



SP/EB.9/2/Rev.1\_SP/EB.8/6  
31 May 2023

English only

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## **REPORT OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME**

### **ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

1. The eighth meeting of the Executive Board of the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), which took place in hybrid format in Geneva, Switzerland, was opened by Ms Kay Williams (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) at 09:30 (CEST) on 15 February 2023. Ms Williams welcomed the participants to the first in-person meeting of the Executive Board since the start of the pandemic. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms Williams and Ms Irma Gurguliani (Georgia).
2. Ms Katherine Theotocatos, coordinator of the Special Programme, welcomed the participants both in person and online and highlighting the key substantive items to be discussed at the meeting on behalf of Ms Jacqueline Alvarez, Chief of the Chemicals and Health Branch in the Industry and Economy Division of UNEP.
3. Following the opening remarks, the co-chair invited the participants of the Executive Board to introduce themselves briefly.
4. The meeting was attended by members and/or alternates from all Executive Board constituencies and represented quorum for decision making in accordance with Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure for the Executive Board of the Special Programme.

### **ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**

#### **2.1 Adoption of agenda and organization of work**

5. The co-chair invited the Board members to consider and adopt the provisional agenda and proposed organization of work as set out in documents SP/EB/8.1 and SP/EB/8.1/Add.1 respectively and highlighted a number of pertinent provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Special Programme as set out in document SP/EB.8/INF.3.
6. The agenda and organization of work were adopted, with the Executive Board agreeing to adjust the timing of certain agenda items to accommodate the availability of some observers.

### **ITEM 3. APPROVAL OF THE REPORT OF THE SEVENTH MEETING AND THE INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

7. The Executive Board was invited to consider and approve the reports of the seventh meeting of the Executive Board meeting, held online from 28 March to 1 April 2022, as contained in document SP/EB.8/2 and the report of the intersessional meeting of the Executive Board, held online on 5 December 2022, as contained in document SP/EB.8/2.Add.1. Both reports were approved without any modifications.

**ITEM 4. CONSIDERATION OF ELIGIBLE AND COMPLETE APPLICATIONS FOR THE SIXTH ROUND OF FUNDING UNDER THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME**

8. Under this agenda item the Executive Board was invited to review and consider the eligible and complete applications submitted under the sixth round of funding, with a view to approving projects that would receive funding.
9. To facilitate the work of the Executive Board, the Secretariat had made available the full application packages submitted by each country, which included application forms, signed endorsement letters, letters of support and additional information, as well as the appraisals undertaken by the Secretariat and the internal task team.
10. The co-chairs of the Executive Board invited the Special Programme Secretariat to provide an overview of the launch and review process for the sixth round of applications and to introduce the background documents (SP/EB.8/3 and its addenda SP/EB.8/3/Add.1, SP/EB.8/3/Add.2 SP/EB.8/3/Add.3 and SP/EB.8/3/Add.4) to assist the Board in its deliberations on this agenda item.
11. In its presentation the Secretariat indicated that the call for applications had been launched on 11 April 2022. The deadline for the submission of applications to the Secretariat was 12 August 2022. Following the application deadline, the Secretariat received 19 applications, from 18 countries. Each application underwent an initial screening, during which one application was found to be ineligible because it was not submitted by an entity of the national government; the latter application was later withdrawn.
12. The remaining 18 applications underwent an in-depth review by the Secretariat. The Special Programme Secretariat then convened two online meetings of the internal task team comprising representatives from the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention, the SAICM Secretariat and the GEF Secretariat to undertake a review and appraisal of the initial applications received and, later, the final applications resubmitted by the applicants following feedback provided from the first review. Each appraisal involved a qualitative analysis of each project and a technical review of the activities planned. The appraisal also included a detailed review and assessment of the budget in relation to the proposed activities.
13. After the first round of appraisals, feedback was provided to all applicants to enable them to revise and resubmit their applications. In the initial review five applications were identified as not being eligible for funding under the Special Programme because they fell into the mandate of the Global Environment Facility; the applicants were informed accordingly and were invited to revise and resubmit their applications.
14. The Secretariat and the internal task team ultimately reviewed 15 final applications submitted by 15 countries. In this process one application, from China, was found to still fall into the mandate of the GEF and was therefore not eligible for funding under the Special Programme. The remaining 14 eligible and complete applications, as listed in Annex II, underwent appraisal for consideration by the Executive Board. The Secretariat presented the results of the appraisal of each project to the Board.
15. Following the Secretariat's presentation, the co-chairs invited the Executive Board to deliberate on each eligible and complete application received by the Secretariat for the sixth round of applications.
16. The Board discussed the merits of each project in light of the appraisal criteria set out in the application package, in particular the Guidance on the Scope of the Special Programme, and provided comments on each application to further strengthen the applications that were approved for funding as well as to provide feedback and guidance to countries whose projects were not approved, with a view to encouraging them to resubmit revised applications in the future.
17. Following its discussion, the Executive Board approved nine projects with budgets amounting to US \$2,207,875. The approved projects were selected taking into account the projects' merits, regional balance and priority to countries with least capacity, taking into account the special needs of least development countries and small island developing states, as follows:

