

Video message

Resumed first session of the open-ended working group (OEWG) on a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution

Organizers: UN Environment Programme, Government of Thailand

Bangkok, Thailand

30 January 2023

Your Excellency Varawut Silpa-archa,

Excellencies,

Executive Director Inger Anderson,

Dear colleagues and friends,

Every year, more than 13 million people die as the result of known environmental risks, including air pollution and exposure to chemicals.

These avoidable tragedies are only increasing, fuelled by climate change and biodiversity loss.

To support countries to address these threats, WHO and other UN agencies are building the evidence base for what works, including a recent publication with more than 500 proven interventions to create environments that nurture health, rather than harm it.

However, implementation of this guidance in countries still lags, underscoring the need to strengthen research and evidence to show the cost-effectiveness and benefits of these interventions.

This panel can make a real difference, with a strategic approach that builds on the work of other processes, and by identifying opportunities to innovate, with a focus on prevention.

WHO looks forward to working with you to consider what role we can play in the panel as it takes shape.

Only by working together across the public and private sectors, with international agencies and civil society, can we tackle the challenges posed by chemicals and waste, and prevent these needless deaths.

I thank you.

[199 words]