

Meeting of the Bureau 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
Tuesday, 8 August 2023
15:00 – 18:00 (EAT; GMT + 3)
Online meeting

Draft Bureau Meeting Summary

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. Mrs. Gudi Alkemade, Chair of the OEWG, opened the meeting, and welcomed all participants.
2. Bureau members congratulated Mrs. Tessa Goverse on her appointment as head of the SPP OEWG Secretariat and welcomed her to the Bureau meeting.
3. The meeting agenda was adopted without any changes.

Agenda item 2: Summary of the Bureau meeting on 26 June 2023.

4. The meeting summary from the previous Bureau meeting was adopted. Following up on the meeting summary, the Secretariat following up on a request by the EU and its 27 MS, related to the presentation of submissions on operating principles on the webportal, committed to ensure that submissions made by the EU and its 27 MS will be reflected as such, including reference to the EU and its 27 MS in any compilation or summary document of submissions.

Agenda item 3: Organization of intersessional work leading up to OEWG 2.

5. The Chair invited the Secretariat to introduce agenda items on the roadmap/timeline for the intersessional work towards the preparations of the OEWG2 working documents, the document on ‘must have’ vs ‘nice to have’ elements of proposals for the OEWG to finalize, the draft scenario note and annotated agenda for OEWG2.
6. The Secretariat provided a presentation on the intersessional process, clarifying that:
 - webinars are being planned on conflict of interest, institutional arrangements and capacity building.
 - side events are being planned in the margins of the ICCM5, the Minamata CoP organized by the Geneva Environment Network.
 - Written submissions will be requested from Member States and stakeholders on ‘the needs and questions the panel may handle’, and from UN agencies on capacity building activities related to the sound management of chemicals and waste and pollution prevention.
 - Regional consultations are planned in September/October 2023. Following the deadline for registration for the Asia and the Pacific and Africa regional meetings the Secretariat reported that 56 participants had registered for the Asia Pacific regional meeting and 71 for the Africa regional meeting. More information can be found at the [regional meeting website](#).
 - On the status of the working documents, the Secretariat reported that the deadline for submitting the working document for editing and translation is 28 August 2023.
7. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to provide clarification on the following:
 - the nature of the intergovernmental meeting following the OEWG process; and
 - whether there will be a side event at INC 3 and Minamata COP?
8. The Secretariat clarified that Resolution 5/8 calls for an intergovernmental meeting for the establishment of the Science-Policy Panel upon the completion of the preparation of proposals. It is expected that the proposals developed during the OEWG process will be presented to an intergovernmental meeting in line with resolution 5/8, for which the date and venue has not been decided. The Secretariat further confirmed that they have been invited to INC 3 and are exploring organizing side events at INC-3, ICCM 5 and Minamata COP.

9. The Secretariat was requested to provide a more detailed overview of the roadmap setting out the timelines of the intersessional work and the preparation of documents to be uploaded under post meeting documents of the bureau meeting webpage.

10. The Secretariat introduced the document on '[must haves and nice to haves](#)' for proposals to be developed by the OEWG.

11. The Bureau provided the following comments on the “must haves and nice to have” items:

- Bureau members welcomed the proposal by the secretariat as a useful basis for discussion and expressed general agreement with the categorization of the elements.
- Regarding the list of nice to have elements, there was a request to include gender considerations throughout the documents currently under preparation and not only in a possible proposal on gender policy.
- Some Bureau members indicated that the proposal would merit further discussion by the regions and requested it to be included in the agenda for the regional consultations.
- Suggested to change the terminology of must have and nice to have and noted that the elements in the two categories have not been agreed to by the OEWG (and may rather link to the level of detail for the OEWG to finalize discussions on those elements related to what can be left for the panel to agree).
- Highlighted the need to identify if certain sub-elements within an element (e.g., process for determining and executing the work programme) can or must be finalized by the end of the OEWG process.
- Asked for clarification on whether Member States and stakeholders will be invited to provide written submissions on capacity building?
- The Bureau members requested the secretariat to further develop the document in more detail, taking into account the timeline on what to be done in OEWG 2 and what in OEWG 3, for example for Rules of Procedures.
- One member furthermore requested that in planning for OEWG 2, the Secretariat should ensure that adequate time is allocated to elements that have not been previously discussed.