**Table 1.** Projects approved under the sixth round of funding**Africa**

| Country | Project Title  |
|---------|--|
| Gambia  | Capacity strengthening and technical assistance for environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes in the Gambia.  |
| Kenya   | Sound Chemicals and Waste Management Kenya (Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste)   |
| Lesotho | Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Coordination of Chemicals and Waste Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements and Mainstreaming Gender in their Implementation in Lesotho.   |
| Mali    | Strengthening Mali's National capacity to implement the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions including SAICM.  |
| Rwanda  | Strengthening institutional capacity to reduce environmental and health risks from lead exposures and contamination in Rwanda.   |
| Togo    | Setting up a cost recovery mechanism to support the establishment of a sustainable legal and institutional framework for the sound management of chemicals with a special focus on the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention. |

**Asia Pacific**

| Country  | Project Title   |
|----------|---|
| Maldives | Institutional strengthening and capacity building for the sound management of chemicals and wastes in the Maldives. |

**Central and Eastern Europe**

| Country | Project Title  |
|---------|--|
| Georgia | Establish of a Poison Control Center (PCC) as an essential infrastructural element of sound chemicals management system and prevention of chemicals exposure and management of poisonings in Georgia |

**Latin American and the Caribbean**

| Country | Project Title   |
|---------|---|
| Ecuador | Improvement and sustainability for the management of hazardous and special waste and chemical products for industrial use in Ecuador. |

**ITEM 5. PREPARATIONS FOR THE LAUNCH OF THE SEVENTH ROUND OF APPLICATIONS****Item 5.1 Presentations from the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention and SAICM**

18. Representatives from each of the Secretariats of the chemicals and waste related instruments and the GEF were invited by the co-chairs to provide the Executive Board with an overview of the outcomes and/or expected outcomes of relevant meetings held by their respective Governing Bodies.
19. Speaking on behalf of the secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions, Mr. Frank Moser noted that the conventions were reverting to the usual two-year biennium meeting cycle. He provided an overview of the triple COPs meeting, to take place in May 2023 on the theme 'Accelerating action: Targets for the sound management of chemicals and waste', and highlighted key topics to be discussed under each relevant COP as well as joint issues relevant to all the COPs. He also referred to the PCBs fair that was scheduled to

take place in the margins of the 2023 COPs in Geneva. He then gave a brief update on the Basel Convention Implementation and Compliance Committee (ICC), and noted that the ICC had welcomed the willingness of some Parties, and encouraged other Parties, to consider submitting a project proposal to the Special Programme as a way to improve implementation of the Basel Convention.

