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**United Nations Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment Programme**

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**Resolution adopted by the United Nations Environment
Assembly on 2 March 2022**

**5/8. Science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of
chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution**

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 4/8 on sound management of chemicals and wastes, and 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 the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020,

Recalling also its resolution 5/2, which approved the medium-term strategy of the United Nations Environment Programme for the period 2022–2025, with its subprogramme on chemicals and pollution action, alongside those on nature action and climate action, its promotion of sound science, and the sharing of information and knowledge,

Appreciating the work on the promotion of the sound management of chemicals and waste and the prevention of pollution by the relevant multilateral agreements, other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies, including the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals and the International Conference on Chemicals Management, and welcoming the continuation of their scientific work to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution,

Recognizing the importance of science-based assessments to inform decision-making processes,

Noting the report prepared by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme in cooperation with the member organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals entitled *Assessment of Options for Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface at the International Level for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste*¹

¹ United Nations Environment Programme, *Assessment of Options for Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface at the International Level for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste* (2020).

Acknowledging that improving the availability of scientific information and assessments can address capacity challenges, enable more effective and efficient action to minimize and prevent the adverse impact of the unsound management of chemicals and waste, and prevent pollution to improve human well-being and contribute to the prosperity of all,

Reaffirming that the sound management of chemicals and waste is crucial for the protection of human health and the environment,

Recognizing that air pollution is the single greatest environmental risk to human health, with a disproportionate impact on women, children and the elderly,

Convinced that a science-policy panel could support countries in their efforts to take action, including to implement multilateral environmental agreements and other relevant international instruments, promote the sound management of chemicals and waste, and address pollution by providing policy-relevant scientific advice on issues, and that it could further support relevant multilateral agreements, other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders in their work,

1. *Decides* that a science-policy panel should be established to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and prevent pollution, with details to be further specified according to the provisions in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the present resolution;
2. *Considers* that the principal functions of the panel should include, among other things:
 - (a) Undertaking “horizon scanning” to identify issues of relevance to policymakers and, where possible, proposing evidence-based options to address them;
 - (b) Conducting assessments of current issues and identifying potential evidence-based options to address, where possible, those issues, in particular those relevant to developing countries;
 - (c) Providing up-to-date and relevant information, identifying key gaps in scientific research, encouraging and supporting communication between scientists and policymakers, explaining and disseminating findings for different audiences, and raising public awareness;
 - (d) Facilitating information-sharing with countries, in particular developing countries seeking relevant scientific information;
3. *Also considers* that the panel should be an independent intergovernmental body with a programme of work approved by its member Governments to deliver policy-relevant scientific evidence without being policy prescriptive;
4. *Decides* to convene, subject to the availability of resources, an ad hoc open-ended working group that will begin work in 2022, with the ambition of completing it by the end of 2024;
5. *Also decides* that the ad hoc open-ended working group will prepare proposals for the science-policy panel to consider the following issues:
 - (a) Institutional design and governance of the panel;
 - (b) Name and scope of the panel;
 - (c) Principal functions of the panel, as set out in paragraph 2 of the present resolution, while respecting the mandates of relevant multilateral agreements and other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies, avoiding overlap and duplication of work, and promoting coordination and cooperation;
 - (d) Relationships of the panel with relevant key stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental organizations, and civil society;
 - (e) Processes for determining and executing the work programme of the panel;
 - (f) Arrangements for identifying and engaging with experts to contribute to the work of the panel;
 - (g) Procedures for the review and adoption of reports and assessments produced by the panel;
 - (h) Arrangements for secretariat support for the panel;
 - (i) Options for voluntary financing of the work of the panel;
 - (j) Rules of procedure and the operating principles governing the work of the panel;
 - (k) An indicative budget for the panel;

- (l) Any other matters that the ad hoc open-ended working group believes should be addressed;
6. *Further decides* that the ad hoc open-ended working group should take into account the need to ensure that the panel:
- (a) Is able to deliver outputs that are policy relevant without being policy prescriptive;
 - (b) Is interdisciplinary, ensuring contributions from experts with a broad range of disciplinary expertise; has inclusive participation, including indigenous peoples; and has geographical, regional and gender balance;
 - (c) Has procedures that seek to ensure that the work of the panel is transparent and impartial and that it can produce reports and assessments that are credible and scientifically robust;
 - (d) Undertakes work that is complementary to and does not duplicate the work of the relevant multilateral agreements, other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies, including those that are members of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals;
 - (e) Coordinates, as appropriate, with other science-policy bodies, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;
 - (f) Has the ability to address potential conflicts of interest and safeguard commercially sensitive information;
 - (g) Has the flexibility to respond, to the extent possible, to the needs identified by stakeholders and agreed to by its member Governments, and to fulfil its principal functions, as set out in the present resolution;
 - (h) Is cost-effective, with the leanest structure consistent with achieving the highest impact;
7. *Decides* that the ad hoc open-ended working group should include Governments and regional economic integration organizations and be open to observers from United Nations entities, relevant multilateral agreements, other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies, including those that are members of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, and stakeholder representatives;
8. *Requests* the Executive Director to cooperate closely with the secretariats of relevant multilateral environmental agreements and relevant international organizations and bodies, as appropriate;
9. *Also requests* the Executive Director to convene meetings of the ad hoc open-ended working group and invite the World Health Organization to play a role, as appropriate;
10. *Further requests* the Executive Director, upon completion of proposals prepared by the ad hoc open-ended working group, to convene an intergovernmental meeting for the purpose of considering the establishment of a science-policy panel;
11. *Requests* the Executive Director to report on the outcomes of the ad hoc open-ended working group to the United Nations Environment Assembly and to relevant multilateral agreements, other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies;
12. *Invites* Governments and others in a position to do so to provide extrabudgetary resources for the implementation of the present resolution, in particular to enable the full participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the ad hoc open-ended working group;
13. *Requests* the Executive Director to provide a secretariat for the ad hoc open-ended working group and prepare the analytical and summary reports necessary for its work;
14. *Invites* the governing bodies of relevant multilateral agreements, other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies to consider the present resolution, as appropriate.
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