12. The Secretariat clarified that it shall revise the document to include a timeline and clarify sub-elements. The Secretariat will also seek to find more appropriate terms and language given the feedback provided by the Bureau. It further pointed to the scenario note for further discussion on the timing of the elements and confirmed that a request for written submissions on capacity building will be sent out to UN agencies, along with the request on “the needs and questions the panel may handle” to Member States and stakeholders, and these will be included in the revised timeline.

13. The Secretariat presented the [annotated agenda for OEWG 2](#) and asked for guidance from the Bureau on the annotated agenda.

14. The Bureau provided the following overarching comments on the annotated agenda:

- Noted general support for the annotated agenda.
- Recalled the election of officers at the last meeting and requested that the Secretariat prepare for the election of the remaining Bureau members in a similar manner, including organizing a briefing on the procedures of the election prior to the planned election.

15. The Secretariat further clarified that they will be prepared to conduct an election if needed and confirmed that a briefing will be provided the day before the election.

16. The Bureau members further agreed that the secretariat finalize the draft annotated agenda for it to be send for editing, taking into account the comments made by the Bureau, including on how to refer more in general to issues that were place in the ‘parking lot’, since they may be related to several documents.

17. The Secretariat finally presented the [draft scenario note](#), highlighting the four main sections including the organization of work, election of officers, proposed objective and in-session work, and possible outcomes for OEWG 2.

18. The Bureau provided the following comments on the draft scenario note:

- Asked for clarification on the anticipated number of contact groups, noting that a maximum of two contact groups should be held at the same time;

- Suggested being more specific on the outcome of the discussion on the skeleton outline document;
- Asked for clarification on how the items in the “parking lot” will be discussed;
- Clarify language related to the organization of work of the second session versus organization of work for the working group (and the planning of its third session);
- Consider establishment of a legal group;
- Ensure that working documents are made available in a timely manner, and the documents should be concise and include text suggestions as a basis for discussion, in order to reduce the workload at the meeting;
- Ensure that working documents are aligned with UNEA Resolution 5/8;
- Adequate attention is placed on indigenous knowledge;
- Ensure more precise text, in particular in paragraphs 10, 11, 12, 21 and 26 regarding not just topics that must be discussed, but also the outcome, prioritization of topics, and the proposed timetable for the week, and for paragraph 10 language should reflect that the discussions will resume from OEWG 1.2;
- Ensure sufficient time is allocated to issues that have not been addressed in the first session, while doing justice to the importance of continuing discussions on capacity building.
- It would be helpful if the discussion on capacity building could be framed, as an additional mandate during the intersessional period called for in the meeting report of OEWG 1.2.
- Confirmed that the Plenary sessions can be streamed online, however the contact groups should not be streamed online;
- Requested confirmation of the timeline for when documents will be made available, including if there will be an earlier date for English advance versions

19. It was further agreed that the Bureau members can provide comments on the draft scenario note in writing no later than Friday, 18 August 2023, and that the revised Scenario Note will be discussed at the next bureau meeting.

20. The Secretariat thanked the Bureau for their feedback and confirmed that there will not be more than two contact groups at the same time but noted the potential need for specific smaller groups (such as a legal group). They confirmed that live streaming will only be available for sessions of the Plenary. The Secretariat also took note of the need for concise documents that can facilitate the negotiation of text, and the request to be more precise on certain paragraphs in the scenario note, and the need to start discussions on those topics that have not previously been discussed at OEWG 1.1, 1.2.

21. The Secretariat confirmed that the first mention of organization of work refers to the overall week and preceding meetings, wherein the second mention in 3.7 is more specific. The language will be updated to be clearer.

22. Finally, the Secretariat confirmed that the documents in all UN languages will be uploaded no later than 30 October 2023, six weeks in advance of the meeting, but that advance English versions will be available approximately four weeks prior to this. Unedited advance English versions will also be posted on the regional consultation webpages.