20. “Ms. Marianne Bailey, speaking on behalf of the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention, reported that the first full national reports under the Minamata Convention, submitted at the end of 2021, had been analysed in order to understand parties’ needs and would be considered by the Implementation and Compliance Committee at its meeting in March 2023. She recalled the distinction between the Minamata Convention’s Specific International Programme (SIP) and the Special Programme and noted that the secretariat of the Minamata Convention provided inputs into Special Programme guidance and webinars for prospective applicants, to help them understand the different sources of support available. Providing a brief overview of decisions of the Minamata COP, she noted some highlights, including the amendment to Annex A on mercury-added products, with new products categories for phaseout by 2025 and new requirements on dental amalgam deadline for the phaseout by 2025 of mercury added products listed in the amendment Annex A, with parties still working on full implementation of mercury-added products requirements. She noted that COP5 in 2023 would look at phaseout dates for other products as well as industrial processes in Annex B. She briefly discussed the ongoing effectiveness evaluation and the second review of the Minamata Convention’s financial mechanism as well as the midterm evaluation of the SIP mandate. She concluded by noting that while the Special Programme was not a part of the financial mechanism under the Minamata Convention, it provided important support to parties as well as non-parties and she emphasised the need to continue to avoid duplication of effort and to enhance complementarity.”
21. Ms Delfina Cuglievan Wiese, speaking on behalf of the SAICM Secretariat, provided an overview of the upcoming meetings taking place under the auspices of SAICM, including the resumed fourth intersessional meeting to be held in Nairobi the following week, followed by a series of regional meetings leading up to the meeting of the fifth International Conference on Chemicals management, scheduled for September 2023. She noted that the discussions on new framework text included topics of relevance to the Special Programme such as capacity building to support the new instrument and various proposals concerning a financial mechanism. She provided information on the ‘deep dive’ sessions to be held in Nairobi that would include one on economic sectors and value chains, based on an IOMC workshop held in Paris in January 2023. Responding to a question from the Executive Board, she noted that the mandates of the various thematic groups that were expected to meet during the upcoming resumed fourth meeting were still under consideration by the co-chairs and co-facilitators at the time of the meeting.
22. Mr. Anil Sookdeo, speaking on behalf of the GEF Secretariat, recalled that in 2022 the eighth replenishment (GEF-8) had been adopted, with significant contributions from 29 donor countries. He noted that the chemicals and waste focal area under GEF-8 was quite broad and he encouraged participants to look at the GEF-8 programming directions for more information. In line with a recommendation from the GEF Council to strengthen the operational focal points of the GEF, a new country engagement strategy had been approved in December 2022 to extend resources to strengthen these focal points, which should be helpful for prospective applicants to the Special Programme. The small grants programme had also been expanded. He noted that the GEF assembly would take place in August 2023 in Vancouver and could provide an opportunity to share experiences with the Special Programme on projects and programmes. He concluded by noting that capacity building workshops for operational focal points and convention focal points would resume this year.
23. Following the presentations, the co-chair expressed the Board’s appreciation to the representatives of the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention, SAICM and the GEF for sharing this information with the Board.

#### **Item 5.2 Approval of revised application guidelines and forms**

24. The co-chairs of the Executive Board invited the Special Programme Secretariat to present an overview of the updated application guidelines and forms for the seventh round of applications, as outlined in documents SP/EB/8/4, SP/EB/8/4/Add.1, SP/EB.8/4/Add.2, SP/EB.8/4/Add.3 and SP/EB.8/4/Add.4. In the presentation,

the representative of the Secretariat highlighted operative paragraph 10 of UNEA resolution 5/7 which encouraged the Executive Board to review the procedures for application for funding in the light of the needs and challenges expressed by developing countries, including those related to operating costs, with a view to promoting an effective and efficient application of the eligibility criteria in line with the terms of reference of the Special Programme, without jeopardizing the ability of the Special Programme to receive funding from existing sources.

25. The Secretariat presented an overview of the issue, recalling that paragraph 6 of the Terms of Reference of the Special Programme provided that “Support from the Special Programme will be available for developing countries, taking into account the special needs of least developed countries and small island developing States, and for countries with economies in transition, with priority given to those with least capacity”. She recalled that the Executive Board had decided to use the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of Official Development Assistance (ODA) as the basis for determining eligibility for funding under past rounds of the Special Programme.
26. The Secretariat provided a summary of the Executive Board’s discussion during its intersessional meeting, held online as a closed session in December 2022. The presentation described the legal opinion from UNEP that had been discussed at that meeting, as well as the various concerns expressed by the Board during its discussion. The Secretariat then introduced the proposed alternative language on eligibility, taking the Board’s intersessional discussion into account, as contained in the Guidance on the Scope of the Special Programme, set out in document SP/EB/8/4/Add.1.
27. Following an extensive and open discussion on the matter, the Executive Board agreed to revise the wording on eligibility and appraisal contained in the updated Guidance on the Scope of the Special Programme for the seventh round as set out in the text box below. The Executive Board confirmed, with reference to paragraph 10 of the Terms of Reference, that the eligibility criteria applied both to eligibility for funding under the Special Programme and to eligibility for membership of the Executive Board of the Special Programme.

a. Under section 2.2 of the Guidance on the Scope of the Special Programme, ‘Who can apply for funding under the Special Programme?’:

“Eligible Governments can apply to the Special Programme.

‘Governments’ specifically refers to the national government ministry or department in charge of the chemicals and waste agenda at the national level. Affiliations of Governments and local governments are not eligible.

