

Needs and Questions the Panel May Handle

Request for Written Submissions from Member States and Relevant Stakeholders

Member states, during the resumed first session of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG1.2), requested the Secretariat of the OEWG to solicit input from Member States and relevant stakeholders regarding the **needs** and **questions** the panel may handle in order to inform negotiations through the OEWG process (OEWG2 and OEWG3).

In support of this request, member States are invited to provide submissions through their respective national focal points (list of focal points available [at this link](#)). Non-government stakeholders are invited to submit their submissions on behalf of their organization or group. Once complete, please submit this filled document to SPP-CWP@un.org. All submissions will be uploaded online and will be summarized in an INF document in order to inform the work undertaken at OEWG2 and OEWG3.

Please complete and submit this form by 5 September 2023.

Several documents prepared by the secretariat for OEWG1.2 are of relevance to this submission, including:

- The Mapping and Gap analysis that was presented at UNEA 4 ([UNEP/EA.4/INF.9](#))
- The UNEP report “Assessment of options for strengthening the science-policy interface at the international level for the sound management of chemicals and waste” <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/33808/OSSP.pdf>
- UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/INF/1 - [UNEA Resolution 5/8 entitled “Science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution”](#)
- The stakeholder survey conducted between OEWG 1.1 and OEWG 1.2, which was summarized in Information document “Stakeholder Engagement Feedback” ([UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/INF/6](#))
- Reports of OEWG1.1 and OEWG1.2, available with all other meeting documents on the [OEWG website](#)

Contact information

What is your name/surname?

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Who are you submitting on behalf of?

Government of Saudi Arabia

Are you a national focal point?

Yes

What is your country?

Saudi Arabia

What is your title?

Government of Saudi Arabia Science and Policy Panel focal point

What is your gender?

Male

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As requested by member states in the recent OEWG 1.2 held in Bangkok from January 30 to February 03, 2023. According to the outcomes of OEWG 1.2, member states and relevant stakeholders were requested to submit their inputs regarding the needs and questions the panel may handle to inform negotiations through the OEWG process (OEWG2 and OEWG3). In support of this request, member States are invited to provide submissions through their respective national focal points by 5 September 2023. Saudi Arabia submission on the needs and question the panel may handle to inform negotiations through the OEWG process (OEWG 2 and OEWG 3) is guided by UNEA Resolution 5/8.

- 1. Please list and if appropriate briefly describe, your preference for which needs the panel may handle. (If possible, please rank your responses, where 1 indicates your top preference):**

UNEA resolution 5/8 provided guidance on the needs the panel may handle, indicated in the principal functions of the panel as identified in para 2 in UNEA Resolution 5/8 and the need to ensure certain principles as stated in the same resolution para 6.

Function (a): Undertaking “horizon scanning” to identify issues of relevance to policymakers and, where possible, proposing evidence-based options to address them;

Guided by the mandate and this function, the panel should handle the specific need of identifying OPTIONS available for the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution resulting from horizon scanning. Taking into consideration that only options aligned with the principles in para 6 are considered; in that sense, only options which are transparent, credible, scientifically robust, cost-effective, inclusive, and complementary to other bodies’ work without duplication, only those options should be provided in the outputs of the panel in policy-relevant not policy prescriptive manner. Noting that this requires providing a set of options, not a single approach.

Function (b): Conducting assessments of current issues and identifying potential evidence-based options to address, where possible, those issues, in particular, those relevant to developing countries;

Guided by the mandate and this function, the panel should handle the specific need of identifying OPTIONS resulting from assessments of current issues available to address chemical, waste and pollution issues, in particular relevant to developing countries. Taking into consideration that only options aligned with the principles in para 6 are considered; in that sense, only options that are transparent, credible, scientifically robust, cost-effective, inclusive, and complementary to other bodies’ work without duplication, only those options should be provided in the outputs of the panel in policy-relevant not policy prescriptive manner.

Function (c): Providing up-to-date and relevant information, identifying key gaps in scientific research, encouraging and supporting communication between scientists and policymakers, explaining and disseminating findings for different audiences, and raising public awareness

Guided by the mandate and this function, the panel should handle the specific need of identifying the existing key gaps in scientific research on the sound management of chemicals, and waste, and pollution prevention which need to be addressed by the scientific community and shared with different audiences, and the best means to share this information, taking into consideration the principles in para 6 are considered.

