph (e) above, including an analysis of existing regulatory and policy frameworks and their ability to address these issues towards the achievement of the 2020 goal, in particular for lead and cadmium;

(g) Prepare by 30 April 2020 an assessment of options for strengthening the science-policy interface at the international level for the sound management of chemicals and waste, taking into account existing mechanisms, including under UNEP, and relevant examples in other areas, in order to maximise cost-effectiveness, make best use of new technologies, track progress and improve implementation of relevant multilateral environmental agreements at the national level, and to make it available for consideration by all stakeholders prior to ICCM-5;

(h) Provide technical advice, policy support and capacity building to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, particularly in order to put in place the necessary legislative and regulatory frameworks and to mainstream sound management of chemicals and waste in national development plans, domestic budgets and relevant sector policies; and to further encourage industry and private sector involvement throughout the value chain, including through designated responsibilities and measures to promote cost recovery and the polluter pays principle;

(i) Report to the United Nations Environment Assembly, at its fifth session, on the implementation of the present resolution, as well as on the implementation of the programme of work activities with respect to chemicals and waste; and to make a progress report available for ICCM-5.