Countries should refer to paragraph 6 of the Terms of Reference for eligibility which states that ‘Support from the Special Programme will be available for developing countries, taking into account the special needs of least developed countries and small island developing States, and for countries with economies in transition<sup>1</sup>, with priority given to those with least capacity’.

Note that a number of donors have strict policies of funding only applications that meet the eligibility requirements of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list of Official Development Assistance (ODA)<sup>2</sup> at the time of application.

<sup>1</sup> See United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects Report available at [https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/document\\_gem/global-economic-monitoring-unit/world-economic-situation-and-prospects-wesp-report/](https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/document_gem/global-economic-monitoring-unit/world-economic-situation-and-prospects-wesp-report/) with annexes available at [https://desapublications.un.org/file/1113/download?\\_ga=2.247642817.739791176.1676889344-1020178047.1591942680](https://desapublications.un.org/file/1113/download?_ga=2.247642817.739791176.1676889344-1020178047.1591942680)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>”

b. Under Annex III to the Guidance on the Scope of the Special Programme dealing with Appraisal Criteria:

“1.5 Questions for prioritization on the basis of country capacity, in accordance with paragraph 6 of the Terms of Reference



These questions are for the Board to consider:

P1. What is the level of ownership, impact and sustainability of the project?

P2. Is the country classified as high income by the World Bank?

If yes,

P2.1. Is the country able to implement the project by its own financial means and capabilities?

P2.2 Does the beneficiary contribution from the applicant exceed the minimum 25% threshold provided for in paragraph 21 of the Terms of Reference and if so by how much?

P 3. Are there other factors relating to the country's capacity that should be taken into account?"

28. Following the conclusion on the discussion of eligibility in the context of country classification, the Secretariat then provided a brief presentation on the question of eligibility for funding under the Special Programme with reference to paragraph 4 of the Terms of Reference, which provided that "The Special Programme should avoid duplication and proliferation of funding mechanisms and associated administration, and should fund activities that fall outside the mandate of the Global Environment Facility". The Secretariat provided statistics on the proportion of applications per round that were found to be ineligible for funding under the Special Programme on this basis, noting that the expansion of the GEF mandate over time meant that applications that in the past could be funded under the Special Programme would no longer be eligible for funding. The Executive Board discussed the matter, with clarification on specific questions provided by the representative of the GEF Secretariat. The Executive Board agreed that there was no intention to reopen the terms of reference of the Special Programme, which could in any event only be done by UNEA, but that the matter should be recorded in the report of the meeting. In addition, the Secretariat was asked to include a question in the application form for the seventh round of funding that would allow applicants to confirm that they had consulted with the GEF operational focal point in-country on the application.
29. In concluding the discussions on the arrangements for the seventh round of funding, the Executive Board welcomed the updates made to the application documents and requested the Secretariat to ensure that the changes on eligibility were reflected consistently throughout the package of application documents. The Secretariat was also requested to arrange for translation of the application package into the relevant United Nations languages and to make any necessary updates to the e-learning course, available on the Secretariat's website in English, French and Spanish.

### **Item 5.3 Timeline for review and appraisal of applications**

30. The Secretariat briefly presented the proposed timeline for the submission, appraisal and review of the applications as outlined in document SP/EB.8/4.
31. Following its deliberations, the Executive Board endorsed the timeline for processing the seventh round of applications, as set out in Annex III.

## **ITEM 6. UPDATE ON THE OPERATIONS OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME**

### **6.1 Update on Secretariat activities**

32. The co-chairs invited the Secretariat to present an update on the activities of the Secretariat since the last meeting, as outlined in SP/EB.8/5.

#### ***Update on project implementation status***

33. The representative of the Secretariat provided an update on the status of implementation of the 66 projects approved up to and including the fifth round of funding under the Special Programme, noting that 42 projects were ongoing either as originally agreed or with no-cost extensions. Twelve projects had completed implementation and closed, three had completed implementation and were in the process of closing, one had expired, one had been cancelled and six were pending signature of their legal agreements. Information was

presented by region and by round of funding. The Secretariat also gave an overview of those projects that had been granted no cost extensions beyond the usual maximum of 36 months (a total of 34 no cost extensions granted for 28 projects), including the regional breakdown. The main reasons for the delays in implementation included COVID-19 impacts, delays in recruitment or staffing turnover, delays in disbursement of funds and political or structural changes in-country.

