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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**  
Second session  
Dead Sea, 11 – 15 December 2023\*

## **Draft scenario note for the second 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**

1. At its resumed fifth session, held in Nairobi and online from 28 February to 2 March 2022, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 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 (hereinafter referred to as the “science-policy panel”), 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 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 secretariat, considering the decisions taken at the first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group (Nairobi and online, 6 October 2022 and Bangkok, 30 January – 3 February 2023) and in consultation with the Bureau members elected at those meetings. It sets out proposed plans and general expectations for the second session of the ad hoc open-ended working group on a science-policy panel in order to assist participants in their preparations.

### **I. Organization of work**

4. The first part of the first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group (OEWG-1.1) was held in Nairobi on 6 October 2022 and the resumed first session (OEWG-1.2) was held in person at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, from 30 January to 3 February 2023. The reports of the meetings are available in documents UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/3 and UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/11. The second session will be held from Monday to Friday, 11 - 15 December 2023 at the King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Centre in Dead Sea.<sup>1</sup>
5. Facilities will be made available for informal consultations, technical briefings, regional and other groups preparatory meetings on Saturday 9 December and Sunday 10 December 2023 at the

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<sup>1</sup> Practical information for participants may be found in the logistics note available on the webpage of the meeting at [www.unep.org/events/conference/oewg2-science-policy-panel-contribute-further-sound-management-chemicals-and](http://www.unep.org/events/conference/oewg2-science-policy-panel-contribute-further-sound-management-chemicals-and). [pending weblink]

same venue, prior to the formal opening of the meeting. A tentative schedule with further details is available in Annex I of this present note.

6. The second session will be held as an in-person meeting and will be conducted in the six official UN languages. The plenary meetings will also be live streamed online. The exceptional in-person nature of this session is to accommodate the need to finalize the election of the remaining members of the Bureau of the ad hoc open-ended working group, potentially to be conducted through a secret ballot. Future meetings of the OEWG may be held in hybrid format, subject to the availability of funding.

7. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of Environment Assembly resolution 5/8, the Executive Director extended invitations to attend the session to representatives of Governments and regional economic integration organizations. Invitations to attend the session as observers were also extended to representatives of United Nations entities, relevant multilateral environmental agreements, other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies, including those that are members of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC). Major Groups and Stakeholders' organizations accredited to the Environment Assembly, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), as well as to stakeholders admitted as observers to the meetings of relevant chemicals and waste-related multilateral environmental agreements, and focal points representing non-governmental organizations under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) were also invited to attend as observers.

## II. Election of officers

8. At OEWG-1.1 and OEWG-1.2, the ad hoc open-ended working group elected the following officers, in accordance with rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure of UNEA.

Chair: Ms. Gudi Alkemade (Netherlands)<sup>2</sup>

Vice-Chairs: Mr. Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda)

Mr. Jinhui Li (China)<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Oumar Diaouré Cisse (Mali)

Ms. Saqlain Syedah (Pakistan)

Mr. Michel Tschirren (Switzerland)

Ms. Valentina Sierra (Uruguay)

Rapporteur: Mr. Cyrus Mageria (Kenya)

9. The ad hoc open-ended working group will therefore be invited to consider the election of the remaining officers, possibly through a secret ballot. The ad hoc open-ended working group will be invited to ensure adequate regional representation in the composition of the Bureau, while taking into account the need to ensure gender balance.

## III. Proposed objective and in-session work at the second session

10. The aim of the second session is to continue the work of developing the proposals for the establishment of the science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, as called for under UNEA resolution 5/8. In light of the discussions at the OEWG-1.1 and OEWG-1.2 and following guidance received from the Bureau of the ad hoc open-ended working group, it is proposed that discussions commence on the proposals related to scope and objective, functions and operating principles of the panel; institutional arrangements and rules of procedure for sessions of the plenary; relationship with relevant key stakeholders; and work-related processes and procedures.

11. To facilitate the discussions, the secretariat has prepared working and information documents, which the ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to use as a basis for its deliberations.

### Skeleton outline of a science policy panel

<sup>2</sup> The Chair was elected at the resumed first session in accordance with rules 56 and 57 of the rules of procedure of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

<sup>3</sup> One of the Bureau members, Qadoori Jabir (Iraq), resigned and was replaced by Jinhui Li (China), who was elected by means of a silence procedure, in accordance with rule 19 of the rules of procedure of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

12. The Secretariat has prepared for the consideration of the ad hoc open-ended working group document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/2, which provides a skeleton outline of a main document with proposals to be developed by the ad hoc open-ended working group for consideration at the intergovernmental meeting. The skeleton outline takes into account the elements laid out in resolution 5/8, for the establishment of science-policy panel, and meeting outcomes from the OEWG-1.1 and OEWG-1.2 of the ad hoc open-ended working group. In the current skeleton outline, scope and function of the panel, operating principles of the panel, and institutional arrangements for the panel, are proposed to be included in the main document. The rules of procedure, financial procedures and work-related processes and policies are proposed to be included in the annexes, which may allow flexibility for future updating of these rules, procedures, processes and policies when needs arise. The skeleton outline can be filled with relevant sections as agreed text is developed by the ad hoc open-ended working group.

