

Statement on

The Special Programme to Support Institutional Strengthening at the National Level for Implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Future Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

Submitted by the following Major Groups civil society cluster

- **NGOs**
- **Workers and Trade Unions**
- **Women**
- **Science and Technology**
- **Farmers**
- **Regional Representative – West Asia**

Thank you Chair.

Let me begin by stating that, it is essential for developing countries and countries with economies in transition to have additional, steady and predictable access to financial resources for realization of chemical safety and sustainable development.

We support the objective of the Special Programme and agree that institutional strengthening is critically important. However, we believe careful attention needs to be paid to the details of the special programme to make it truly effective.

We therefore raise a few concerns about the proposal and its terms of reference.

1. On Eligibility

The Special Programme TOR explicitly states that activities that fall within the mandate of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) are not eligible for funding. Currently, the chemicals agenda occupies only 10% of the GEF budget. We welcome the expanded GEF focal area but this strict restriction of the Special Program excludes a potentially large group of activities that are very relevant for the SMC. We recommend that this restriction be taken out as sidelining critical activities will undermine the SAICM 2020 Goal.

2. On Duplication of efforts

We are concerned that in the spirit of avoiding duplication and proliferation of funding mechanisms there will be a negative impact on existing SAICM QSP and Projects that are currently implemented under GEF. SAICM QSP currently have many projects still operating. More projects have been approved for funding at the recent meeting of the Trust Fund Implementation Committee with eight additional projects recommended for resubmission should the QSP Executive Board call for another application round in 2014. This is a clear demonstration of the benefits of QSP for countries and organisations.

We recommend that the Special Programme should complement activities within the mandate of the Global Environment Facility and SAICM Quick Start Programme but not replace them so as to achieve long term financing for sound chemicals and waste management.

3. On exclusion civil society projects

We would like to emphasize that both the GEF and QSP welcome applications with civil society participation. CSO driven projects became QSP award winners and have proved to be effective and efficient. We therefore recommend that the Special Programme should specifically welcome project concepts submitted by developing and transition country governments, CSOs, communities, the private sector, or other civil society entities. Applications should include measures to achieve collaborative multi-sectoral participation, in particular by broadening the participation of all actors including, indigenous peoples, trade unions, farmers, science and technology institutions and other stakeholders.

4 On private sector responsibility

The special program does not sufficiently recognize the responsibility of the private sector in the management of chemicals. We therefore recommend that the special program reflect the accountability of the private sector in particular the chemical industry in SMC.

I thank you for your attention