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**Ad hoc open-ended working group on a science-policy panel
to contribute further to the sound management of
chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution
First session**

Nairobi, 6 October 2022*

Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda**

**Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters:
organizational matters**

**Scenario note for the first part of the first session of the ad hoc
open-ended working group on a science-policy panel to
contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and
waste and to prevent pollution**

Note by the secretariat

Introduction

1. At its resumed fifth session, held in Nairobi and online from 28 February to 2 March 2022, the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, by its resolution 5/8, decided that a science-policy panel should be established to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, with details to be further specified according to the provisions of paragraphs 4 and 5 of the resolution.
2. In addition, the Environment Assembly decided to convene, subject to the availability of resources, an ad hoc open-ended working group that would commence its work in 2022, with the ambition of completing it by the end of 2024. The Environment Assembly further requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to provide a secretariat for the ad hoc open-ended working group and to prepare the analytical and summary reports necessary for its work.
3. The present note has been prepared by the UNEP secretariat to the ad hoc open-ended working group and sets out the proposed plans and general expectations for the first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group on a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution. It is intended to assist participants in their preparations for the first part of the first session.

* The first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group on a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution is being held in two parts. The first part of the session will be held in Nairobi on 6 October 2022, while the second part, namely the resumed first session, will be held in person in Bangkok and is tentatively scheduled to be held in the first quarter of 2023.

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I. Dates and duration

4. Taking into account the views expressed by Member States at the subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives held in Nairobi on 7 July 2022, the first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group will be held in two parts. Pursuant to resolution 5/8, the first part of the first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group will be held in Nairobi on Thursday, 6 October 2022. The resumed first session will be held early in the first quarter of 2023 in Bangkok.¹

5. The session will be conducted in the six official languages of the United Nations. It will be held in a hybrid format, allowing for both online and in-person participation. Member States and other stakeholders with the capacity to do so are invited to attend in person, provided that the minimum coronavirus disease (COVID-19) safety requirements are respected, as outlined in the information note for participants. Accredited representatives may also choose to participate remotely through the online meeting platform, with full speaking rights and online interpretation.

6. The session will be paperless. Pre-session documents are available on the meeting website.² In-person participants are expected to bring their own laptop computers or other devices to access the documents. Limited technical support will be available on site.

7. In order to facilitate proper planning for the session, participants should register for the session as soon as possible, following the procedure for registration outlined in the information note for participants.

8. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of Environment Assembly resolution 5/8, invitations to attend the session were addressed to representatives of Governments and regional economic integration organizations. Representatives of 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 (IOMC), and other stakeholders were invited to take part in the session as observers. Invitations to participate as observers were also extended to organizations accredited to the Environment Assembly as well as to stakeholders that are admitted as observers to the meetings of relevant chemicals and waste-related multilateral environmental agreements and focal points of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

9. To ensure the broad mobilization and engagement of relevant stakeholders, the secretariat has conducted online information-sharing sessions in follow up to the adoption of the resolution. The secretariat has also encouraged relevant organizations not yet accredited or admitted as observers to the meetings of the above-mentioned bodies to seek accreditation for participation therein.

II. Organization of work

10. The first session will be formally opened by a representative of UNEP, who will deliver an opening statement. Opening statements will also be delivered by a representative of the World Health Organization.

11. Following the opening of the session, the ad hoc open-ended working group will consider agenda item 2, election of officers. In accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the Environment Assembly, which apply mutatis mutandis to the work of its subsidiary organs, the ad hoc open-ended working group is expected to elect its officers, including a chair, vice-chairs and a rapporteur, who will collectively constitute the bureau of the ad hoc open-ended working group. The ad hoc open-ended working group is invited to consider the election of a bureau composed of 10 representatives. The ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to elect two officers from each of the five regional groups³ in order to ensure adequate regional representation in the bureau membership, while taking into account the need to ensure gender balance.

12. Once elected, the Chair will preside over the session and will proceed with the consideration of item 3, adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

¹ The present note will be revised following the first part of the first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group to reflect the outcomes of the one-day meeting and any effect they may have on the possible actions proposed for consideration by the ad hoc open-ended working group during the resumed first session.

² Further information can be found on the [meeting webpage](#).

³ African States; Asia-Pacific States; Eastern European States; Latin American and Caribbean States; and Western European and other States.

