

Sixth 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, 25 April 2023 16:00 – 18:00 (EAT; GMT + 3)

Online meeting

Agenda item 3 c) Organization of work for OEWG-2

Discussion paper from the Chair: Organization of work of the ad hoc open-ended working group

1. Introduction

The Bureau in its meeting held on 27 February 2023 reflected on the outcome and proceedings of OEWG-1, with a view to identifying lessons learned to be taken into account in preparation of OEWG-2 and OEWG-3. Among the key points raised, the need for effective organization of work in preparation for OEWG-2 was underlined, including the establishment of two parallel contact groups with a clear mandate and agreed working methodology and specific guidance for submitting Conference Room Papers, taking into account practices applied in Multilateral Environmental Agreements, as well as early identification of trained co-facilitators.

The Bureau agreed to defer the issue of organization of work for OEWG-2, including on modalities for contact groups following the offer of the Secretariat to develop a background document providing an overview of negotiations approaches for contact groups under MEAs and other fora. This document was made available on the website for the Bureau on 13 April 2023.

Following the lessons from OEWG1.2, the information in the background document, and given the mandate of the OEWG to develop proposals to establish a panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and the prevention of pollution, the Bureau may wish to consider the modalities as outlined below.

2. Organization of work for the AHOEWG

The Bureau may wish to consider that the most likely modalities to facilitate negotiations towards the outcomes of the OEWG will be through:

- **Plenary:** to agree any outcomes, processes or arrangements of the negotiations process and finally agrees on a recommendation by the AHOEWG for a proposal for a draft decision on the establishment of the panel to be adopted at an intergovernmental conference. Plenary agreements will be reflected in the OEWG report.
- **Contact groups:** that will be mandated to work towards outcomes that will form the basis for the elements of the proposal for the draft decision on the establishment of the panel. Outcomes of the contact groups, often in the form of CRPs, will be introduced at the plenary for adoption.
- **Informal consultations:** can be organized with a view to facilitate open and informal exchange of views and can help find a commonly acceptable solution or produce draft text. Informal consultations can be mandated by the Bureau, eg during the intersessional period, Chair of the OEWG, in the plenary, or by the co-facilitators of the contact groups. Outcomes of informal consultations will be reported back to plenary or the contact group for further consideration.
- **Other formats:** For example, Friends of the Chairs/Facilitators could be established, pending the dynamics in the discussions.

Modalities for the contact groups:

- Contact groups should be provided with a clear mandate to deliver an outcome, in the form of a CRP to be introduced to the plenary by the co-facilitators, or alternatively to be captured.
- Contact groups will be co-facilitated by 2 co-facilitators, representing different regional groups, taking into account the balance between developed and developing countries, as appropriate.

- Discussions in the contact groups will be captured in uniform methodology (screenwriting).
- Contact groups will be held in English only.

Modalities for informal consultations:

- Can be facilitated by the Chair, contact group co-facilitators, Bureau members or any delegate, or by nomination in the group.
- They may or may not result in text, depending on their mandates.
- Informal consultations are not interpreted.

Scheduling of contact groups:

Taking into account the lessons learned identified, as well as the heavy agenda for OEWG2, the Bureau may wish to consider that the OEWG2 could include the parallel scheduling of 2 contact groups. In doing so, in scheduling of the contact groups, it should be taken into account how the issues for discussion are linked to each other.

(Co)- facilitators:

The Bureau with the help of the Secretariat may wish to timely identify potential (co-) facilitators.

Speaking arrangements:

Whereas in plenary MS will be given the floor on a specific agenda item first, in contact groups and in informal consultations, stakeholders can engage in the discussion and be given the floor during the discussion. In contact groups stakeholders can also make proposals, that will only be reflected if supported by a MS, in line with the practice in MEAs.

Seating arrangements:

Whereas in plenary there will be fixed seating, in contact groups and informal consultations seating is free. Stakeholders are urged to ensure that MS can have a place behind the microphone.