34. The Secretariat discussed a few specific cases for the Board to consider:

a. **Benin:** The project had been approved under the first round of funding, and from 2017 to 2020 the implementation rate of the project was satisfactory. However, with the onset of the COVID pandemic in 2020, implementation had stopped. Attempts to engage with the country, including attempts through the Permanent Mission, were not successful and the project agreement had expired in 2021. Based on this, the project was included in the assessment of closed projects that was conducted in 2022. In December 2022, the project focal point reached out to the Secretariat to request an extension for 12 to 18 months, by reason of delays arising from COVID-19 and delays in parliamentary approvals on chemicals and waste management. The co-chairs of the Executive Board had decided that, given the long time since the expiry of the project and the fact that project reports had still not been finalised, it would better to close the project and then allow the country to request funding again in the future.

b. **Brazil:** This project was conditionally approved under the second round of funding in 2017, with the amended project finally approved by the Board in late 2020, after delays arising from political changes in the country as well as the pandemic. The Secretariat had been working the Ministry of Environment and UNEP's Brazil office, which had been identified as the implementing partner for this project, to finalise the project agreement and launch the project. Further delays had arisen through the inclusion of a private sector entity as a project partner providing financial support to the project, resulting in the need for a due diligence clearance and the conclusion of a donor agreement between the entity and UNEP's Brazil office. The Secretariat was awaiting further updates from the partners on finalisation of the donor agreement, which would clear the way for the project agreement to be signed. The Secretariat was keeping the co-chairs informed of progress, under the Board's policy on dealing with protracted delays in finalizing implementation arrangements for projects.

c. **Burkina Faso:** The project had been approved in March 2022 under the fifth round of funding. Before the project cooperation agreement could be signed it was brought to the Secretariat's attention that a coup had taken place in country. The UN Resident Coordinator's office in-country informed the Secretariat that until further notice under United Nations policy, only critical humanitarian projects could be implemented in the country and the agreement could therefore not be signed. The UNEP representative in the region was monitoring the situation and would inform the Secretariat of any change.

d. **Nauru:** The Basel Convention's Implementation and Compliance Committee had taken another decision on Nauru's compliance with its obligations under the Convention, which was made available as an information document for this meeting. Nauru had recently had a no-cost extension approved by reason of challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which had started during the initial phase of the project, combined with lack of appropriate expertise in country to manage the project and lack of technical expertise to carry out the activities. The project had also suffered from staffing turnover and recruitment delays, and the first disbursement was delayed because it was necessary to change the banking details. The no-cost extension had extended the project through to March 2024.

e. **Pacific Islands:** this group of projects, in particular, appeared to have struggled with delays in implementation for a variety of reasons, primarily COVID-19 and staffing or recruitment problems. Since many of the challenges faced by the projects seemed to be similar, the Secretariat was planning to arrange a workshop for the project focal points to allow them to engage with each other, share lessons learned and possibly identify areas in which they could work together or support one another. This would also be an opportunity for the Secretariat to do a deep dive into each project, in a more meaningful way than had been possible through online meetings.

### *Update on Communications*

35. The Secretariat presented an update on its activities relating to communications and knowledge management, noting that it would undertake an independent review of the Special Programme communications strategy in order to update it given the extension of duration. The Secretariat also planned to generate factsheets from the closed projects assessment to promote lessons learned.

### *Update on private sector engagement*

36. The Secretariat reminded the Executive Board that, following discussions at its seventh meeting, it had been tasked with arranging a private sector engagement workshop to explore private sector support to Special Programme projects. While this had originally been planned to take place in the margins of the fourth intersessional meeting of SAICM, owing to scheduling conflicts it had been postponed. Thereafter the Secretariat became aware of other relevant discussions on private sector engagement such as the workshop arranged by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) and UNITAR from 18-19 January 2023 on advancing global chemicals and waste management in chemical intensive economic sectors and value chains. This multi-stakeholder workshop in support of the intersessional process for the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (“Beyond 2020”) would feed into ongoing discussions at the resumed session of the intersessional process and eventually to ICCM5 in September 2023.
37. Bearing this in mind, the Executive Board decided that the Secretariat should wait to see the outcomes of those discussions, in order to build on them in the future and to prevent duplication of efforts in different forums. The plan to hold a private sector engagement workshop in 2023 was therefore put on hold.