13. The ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to agree on which parts of the proposed skeleton need to be finalized by the ad hoc open-ended working group for establishing the science-policy panel at the intergovernmental meeting, and which part(s) may be finalized by the science-policy panel itself, once established.

#### **Scope and objective, functions, and operating principles of a science policy panel**

14. With respect to the scope and objective, functions, and operating principles of the panel, the Secretariat has prepared for the consideration of the open-ended working group document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/3. This document includes a recap of outcomes on scope and objective, and functions from OEWG1.2 and specifies how these elements will fit into UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/2, the skeleton outline. The document is accompanied by UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF2, which serves as an executive summary and background document on operating principles adapted from what was prepared for the April 2023 webinar and received from member states and stakeholders through written submissions. In addition, this document will be supported by an information document, UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF3, which builds on member states and stakeholders' written submissions, presenting the mapping of capacity-building activities on chemical, waste and pollution prevention related to the science-policy interface across Conventions and UN agencies.

15. The open-ended working group may wish to agree on the draft document proposed by the Secretariat on scope and objective, and functions, and the framework on operating principles of the panel. In doing so, it may wish to consider document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/3, including the way forward suggested therein. The open-ended working group may also wish to consider the range of issues in the "parking lot" (ref: UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/7, para 80), which are to be considered further when developing other elements of the panel.

#### **Institutional arrangements and rules of procedure of the panel**

16. With respect to the institutional arrangements and rules of procedure of the panel, the Secretariat has prepared for the consideration of the open-ended working group document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/4. This document includes two main parts, one on institutional arrangement, the other on the rules of procedure for the panel. The first part discusses existing models and implications of institutional design choices. It begins with a general introduction of institutional arrangements, followed by a detailed discussion of the structures, membership, terms of reference (including administrative and scientific/technical functions), and work arrangements. The current document is to be read in conjunction with UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF4, a background document which reviews and discusses in detail the institutional arrangements of existing science policy interfaces. It is built upon UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/INF5, an information document prepared for the OEWG-1.1 and OEWG-1.2 of the OEWG, which provided a comparative analysis of existing scientific assessment structures.

17. The second part explains the typical rules of procedures employed to reflect the agreed institutional arrangements. The information document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/INF7 has provided an overview of existing rules and procedures of selected science-policy bodies.

18. The open-ended working group may wish to consider the draft document prepared by the Secretariat on institutional arrangements of the panel. In doing so, it may wish to consider document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/4, including the way forward suggested therein and, in particular, to:

- (a) Agree on which elements of the institutional arrangements should be in the main document;
- (b) Discuss the financial arrangements to ensure a functioning panel;

- (c) Provide guidance on possible intersessional work and documents that could be prepared ahead of its third session;
- (d) Undertake a preliminary consideration and development of rules of procedure for the panel, in light of its discussions on the institutional arrangement of the panel. While the ad hoc open-ended working group may only consider these points in greater detail at its future session, such initial consideration would facilitate the development of options of an outline of the rules of procedures, if such work were to be agreed on.

#### **Relationship with relevant key stakeholders**

19. With respect to the relationship of the panel with relevant key stakeholders, the Secretariat has prepared for the consideration of the open-ended working group document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/5. It has three main parts, namely, (i) the potential roles of various stakeholders in the operationalization of the panel; (ii) stakeholder engagement approaches of existing panels; and (iii) analysis of key factors that OEWG may wish to consider, in particular, the findings from the effectiveness evaluation of existing panels and review of scientific literature. This document serves as a background document on relationships with key stakeholders and approaches and is to be read in conjunction with UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/5 which discusses in detail the relationships with key stakeholders of existing panels.

20. The open-ended working group may wish to consider the draft document prepared by the Secretariat on the relationship with relevant key stakeholders of the panel. In doing so, it may wish to consider document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/5, including the way forward suggested therein and, in particular, to:

- (a) Agree on potential roles of stakeholders, and for which types of activities/roles, informal interactions would be sufficient, and for which others, formal relationships should be established;
- (b) Include indigenous knowledge by taking advantage of existing guidelines on engaging indigenous peoples and indigenous knowledge in environmental assessments;
- (c) Provide guidance on possible intersessional work and documents that could be prepared ahead of its third session.

#### **Work-Related Processes and Procedures**

21. With respect to the work-related processes and procedures of the panel, the Secretariat has prepared for the consideration of the open-ended working group document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/6. This document has four main parts, namely: (i) process for determining and executing the work programme of the panel, including a prioritization framework; (ii) arrangements for identifying and engaging with experts to contribute to the work of the panel; (iii) procedures for the review and adoption of reports and assessments produced by the panel, and; (iv) conflict of interest. This document is to be read in conjunction with the following information documents, UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/6 to UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/9.