23. The Bureau noted that it is important to make best use of time at OEWG 2. There may be more than two contact groups established to facilitate the need for providing mandates to the contact groups, however no more than two can be scheduled at the same time. The Bureau requested that the language on how to establish contact groups could be clarified, in line with the as it relates for what must be done at OEWG 2.

Agenda item 4: Indicative budget for 2023.

24. The Secretariat presented the [revised indicative 2023 – 2024 budget](#), which reflects the addition of in-person regional meetings. They noted that the final figure for the meeting venue has not been finalized by UNDP Jordan, who are currently undergoing their procurement processes. The Secretariat highlighted that further resource mobilization will be necessary towards the next session of OEWG while clarifying that the document includes changes compared to the previous document based on the actual costs for secretariat staff, as well as a potential hybrid format for the third session.

25. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for the update provided and made the following comments:

- Noted their expectation of a working document for OEWG 2 regarding current costs, expenditures and other relevant information;

- Asked whether there are any expenses that are not accounted for in the current budget document, or more in depth information regarding staff, consultants and travel.

26. The Bureau noted that the Secretariat can use the figures presented for the indicative 2023 budget, and that it would be useful to have a discussion on the full overview of the budget and expenditures, for the whole process which examines the budget and expenditures. They further requested that the budget document made available for the next bureau meeting is inclusive of the whole process, including cost and expenditure of the different activities in the budget. The Secretariat was further requested based on the document to prepare a comprehensive document for the OEWG 2 that provides an overview of the overall budget and expenditures from the start of the OEWG process. The Bureau also agreed that resource mobilization will be discussed in the next bureau meeting.

Agenda item 5: Engagement of stakeholders in the OEWG meetings and process.

27. The Secretariat was invited to provide an update on stakeholder engagement, in particular to focus on its engagement with WHO.

28. The Secretariat provided an update on their engagement with WHO, including the invitation to WHO to provide feedback that may be helpful to the process, as well as inviting feedback on aspects of the working documents.

29. The Bureau thanked the Secretariat for their update and provided the following feedback:

- Noted the difference between technical and official involvement of WHO;
- Also noted the importance of engaging with other major groups such as those with indigenous knowledge and academia;
- Asked for clarification on how the Secretariat is engaging with other stakeholders.

30. The Secretariat confirmed the importance of engagement with WHO, and noted the ongoing efforts to engage with wider groups of stakeholders and noted that working documents also examine the inclusion of academia and the importance of indigenous and local knowledge. The Secretariat also confirmed that beyond the peer review process for the working documents, they are also seeking engagement of other stakeholders via written submission and webinars.

31. The Bureau expressed general agreement with this approach and in particular the engagement with academia, and possible return to the point of indigenous knowledge at a later date.

32. The Bureau proposed that the discussion on this agenda item is continued at the next Bureau meeting.

Agenda item 6: Organization of work.

33. The Chair requested the Secretariat to make a proposal for when the next bureau meeting should be held.

34. Following the discussion, it was agreed that the next Bureau meetings will be held as follows:

- 3 October 2023 from 16:00 – 18:00 EAT, online
- 14 November 2023, in person (margins of INC 3)
- 10 December 2023, in person (prior to OEWG 2)

Agenda item 7: Other Matters

35. The Chair requested the Secretariat to reflect the written submission from the EU as being from the EU and its Member States, and the Secretariat confirmed that this change will be made for the written submission on operating principles and for any subsequent submissions received.

36.

37. The Secretariat confirmed that they will ensure that this language is used for their submission and future references to the EU and its Member States.

38. The Bureau noted specific calls for engagement with SAICM, and INC processes. They also asked for clarification on logistics of hotel rooms for OEWG 2.

39. The Secretariat confirmed that further information will be provided as soon as it is available and following a scoping mission to the venue.

Agenda item 8: Closing of the meeting.

40. The Chair closed the meeting at 17:45 (EAT).