

Request for policymaker support to establish a SPP Science Alliance – An opportunity to broaden the inclusion of the scientific community in the Science-Policy Panel for Chemicals, Waste and Pollution Prevention

Background

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) adopted Resolution 5/8 in March 2022, calling for the creation of a science-policy panel (SPP) to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution. This panel aims to provide policymakers with the best available science, enabling informed decisions that protect human health and the environment.¹

1. Rationale for a SPP Science Alliance

The management of chemicals, waste, and pollution is a critical global challenge, on par with climate change and biodiversity loss. An effective response requires an integrated **interdisciplinary all-hands-on deck approach** that combines the broadest scientific expertise with policy actions.

Among the current challenges is that there is **no coordinated mechanism** for interested scientists and experts to participate in the SPP process when it is established. This means there is **no convening mechanism for knowledge holders**, even though many scientists and local experts around the world generate scientific knowledge, evidence, and opinions. This challenge is interrelated with the need for a long-term strategy to **support the engagement with scientists**, once the SPP is established. To ensure governments are informed by as much evidence as possible, it will need a sustainable long-term mechanism to access the widest scientific expertise and secure the input of relevant scientific experts. It also must be ensured that Science-to-Policy and Policy-to-Science **communication is accessible, effective, and relevant** throughout the decision-making process and after the SPP is established (after 2024). Nations and regions that have full access to the evidence and expertise of the science community will in principle be able to make better and more fully informed policy choices.

In this context, we are seeking support to establish a **Science Policy Panel (SPP) Science Alliance** composed of **international scientific and technical experts** that can complement the role of UNEP accredited organisations and the Science and Technology Major Group. Thereby **any interested individual scientist** can share their evidence and opinions into the SPP via a recognised and formalised mechanism of a Science Alliance and participation from a **diverse range of science experts** can be ensured beyond the foreseen Interdisciplinary Expert Committee (EIC).

¹ UNEP: <https://www.unep.org/owg-spp-chemicals-waste-pollution>

2. Benefits for Policymakers

Such an Alliance brings international and transdisciplinary scientists together, casting the **net of international scientific knowledge widely** and making science more relevant to policy through **capacity building initiatives** (e.g. science communication courses and potentially technical webinars and training courses).

The SPP Science Alliance could be proactive and responsive and would address knowledge gaps as it has a **strong, reliable network** that reaches well beyond policy spheres into academia and the scientific community. As a convening and coordination mechanism, a SPP Science Alliance **can facilitate outreach** to a diverse range of scientific and technical experts in priority areas, that can support better policy making.

3. Activities of the SPP Science Alliance

International network of independent scientists: Provision of a credible, reliable interdisciplinary network to be consulted by decision-makers across the SPP landscape for input and advice. The alliance's network can be used to efficiently find experts working at local, national, regional, and international levels.

Training and capacity building: Support and build international capacity building among scientists (e. g. science training and science for policy training).

Outreach and information platform: Execution of events such as policy- and stakeholder dialogues, information sessions, webinars on thematic topics.

Policy relevant publications: Compiling and issuing concise publications, such as evidence briefings to complement the SPP outputs.

Importance of Policymaker Support

Your support is crucial, and we urge you to support the establishment of the SPP Science Alliance by **advocating for funding** and providing support to secure financial resources that can support the SPP Science Alliance operations and initiatives.

The SPP Science Alliance would execute activities (see point 3. activities) via a secretariat (admin role, coordinator role for internal and external communication, website maintenance, setting up governance, etc.), and via a member committee. For the period of two years a cost calculation is estimated with 700.000- 800.000 € funding needs.

The establishment of a SPP Science Alliance is a vital step towards addressing the global challenges posed by chemicals, waste, and pollution. Your support will be instrumental in ensuring the success of this initiative, leading to a healthier and more sustainable future for all – and a strengthened Science Policy Panel.