### *Update on Knowledge Management*

38. The Secretariat briefly touched on its knowledge management activities, noting that the PowerBI tool on the Secretariat’s webpage would be further developed to capture the substantive outcomes of projects as reflected in the core indicators adopted by the Executive Board in October 2020. The Secretariat explained that the new phase of the PowerBI tool would build upon the previous phase and focus on monitoring the progress made by the projects in terms of results achieved. To demonstrate this, the Secretariat presented a new dashboard that would be used to showcase the results by core indicator criteria. The Secretariat explained that it was expected that progress data to be inserted in the PowerBI tool would become available with the next round of progress reports from the countries in December 2023.

### *Independent assessment of closed projects*

39. The Secretariat presented an overview of the independent assessment of closed projects that had been undertaken during 2022, the report of which had been made available as part of the meeting documents. The assessment covered 11 projects approved under the first and second rounds of funding and had been conducted by three independent consultants working together. Since these early projects had pre-dated the core indicators adopted by the Executive Board, it had been necessary to undertake a process of reverse engineering to see to what extent the projects contributed to the core indicators of the Special Programme at both country project and global programme levels.
40. The Secretariat presented the progress made by the 11 projects taking the lens of each of the eight core indicator criteria as set out in the report contained in document SP/EB.8/6. For five of the eight criteria, the assessment concluded that all projects where these criteria were applicable had made clear progress. For three for the eight criteria, the assessment determined that only one project had not made any progress. The report also highlighted the importance of mainstreaming gender across the projects and explained that despite not having gender mainstreamed in the project designs, significant efforts had been made by the projects to mainstream gender during the implementation. The report further focused on the level of sustainability of project results and noted that the results of six of the eleven projects were fully maintained and those of two of the eleven projects were mostly maintained. The report also contained a compendium of lessons learned that the Secretariat had already



included as reference material as part of the seventh-round documents. Finally, the report issued recommendations which the Secretariat would be taking onboard in its future work.

***Study to strengthen implementation of the sound management of chemicals and wastes and the Instruments through Special Programme support***

41. The Secretariat recalled the study that was being undertaken with resources provided by the government of Germany to elaborate a concept on further strengthening the implementation of the sound management of chemicals and waste and of the Instruments through the support provided by the Special Programme. The concept note for the study had been discussed internally with relevant UNEP offices as well as with the secretariats of the Instruments and the Secretariat was reviewing a proposal from two entities, the University of Cape Town and the Stockholm Environment Initiative, that were interested in jointly undertaking the study.

***Staffing***

42. The representative of the Secretariat provided a brief update on Secretariat staffing, noting that Ms Dina Abdelhakim had left the team in December 2022 to take up a new position elsewhere in UNEP. Her position had been advertised, as had the newly created G5 Finance and Budget Assistant post that the Board had approved in March 2022, and would be filled as quickly as possible.

***Executive Board nominations***

43. The Secretariat recalled that the term of the current Executive Board would end on 2 February 2024. In line with the amended Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat would work with UNEP's Governance Affairs Office to issue a call for nominations in August 2023. The representative of the Secretariat expressed her appreciation to the members of the Board for their strong interest and engagement in the work of the Special Programme.
44. The Executive Board took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the update on operations.

**6.2 Proposed revised Special Programme budget for 2023 and Q1 of 2024**

45. The co-chairs invited the Secretariat to make a brief presentation on the topic. The representative of the Secretariat began by providing an update on the status of contributions to the Special Programme Trust Fund. She recalled that the meeting document SP/EB.8/5 had contained an interim expenditure report as at 31 December 2022. A final expenditure report would be provided as an annex to the report of the meeting (see Annex IV).
46. The representative of the Secretariat introduced the proposed budget for 2023 and the first quarter of 2024, which amounted to a total of US\$ 5,006,000, and highlighted the main components for the Board's attention. These included the newly approved projects under the sixth round of funding, the costs of the study funded by Germany, provision for consultant support on resource mobilisation, provision for workshops with project focal points, a webinar on fraud prevention and costs relating to the review and update of the communications strategy. Responding to a question from a Board member, she confirmed that the surplus of available funds that were not committed under the sixth round of funding would remain in the Trust Fund for future allocations.
47. The Executive Board approved the proposed budget as presented, as set out in Annex V.

**ITEM 7. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NINTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

48. To facilitate the Executive Board's deliberations under this agenda item, the Secretariat gave a brief presentation outlining the tentative agenda items that the Board might wish to consider at the ninth meeting of the Executive Board. The Secretariat noted that, in the absence of any offers to host the meeting, by default the meeting would take place in Geneva, Switzerland. In response to a question from a Board member, the Secretariat confirmed that the next meeting would be attended by the newly constituted Executive Board, following the nominations

process that would be launched in August 2023, with the support of UNEP's Governance Affairs Office, under the amended Rules of Procedure.