22. The open-ended working group may wish to consider the draft document prepared by the Secretariat on the relationship with relevant key stakeholders of the panel. In doing so, it may wish to consider the aforementioned document, including the way forward suggested therein and, in particular, to:

- (a) Discuss the process for determining and executing the work programme, including a prioritization framework;
- (b) Discuss the criteria for the nomination and selection of the experts;
- (c) Discuss the review processes for products/assessment produced by the panel;
- (d) Discuss the options for development of procedures for addressing potential conflicts of interest;
- (e) Provide guidance on possible intersessional work and documents that could be prepared ahead of its third session.

#### **Options for the timetable and organization of work of the ad hoc open-ended working group**

23. The ad hoc open-ended working group may also wish to consider the budgetary considerations and provisional timetable and programme of work presented in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/7.

24. In particular, it may wish to consider the overall approach to the negotiations process with respect to sequencing and proposed clustering of issues for the discussions at its subsequent sessions, the provisional timetable and programme of work proposed for the establishment of the science policy panel, as well as any supporting information to be provided and intersessional work to be undertaken.

25. The ad hoc open-ended working group may also wish to consider the funding and resource requirements needed to facilitate the fulfilment of its mandate. In doing so, it may wish to consider the current budget situation and status of extra-budgetary contributions provided by Member States to-date, which are complemented by an allocation from the UNEP Environment Fund.

#### **Organization of work at the second session**

26. Depending on the progress in plenary, the open-ended working group may wish to consider the establishment of contact groups to consider the issues of operating principles and institutional arrangements, relationship with relevant key stakeholders, as well as other work-related processes and procedures of the panel. It may also wish to consider establishing a contact group to discuss in greater detail the options for the timetable, budget and sequencing of its work. Should there be need for additional contact groups or smaller groups, these may be established on a “as needed” basis. **[Following the Bureau meeting, further details on the possible contact groups may be included here].**

27. Given the anticipated limited time and size of delegations, the ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to limit the number of contact groups that meet simultaneously up to a maximum of two and that any established group be provided with clear and concise mandate.

### **IV. Possible outcomes of the second session of the ad hoc open-ended working group**

28. In the lead-up to the second 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 remaining officers and established its full Bureau;
- (b) Finalized discussions on the development of a proposal for the principal functions of the panel, and recommended any further activities to be undertaken during the intersessional period;
- (c) Finalized discussions on the proposal for the operating principles of the panel, and recommended any further activities to be undertaken during the intersessional period;
- (d) Agreed on the development of a proposal for the institutional arrangements, as well as rules of procedures and processes for the panel, and recommended any further activities to be undertaken during the intersessional period;
- (e) Held some initial considerations on work-related processes and procedures of the panel, including with regard to the landscape of existing science-policy interfaces, and recommended any further work to be undertaken, including with respect to additional information that may be needed or options to be developed by the Secretariat;
- (f) Agreed to the sequencing and clustering of issues for the conduct of its work and its completion by 2024, including considerations of the resources required to do so and the need for any intersessional work from the Secretariat to prepare for its consideration of the other proposals it is to develop;
- (g) Finalized the date, venue and the provisional agenda of the subsequent third session;
- (h) Confirmed any additional intersessional work to be carried out, subject to the availability of funds, during the period leading up to its third session, including with respect to any calls for information from Member States and relevant stakeholders and possible convening of regional meetings and/or stakeholder consultations, as far as possible back to back with other relevant meetings and processes.

Annex I: Tentative schedule for the second session based on the OEWG 2 provisional agenda as set out in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/1

	Saturday & Sunday 9 & 10 December 2023	Monday 11 December 2023	Tuesday 12 December 2023	Wednesday 13 December 2023	Thursday 14 December 2023	Friday 15 December 2023
8.00 – 9.00 am	Regional and other Groups meetings	OEWG Bureau meeting	OEWG Bureau meeting	OEWG Bureau meeting	OEWG Bureau meeting	OEWG Bureau meeting
9.00 - 10.00 am		Regional and other Groups meetings	Regional and other Groups meetings	Regional and other Groups meetings	Regional and other Groups meetings	Regional and other Groups meetings
10.00 am - 1.00 pm		Agenda Item 1 Agenda Item 2 Agenda Item 3	Agenda Item 5 <i>continued</i>	Agenda Item 6 <i>continued</i>	Agenda Item 6 <i>continued</i>	Agenda Item 7
1.00 pm - 3.00 pm	Lunch break	Lunch break	Lunch break	Lunch break	Lunch break	Lunch break
3.00 pm - 6.00 pm	Regional and other Groups meetings  OEWG Bureau meeting	Agenda Item 4 Agenda Item 5 Agenda Item 6	Agenda Item 6 <i>continued</i>	Agenda Item 6 <i>continued</i>	Agenda Item 6 <i>continued</i>	Agenda Item 8 Agenda Item 9
6:30 pm - onwards		<i>Reception (if any, to be confirmed)</i>				