

The Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP  
Briefing Session  
24 January 2017  
Gigiri, UN Office at Nairobi  
Conference Room 4

### **Agenda Item 3: Briefing on the Chemicals and Waste Sub-programme, UN Environment**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This note provides a brief overview of selected activities carried out in 2016 and planned for 2017 under UN Environment's sub-programme on chemicals and waste, including activities related to the implementation of United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution 2/7 on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste. A more detailed overview responding to resolution 2/7 is attached as an annex.

Sound management of chemicals and waste is an essential component of sustainable development. It is a specific target under Sustainable Development Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production, and is also relevant for many other goals, including food security, health, sustainable cities, water and sanitation.

Pollution is a growing global concern for human health and the planet. Disease caused by pollution is responsible for 17% of all deaths worldwide. The third United Nations Environment Assembly will focus on the way to achieve a pollution-free planet. Addressing pollution from chemicals and waste is expected to be an important dimension of this discussion.

UN Environment has been catalyzing global action on the sound management of chemicals and waste, including the development and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and voluntary policy frameworks. As the production and use of chemicals and generation of waste are shifting to developing countries and countries in economies in transition, the role of UN Environment in supporting these countries is growing.

#### **SELECTED EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN 2016 AND PLANNED FOR 2017**

##### ***Global Chemicals Outlook II***

- Based on a mandate from the United Nations Environment Assembly, the second edition of the Global Chemicals Outlook has been initiated and will be completed by 2018. The Outlook will provide an updated and comprehensive global overview of issues and challenges related to the sound management of chemicals. It will support stakeholders in assessing progress towards the 2020 goal for the sound management of chemicals and discussions beyond 2020.
- In April 2016, a consultative meeting on the second edition of the Global Chemicals Outlook was held to review scope and process of the exercise and on updating the first edition of the Global Chemicals Outlook with particular focus on its findings on global trends and development with

regard to the production, use and consumption of chemicals and their related environmental, health and social effects.

- The first meeting of the Global Chemicals Outlook II Steering Committee was held in Geneva on 15 and 16 December 2016.

### ***Global Waste Management Outlook***

- The Secretariat is updating the Global Waste Management Outlook continually with targeted regional and thematic outlook reports. The first such report “Waste Management Outlook for Mountain Regions” was released on December 12. The report may be downloaded here: <http://www.grida.no/publications/default/6826.aspx>

### ***Sustainable Development Goals and Chemicals and Waste***

- UN Environment organized an International Workshop in Geneva on 11-13 April 2016 to advance analysis and action for strengthening synergies between national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and international chemicals and waste agreements with a view to integrate the agenda effectively into national implementation of the Goals and development planning.
- Within the UN Development Account, UN Environment is developing a project focusing on indicators and statistics entitled: “Chemicals and Waste in the 2030 Agenda - Building capacity in Sustainable Development Goals follow-up and review in developing countries to minimize chemicals and waste risks across sectors through data collection, reporting and use for decision-making”.

### ***Special Programme on Institutional Strengthening at the National Level for Chemicals and Waste***

- At its meeting in October 2016, the Executive Board of the Special Programme approved seven projects during the pilot round amounting to US\$ 1.75 million, taking into consideration, regional balance and the special needs of least developed countries and small island developing states (Benin, Tanzania, Iraq, Kyrgyz Republic, Ukraine, Argentina and Dominican Republic).
- The Board agreed that the second round of applications would take place in February 2017. The third Executive Board meeting is scheduled for October/ November 2017.
- Pledges and contributions to the Special Programme Trust Fund and the Secretariat amount to a total of approximately US\$ 17 million.

### ***Minamata Convention and Mercury***

- The seventh session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Minamata Convention was held in Jordan in March 2016. Significant progress was made towards the preparation for entry into force of the Convention.
- 35 ratifications have been deposited (as of 17 January 2017), while 15 more are required for the Convention to enter into force. The First Meeting of the Conference of the Parties is scheduled to take place from 24 to 29 September 2017.
- The interim secretariat of the Minamata Convention continues to provide support to countries towards ratification and early implementation of the convention. More than 85 Minamata Initial Assessment projects have been approved by the Global Environment Facility as well as a USD 45

million project on Global Opportunity for Long-term Development in the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining Sector (GEF GOLD).

- Global Mercury Partnership assists countries and stakeholders in the action to reduce the risk of mercury. The Global Environment Facility launched in December 2016 a \$15.2 million project to address the mercury emission from artisanal and small-scale gold mining. The partnership works in other areas such as coal combustion, mercury-containing products, waste management, etc.
- A new Global Mercury Assessment with updated mercury emission data will be published in 2018. An expert meeting was held in Copenhagen in November 2016.

### ***Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)***

- The first meeting of the intersessional process on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management beyond 2020 is taking place in Brasilia, Brazil from 7 to 9 February 2017. The objective of the process is to prepare recommendations on the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 for adoption in 2020 at the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5).

### ***Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions***

- The conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions will be held in Geneva from 24 April to 5 May 2017.

### ***Endocrine disruptor chemicals***

- UN Environment is working on reports that focus on existing scientific knowledge and initiatives to address endocrine disruptor chemicals. A meeting of the UN Environment Advisory Group took place in November 2016. The reports will be available first semester of 2017.

### ***Chemicals in Products***

- UN Environment is leading the Chemicals in Products Programme engaging different sectors and executing projects with financial support of the Global Environment Facility. A meeting of the Steering Committee for the Programme will take place in February 2017.

### ***Lead pollution***

- UN Environment is cooperating with the World Health Organization to lead the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint to phase out the use of lead in paint by 2020. New regulations and standards have recently been or are being developed in Cameroon, India, and Kenya.
- The second United Nations Environment Assembly requested UN Environment to assist countries in establishing national and regional strategies to promote environmentally sound recycling of used lead acid batteries. An African regional meeting took place in Burkina Faso in December 2016.