49. The Board agreed to the proposed tentative agenda items provided by the Secretariat and noted that the Secretariat would liaise with the co-chairs on the exact timing and arrangements for the ninth meeting, to be organized in around March 2023.

#### **ITEM 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

50. One member of the Board raised the matter of possible fraud and corruption, noting that it was a matter of growing concern domestically. She proposed that the Executive Board explore mechanisms to identify and deal with possible fraud and corruption in the context of the Special Programme such as conducting spot checks or audits of projects.
51. The Secretariat noted that the budget that had just been approved by the Executive Board for 2023 and the first quarter of 2024 included provision for a webinar on fraud and corruption for project focal points, and that the Secretariat would liaise with UNEP's corporate Legal and Finance offices to assist in providing this training.
52. The Executive Board decided to request the Secretariat to provide a document for the ninth meeting that would include some proposals for mechanisms to manage the risk of fraud and corruption in Special Programme projects, such as spot checks and audits.

#### **ITEM 9. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

53. Noting that the Secretariat would, as per its usual practice, circulate a draft meeting report for review by the members of the Executive Board, the co-chair thanked the members of the Executive Board, the observers and the Secretariat for their contributions and hard work over the past few days.
54. An observer at the meeting took the floor to thank the Executive Board for their willingness to accommodate the concerns that had been expressed during these discussions, noting that the Special Programme provided valuable support to implementation of the instruments which it was set up to support.
55. The meeting was closed at 1pm on Friday 17 February 2023.
56. [In line with established practice, a draft report was circulated online among the members of the Executive Board for their comments. The Secretariat made the necessary amendments in order to finalize the present report].

**ANNEX I  
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

| <b>EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS – RECIPIENT COUNTRIES</b>   |   |
|--|---|
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## ANNEX II

## LIST OF ELIGIBLE AND COMPLETE APPLICATIONS UNDER THE SIXTH ROUND OF FUNDING CONSIDERED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

## Africa

|   | Country | Country Status          | Project Title   |
|---|---------|-------------------------|---|
| 1 | Gambia  | Least Developed Country | Capacity strengthening and technical assistance for environmentally sound management of chemicals and wastes in the Gambia.   |
| 2 | Guinea  | Least Developed Country | Institutional capacity building for the improvement and implementation of the synergy between the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm, Minamata conventions and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) in the Republic of Guinea. |
| 3 | Kenya   | Developing Country      | Sound Chemicals and Waste Management Kenya (Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste)  |
| 4 | Lesotho | Least Developed Country | Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Coordination of Chemicals and Waste Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements and Mainstreaming Gender in their Implementation in Lesotho.  |
| 5 | Liberia | Least Developed Country | Enhancing national capacities, reporting and synergies between Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions and SAICM for the sound management of chemicals and waste in Liberia.   |
| 6 | Mali    | Least Developed Country | Strengthening Mali's National capacity to implement the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions including SAICM.   |
| 7 | Rwanda  | Developing Country      | Strengthening institutional capacity to reduce environmental and health risks from lead exposures and contamination in Rwanda.  |
| 8 | Togo    | Developing Country      | Setting up a cost recovery mechanism to support the establishment of a sustainable legal and institutional framework for the sound management of chemicals with a special focus on the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention.                      |

## Asia Pacific

|   | Country   | Country Status     | Project Title   |
|---|-----------|--------------------|---|
| 1 | Maldives  | Developing Country | Institutional strengthening and capacity building for the sound management of chemicals and wastes in the Maldives.   |
| 2 | Sri Lanka | Developing Country | Institutional Strengthening for proper management of chemicals and their waste.   |
| 3 | Viet Nam  | Developing Country | Strengthening national capacity for Mining Waste management toward the Circular Economy in Viet Nam. Establishment of the model of mining circular economy for a coal mine enterprise in Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam. |

### Central and Eastern Europe

|   | Country | Country Status                     | Project Title   |
|---|---------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Georgia | Country with economy in transition | Establish of a Poison Control Center (PCC) as an essential infrastructural element of sound chemicals management system and prevention of chemicals exposure and management of poisonings in Georgia. |

