

# Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)

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## Preparatory Committee for the Development of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

Third session

Vienna, 19-24 September 2005

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*\*

### Further development of a strategic approach to international chemicals management

#### Draft global plan of action

##### Note by the secretariat

1. At the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the Development of a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, it was proposed that the strategic approach to international chemicals management (SAICM) consist of three components: a high-level declaration; an overarching policy strategy; and a global plan of action. In connection with the global plan of action, a contact group developed a matrix of concrete measures on the basis of documents submitted to the meeting and comments made during the plenary session. The measures were grouped in accordance with the categories of objectives established for the overarching policy strategy: risk reduction; knowledge and information; governance; capacity building; and illegal international traffic.
2. The Committee agreed that after the session had ended the secretariat, working in consultation with the President, would further revise the table of concrete measures developed by the contact group to remove repetitions and redundancies and to incorporate elements from the secretariat's draft syntheses of objectives within the overarching policy strategy which the Committee felt would more appropriately be classified as concrete measures. The text, as so revised, would be set out as an annex to the report of the second session (SAICM/PREPCOM.2/4, annex V) and circulated for comment, including by regional groups during intersessional consultations. Following those consultations and the receipt of comments, the secretariat would again revise the paper in consultation with the President for consideration by the Committee at its third session.
3. The secretariat has the honour to circulate, in the annex to the present note, the draft global plan of action, comprising an executive summary requested by certain regional groups and the table of concrete measures, as further revised by the secretariat in consultation with the President, for the consideration of the Committee at its third session.

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\* Re-issued for technical reasons.

\*\* SAICM/PREPCOM.3/1.

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## **Comments on the concrete measures paper submitted by the European Community and its Member States**

- 1. The EU is very grateful for the intersessional work undertaken by the Secretariat in consultation with the President to refine the concrete measures matrices developed during PrepCom2 and welcomes the opportunity to input at this stage in the process. The EU also welcomes the output from the regional consultations to further develop the matrices of concrete measures and the interesting proposals for next steps. The EU considers that the concrete measures of SAICM should build upon activities identified in, *inter alia*, Agenda 21, particularly where they focus on the management of chemicals.**
- 2. The EU considers that the current matrices of concrete measures and their associated activities offer a comprehensive menu of activities which can be used to inform the development of SAICM. However, the EU recognises that due to the number of measures and activities listed, the current list is unworkable as a global plan of action and much prioritisation of the lists will be required.**
- 3. The objectives of SAICM as outlined in the Overarching Policy Strategy should inform the prioritisation of the measures to ensure that the strategy is adequately delivered through their implementation. Building on the objectives outlined the Overarching Policy Strategy, the EU have identified the following specific criteria to aid the process of prioritisation:**
  - Measures which focus on narrowing the gap between the management of chemicals in developing and developed countries;**
  - Actions which assist the implementation of existing agreements and work areas;**
  - Actions which target issues not currently addressed in existing agreements and work areas;**
  - Actions targeting the minimisation or reduction of exposure to particularly hazardous substances such as carcinogenic, mutagenic and toxic to reproduction (CMR), persistent, bioaccumulative, toxic (PBT) substances, endocrine disruptors and heavy metals such as mercury, cadmium and lead.**
- 4. On the basis of these criteria, the EU has identified measures and activities from the matrices circulated by the Secretariat and has extracted its priorities from them to develop a priority list. This list is attached at Annex A. The priority list does not preclude the other measures listed from having a role in SAICM, but**

**gives an example of how measures could be prioritised for immediate work.**

**5. Where the prioritised measures have been amended from the original text in SAICM/PREPCOM.2/4, this is indicated using the track change function. The priority list includes five additional measures under risk reduction that were not included in the Secretariat's list:**

- Occupational safety and health – avoid worker exposure through technical measures where possible; provide appropriate protective equipment; improve the acceptance of wearing protective equipment and stimulate further research on protective equipment to be used under hot and humid conditions.**
  - Occupational safety and health – Take, as a priority, measures to protect workers from chemicals causing asbestosis, other asbestos related diseases and occupational cancers, and those chemicals included in the Rotterdam Convention based on their occupational health risks**
  - Occupational safety and health – work towards a total ban of asbestos**
  - PBTs/CMRs/HMs – Consider the need for further action on mercury, considering a full range of options, including the possibility of a legally binding instrument, partnerships and other actions (based in Decision 23/9, UNEP GC 23). Take action on reducing the risk of exposure related to mercury in products such as batteries, and to production processes such as chlor-alkali facilities, through, for example, when warranted, introductions of bans or restrictions on uses (based on Decision 23/9, UNEP GC 23)**
  - PBTs/CMRs/HMs – Consider the review on the need for global action in relation to lead and cadmium to be presented by UNEP to the Governing Council at its 24<sup>th</sup> Session in 2007 (Decision 23/9 UNEP GC23)**
- 6. A key requirement is that the measures listed in the matrices are indeed concrete and appropriately resourced. This necessitates the identification of main actors, indicators of progress and targets / timeframes to be identified for each of them. The EU therefore welcomes the work of the African regional Group to complete the matrices, and looks forward to the outcome from IOMC's work to identify which organisation(s), including industry, could be "main actor(s)" on specific measures bearing in mind that national governments will have an important role in all concrete measures.**
- 7. The EU welcomes the work being undertaken by the African, Asia Pacific and Central and Eastern European Regional Groups to consider the lists of concrete measures and to develop their own regional prioritisation exercises.**

**The EU also notes with interest the outcome from the GRULAC consultations which stressed the need to carefully consider the link between the Overarching Policy strategy and the prioritisation of concrete measures. The EU therefore supports the request from GRULAC for the Secretariat to prepare an explanatory overview of the structure of the concrete measures table and its relationship to the overarching policy strategy and to identify, at a strategic level, the main priorities for concrete measures and express them thematically. It is hoped that the EU's prioritisation criteria and the EU's priority table may help to inform the development of the overview.**