

## 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](mailto: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?

Linsey Cottrell

Who are you submitting on behalf of?

Conflict and Environment Observatory

Are you a national focal point?

No

What is your country?

UK

What is your title?

Environmental Policy Officer

What is your gender?

Female

What is your email address?

linsey@ceobs.org

**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):**

- Support for conflict-affected communities – highlighting pollution and the subsequent health and environmental needs resulting from armed conflict and impacts within conflict-affected States and alignment with the [UNEA Resolution 3/1](#) *Pollution mitigation and control in areas affected by armed conflict or terrorism* and [UNEA Resolution 4/8](#), which highlights the challenge of solid waste management in conflict-affected states. **(Rank 1)**
- Alignment with the [International Law Commission’s legal principles](#) on the Protection of the Environment in relation to Armed Conflict (PERAC) and in particular:
  - Principle 24 to cooperate with respect to post-armed conflict environmental assessments and remedial measures;
  - Principle 25 for appropriate measures so that the damage does not remain unrepaired or uncompensated, and may consider establishing special compensation funds or providing other forms of relief or assistance; and
  - Principle 26 to remove or render harmless toxic or other hazardous remnants of war that are causing or risk causing damage to the environment.
  - Principle 27 to ensure that remnants of war at sea do not constitute a danger to the environment**(Rank 2)**
- Alignment with the political declaration on the use of [Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#) (EWIPA) that seeks to protect civilians, and recognizes that the environment can also be impacted and the need for damage assessments. **(Rank 3)**
- Alignment with the [Principles for Assisting Victims of the Toxic Remnants of War](#) on how assistance programmes for conflict-affected communities should be designed and implemented. **(=Rank 3)**
- Support for research and capacity building into the implementation of the waste and chemical multinational environmental agreements in fragile and conflict-affected states. **(=Rank 3)**

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

Armed conflicts generate pollution and create and sustain the conditions where polluting practices can go unchecked. By destroying environmental governance, and constraining sustainable development, over time pollution can cause more premature deaths than armed violence itself.

The intergovernmental science-policy panel on chemicals, waste and pollution must ensure that the needs of communities within fragile, conflict-affected states are considered. It is critical that the panel therefore aligns with UNEA [Resolution 3/1](#) and [Resolution 4/8](#), as well as the recently adopted [PERAC](#) principles and [EWIPA](#) political declaration. Countries affected by armed conflicts typically suffer from pre-existing pollution and waste management issues, which are often exacerbated during and after conflict as environmental governance collapses.

Conflicts themselves also generate new sources of pollution, for example through damage or disruption to industrial infrastructure, urban areas or the use of particular weapons. Governance collapse also impedes the implementation of international agreements on chemicals and waste, such as the [Rotterdam Convention](#).

The conflict in [heavily-industrialised Ukraine](#), has drawn attention to the relationship between armed conflicts and pollution, with independent monitoring identifying damage to buildings, industry and infrastructure causing serious risk of pollution incidents, impacts on [water resources](#),

the risks from debris and [asbestos-containing material](#), and long-term environmental harm. Unfortunately, these risks are not unique to Ukraine.

The PERAC principles address the management of the toxic and hazardous remnants of war, on access to information on pollutants, on reducing pollution risks around military facilities and on state responsibility for environmental damage. These can be strengthened through alignment with the science-policy panel, with recognition of the need for victim assistance in conflict-affected states.

**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):**

- How can international understanding and awareness be increased on the pollution associated with armed conflict and military activities? (**Rank 1**)
- How can states be encouraged to take appropriate measures to minimise and control pollution in situations of armed conflict or military activities? (**Rank 2**)
- How can all stakeholders within conflict-affected states be encouraged to participate in the preparation of national plans and strategies to prioritise environmental assessment and remediation projects, and to ensure the collection and dissemination of appropriate data? (**Rank 3**)
- Where are the priority, high risk sites and what urgent assistance is required to undertake priority fieldwork, environmental assessment or remedial action in conflict-affected states? (**=Rank 3**)
- What funding mechanisms and resources are available and needed to support fieldwork, environmental assessment or remedial action in conflict-affected states in situations of armed conflict or military activities? (**=Rank 3**)
- How can the science policy panel best align with and encourage implementation of the ILC's PERAC principles? (**=Rank 3**)
- How should assistance for victims of military and conflict-related pollution be designed and implemented? (**=Rank 3**)

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

The science-policy panel can play an important role in building and sustaining attention on the health and ecological risks of conflict pollution. The panel could also be of critical importance in encouraging research into the health and ecological burden of conflict pollution, in highlighting the need for environmental and epidemiological research in affected areas, and for victim assistance and environmental remediation.

UNEP's current [medium-term strategy](#) states that work on conflicts will be mainstreamed across its core focus areas, including action on chemicals and pollution. In this respect, we strongly support use of the science-policy panel as a vehicle to support the UNEP's strategy aim, and as part of the implementation of UNEA resolution 3/1. Indeed the majority of the questions for the panel derive from aspects of resolution 3/1.

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