### Latin American and the Caribbean

|   | Country  | Country status     | Project Title   |
|---|----------|--------------------|---|
| 1 | Ecuador  | Developing Country | Improvement and sustainability for the management of hazardous and special waste and chemical products for industrial use in Ecuador. |
| 2 | Paraguay | Developing Country | Improve the Phytosanitary Products Registration System - SENAVE - Paraguay.   |

**ANNEX III****CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE PROPOSED ORGANISATION OF WORK AND  
TIMELINES FOR THE LAUNCH AND APPRAISAL OF THE SEVENTH ROUND OF  
APPLICATIONS**

| <b>Activity</b>  | <b>Timeframe</b>            |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Launch of the call for applications for funding                            | 6 April 2023                |
| Application Deadline   | 11 August 2023              |
| Acknowledgement of receipt and information on eligibility and completeness | 18 August 2023              |
| First Meeting of the Internal Task Team                                    | 18-19 September 2023        |
| Comment/suggestions for improvement sent                                   | 3 October 2023              |
| Deadline for the resubmission of final applications                        | 3 November                  |
| Second Meeting of the internal Task Team                                   | 21-22 November 2023         |
| Documents submitted to the Executive Board                                 | One month before EB meeting |
| Ninth Meeting of the Executive Board                                       | March 2024                  |
| Decisions on applications are communicated to countries                    | March 2024                  |

ANNEX IV

INTERIM FINANCIAL EXPENDITURES STATEMENT: 01-JAN-2017 to 31-DEC-2022 (USD)

|  | 2017             | 2018             | 2019             | 2020             | 2021             | 2022             | Grand Total       |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Contractual Services                     | 1,412            | 21,236           | 38,469           | 65,559           | 34,589           | 23,395           | 184,660           |
| Equipment, Vehicles and Furniture        |                  |                  | 7,869            | 31               | 570              |                  | 8,470             |
| IP-PSC                                   |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  | 2,898            | 2,898             |
| General Operating and Other Direct Costs | 4,885            | 165,743          | 70,385           | 16,263           | 345,631          | 109,273          | 712,180           |
| Staff and other personnel cost           | 418,501          | 618,495          | 1,040,062        | 605,410          | 1,175,904        | 1,175,666        | 5,034,037         |
| Transfer/Grant to Implementing Partners  | 1,457,914        | 2,795,864        | 1,872,089        | 3,460,593        | 485,150          | 3,965,307        | 14,036,917        |
| Travel                                   | 50,269           | 26,769           | 81,606           | - 5,844          |                  | 1,432            | 154,232           |
| UN-PSC (Indirect Support Costs)          | 140,675          | 143,147          | 408,384          | 461,863          | 185,367          | 445,225          | 1,784,660         |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                       | <b>2,073,656</b> | <b>3,771,254</b> | <b>3,518,864</b> | <b>4,603,875</b> | <b>2,227,212</b> | <b>5,723,195</b> | <b>21,918,055</b> |



ANNEX V

APPROVED BUDGET FOR 2023 AND FIRST QUARTER OF 2024

|  | Personnel Costs  | Contractual Services | Travel         | IP-Direct        | Op Costs       | TOTAL            | 2024 - Q1      | TOTAL REVISED BUDGET |
|--|------------------|----------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| <b>Output 1: Management of the Special Programme</b> | 20,000           | 40,000               | 125,000        | 0                | 120,000        | 305,000          | 76,250         | 381,250              |
| <b>Output 2: Technical assistance</b>                | 55,000           | 60,000               | 0              | 2,317,875        | 0              | 2,432,875        | 0              | 2,432,875            |
| <b>Output 3: Communications</b>                      | 0                | 150,000              |                | 0                | 0              | 150,000          | 37,500         | 187,500              |
| <b>Output 4: Monitoring</b>                          | 80,000           | 60,000               | 60,000         | 0                | 0              | 200,000          | 50,000         | 250,000              |
| <b>Evaluation</b>                                    | 0                | 0                    | 0              | 0                | 0              | 0                | 0              | 0                    |
| <b>Staff costs</b>                                   | 1,403,500        | 0                    | 0              | 0                | 0              | 1,403,500        | 350,875        | 1,754,375            |
| <b>TOTAL (NET)</b>                                   | <b>1,558,500</b> | <b>310,000</b>       | <b>185,000</b> | <b>2,317,875</b> | <b>120,000</b> | <b>4,491,375</b> | <b>514,625</b> | <b>5,006,000</b>     |