Function (d): Facilitating information-sharing with countries, in particular developing countries seeking relevant scientific information;

Guided by the mandate and this function, the panel should handle the specific need of scientific information sharing with countries, in particular developing countries seeking information.

2. Please provide any relevant comments on the needs you have listed above:

In addition to the answer provided in question 1 above, we recall the UNEA resolution 5/8 preamble to guide the needs.

- Availability of scientific information and assessments
- Address capacity challenges, enable more effective and efficient action to minimize and prevent the adverse impact of the unsound management of chemicals and waste, and prevent pollution to improve human well-being and contribute to the prosperity of all,
- Support countries in their efforts to take action, including to implement multilateral environmental agreements and other relevant international instruments.
- Promote the sound management of chemicals and waste.
- Address pollution by providing policy-relevant scientific advice on issues.
- Support relevant multilateral agreements, other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders in their work.
- Decides that a science-policy panel should be established to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and prevent pollution, with details to be further specified according to the provisions in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the present resolution.

Also recall Para 2:

Considers that the principal functions of the panel should include, among other things:

- (a) Undertaking “horizon scanning” to identify issues of relevance to policymakers and, where possible, proposing evidence-based options to address them;
- (b) Conducting assessments of current issues and identifying potential evidence-based options to address, where possible, those issues, in particular those relevant to developing countries;
- (c) Providing up-to-date and relevant information, identifying key gaps in scientific research, encouraging and supporting communication between scientists and policymakers, explaining and disseminating findings for different audiences, and raising public awareness;
- (d) Facilitating information-sharing with countries, in particular developing countries seeking relevant scientific information;

Also recall Para 3:

Also considers that the panel should be an independent intergovernmental body with a programme of work approved by its member Governments to deliver policy-relevant scientific evidence without being policy prescriptive.

Also recall Para 6:

Further decides that the ad hoc open-ended working group should take into account the need to ensure that the panel:

- (a) Is able to deliver outputs that are policy relevant without being policy prescriptive;
- (b) Is interdisciplinary, ensuring contributions from experts with a broad range of disciplinary expertise; has inclusive participation, including indigenous peoples; and has geographical, regional and gender balance;
- (c) Has procedures that seek to ensure that the work of the panel is transparent and impartial and that it can produce reports and assessments that are credible and scientifically robust;
- (d) Undertakes work that is complementary to and does not duplicate the work of the relevant multilateral agreements, other international instruments and

- intergovernmental bodies, including those that are members of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals;
- (e) Coordinates, as appropriate, with other science-policy bodies, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;
 - (f) Has the ability to address potential conflicts of interest and safeguard commercially sensitive information;
 - (g) Has the flexibility to respond, to the extent possible, to the needs identified by stakeholders and agreed to by its member Governments, and to fulfil its principal functions, as set out in the present resolution;
 - (h) Is cost-effective, with the leanest structure consistent with achieving the highest impact

3. Please list, and if appropriate briefly describe, your preference for which questions the panel may handle. (If possible, please rank your responses, where 1 indicates your top preference):

In proposing the questions the panel may handle, we take guidance from the principal functions of the panel as identified in para 2 in UNEA Resolution 5/8 and the need to ensure certain principles as stated in the same resolution para 6. The panel must address questions directly related to its principal functions, identified in paragraph 2 of UNEA Resolution 5/8. It is imperative for the panel to ensure that principles, as stated in paragraph 6 of the same resolution, are strictly adhered to while proposing the questions.

Function (a): Undertaking “horizon scanning” to identify issues of relevance to policymakers and, where possible, proposing evidence-based options to address them;

In this function, the panel proposes evidence-based options based on horizon scanning to address issues related to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution. Following are some specific questions to address this specific function in the order of importance:

Main question: Which OPTIONS are available for the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, taking into consideration that only options aligned with the principles in para 6 are considered; in that sense, only options which are transparent, credible, scientifically robust, cost-effective, inclusive, and complementary to other bodies’ work without duplication, only those options should be provided in the outputs of the panel in policy-relevant not policy prescriptive manner. Noting that this requires providing a set of options, not a single approach.