13. In considering the adoption of its rules of procedure, the ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to note that as a subsidiary organ of the Environment Assembly, resulting from its establishment by that body, it may wish to adopt the rules of procedure of the Environment Assembly, to be applied *mutatis mutandis* to its work.

14. The ad hoc open-ended working group will be invited to consider and adopt the agenda for its first session based on the provisional agenda set out in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1(I)/1.

15. During the session, the ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to meet in plenary session from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 to 6 p.m., subject to adjustments as necessary.

III. General statements

16. In resolution 5/8, the Environment Assembly decided that the ad hoc open-ended working group would prepare proposals for the science-policy panel to consider on the issues, as outlined in paragraph 5 of the resolution. The ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to consider inviting general statements on the establishment of a science-policy panel with the view to guiding its work, taking into account the mandate set out in resolution 5/8.

17. Member States and observers may wish to share initial views in order to ensure that the process for the establishment of the science-policy panel is as efficient and streamlined as possible, and provide guidance on the planning process for the resumed first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group. In particular, they may wish to make general statements and engage in an exchange of views on the following aspects:

(a) In relation to the timetable and organization of work of the ad hoc open-ended working group, they may wish to express their views on, among other things, the number of sessions to be convened to support the negotiations on the establishment of a science-policy panel, given that the matter was not specified in resolution 5/8. Based on previous experience, it is proposed that the ad hoc open-ended working group hold two additional sessions, following the first and resumed first session;

(b) In relation to the preparation of proposals for the establishment of a science-policy panel, representatives may wish to express their views with regard to a possible clustering of the issues set out in paragraph 5 of resolution 5/8 in order to facilitate the discussions and the organization of the work. Without prejudice to the order of priority of the issues, clustering could be organized around the following thematic areas: (a) proposals for the name and scope; (b) proposals for principal functions, institutional design and governance; (c) proposals for the rules of procedure and policies governing the work of the panel; and (d) proposals for the work programme and budget;

(c) In relation to preparations for the resumed first session, the ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to consider the submission of views from Member States and relevant stakeholders on the possible scope of work of the science-policy panel. Such views could be gathered in the intersessional period by means of an online questionnaire, which would facilitate the collection and compilation of the information submitted. They may also wish to recommend further work to be undertaken by the secretariat or by the Bureau in the period leading up to the resumed first session, including with respect to the possible convening of regional consultations, thematic online information-sharing sessions or consultations to be carried out in the margins of other relevant meetings. In doing so, they are encouraged to be mindful of the busy international calendar of meetings and the short period of time available ahead of the resumed first session.

18. Item 5 of the provisional agenda, on options for the timetable and organization of work of the ad hoc open-ended working group, and item 6, on the preparation of proposals for the establishment of a science-policy panel, will be considered at the resumed first session.

IV. Expected outcomes of the first part of the first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group

19. In the lead-up to the first part of the first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group, participants may wish to reflect on the desired outcomes of the session. Reasonable expectations might include that the ad hoc open-ended working group will have:

- (a) Elected its officers and established its bureau;
- (b) Adopted its rules of procedure;

- (c) Shared some initial views through the delivery of general statements on the establishment of the science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution;
- (d) Provided guidance to the secretariat, through general statements and the initial sharing of views, on preparations for the resumed first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group, including confirmation of the proposed number of sessions to be held for the establishment of the panel;
- (e) Provided views on the proposed clustering of issues, in order to facilitate the organization of the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group in preparing proposals for the establishment of a science-policy panel;
- (f) Confirmed any work to be carried out during the period leading up to the resumed first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group, including with respect to any calls for information or the possible convening of regional consultations, thematic online information-sharing sessions or consultations to be carried out in the margins of other relevant meetings.

V. Report of the first part of the first session

20. In the light of the short duration of the first part of the first session, the ad hoc open-ended working group is expected to adopt the draft report on the work of the first part of its first session, in English only. Consistent with standard United Nations practice, the report of the first part of the first session will be finalized after the one-day first part by the Rapporteur, in cooperation with the secretariat and under the authority of the Chair, and will be made available after the closure of the one-day first part of the first session. At the resumed first session, the ad hoc open-ended working group will be invited to consider and adopt a supplemental draft report reflecting the proceedings of the resumed first session. The two reports will together constitute the proceedings of the first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group.