Additional questions in the order of importance include:

- What are the OPTIONS available to mitigate the socio-economic impacts resulting from Policy interventions?
- What are global OPTIONS, and have the potential to effectively manage the future consequences of policy interventions in the sound management of chemicals and waste, such as future cross-border implications?
- Which advanced technology OPTIONS has the potential for scaling up to further contribute to the sound management of waste chemicals?
- How do current investment levels compare with OPTIONS for future global efforts to address issues arising from the unsound management of chemicals and waste?

Function (b): Conducting assessments of current issues and identifying potential evidence-based options to address, where possible, those issues, in particular, those relevant to developing countries;

In this function, the panel proposes potential evidence-based options to address issues, in particular those relevant to developing countries. Following are some specific questions to address this specific function in the order of importance:

Main Question: Which OPTIONS resulting from assessments of current issues are available to address chemical, waste and pollution issues, in particular relevant to developing countries, taking into consideration that only options aligned with the principles in para 6 are considered; in that sense, only options that are transparent, credible, scientifically robust, cost-effective, inclusive, and complementary to other bodies' work without duplication, only those options should be provided in the outputs of the panel in policy-relevant not policy prescriptive manner. This also requires to always providing a set of options, not a single approach.

Additional questions in the order of importance:

- How do current investment OPTIONS, based on evidence-based data, address obstacles in scaling up advanced technologies to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste, in particular those relevant to developing countries?
- What available evidence-based OPTIONS, in particular those relevant to developing countries, can address the cross-border implications of policy interventions? Which options are currently available to plan for the impacts resulting from policy interventions?
- Which global policies have socioeconomic implications, particularly those relevant to developing countries?
- What are evidence-based OPTIONS available currently, and how can countries, particularly developing countries, address the current cross-border implications of policy interventions?
- What are the existing available advanced technological options and has the potential to scale up that promote the sound management of chemicals and waste those particularly relevant to developing countries?
- What role does financial assistance for developing countries play in contributing to the sound management of chemicals and waste?

Function (c): Providing up-to-date and relevant information, identifying key gaps in scientific research, encouraging and supporting communication between scientists and policymakers, explaining and disseminating findings for different audiences, and raising public awareness

In this function, the panel identifies key gaps in scientific research, explains and disseminates findings for different audiences, and raises public awareness. These are some specific questions to address this function in the order of importance:

Main Question: What key gaps in scientific research on the sound management of chemicals, and waste, and pollution prevention exist and need to be addressed by the scientific community and shared with different audiences, and what is the best way to share this information, taking into consideration the principles in para 6 are considered.

Additional Questions in the order of importance:

- What are the key gaps in scientific research regarding assessing and quantifying the socio-economic impacts of policy interventions in the sound management of chemicals and waste, particularly for developing country parties? How can scientists & policymakers communicate to address those gaps in research?
- What role do customized tools and methodologies play in providing up-to-date and relevant information in assessing and addressing the socio-economic impacts of policy interventions?
- Which platforms can be used to disseminate scientific research? What processes are used for scientific research?
- How can countries, particularly developing countries, address the cross-border implications of policy interventions?

Function (d): Facilitating information-sharing with countries, in particular developing countries seeking relevant scientific information;

In this function, the panel facilitates scientific information sharing with countries, in particular developing countries seeking information. These are some specific questions to address this function in the order of importance:

- What forms of information-sharing have the biggest impact on building the capacity needed and requested by developing countries?
- How can information-sharing on scaling up advanced technological options promote the sound management of chemicals and waste, in particular for developing country parties?
- How does information-sharing on assessing and addressing the socio-economic impacts of policy intervention promote sustainable development in developing countries?
- Which modalities of information-sharing are optimal for the facilitation of equitable access to scientific information, particularly for developing countries?

Please provide any relevant comments on the questions you have listed above:

The questions the panel may answer will always be within the scope of the panel as indicated in its mandate and functions (the principal functions of the panel identified in Para 2 of the UNEA Resolution 5/8). The Rules of Procedures of the panel should enforce the principles in para 6 of UNEA Resolution 5/8 in order to for the panel to provide sound outputs.

The modalities of each function listed in Para 2 should be negotiated among member states and be part of the negotiation on RoPs of the panel.