



EU+MS Opening statement

1. Opening of the third meeting of the ad hoc Open-Ended Working Group on the Science Policy Panel (OEWG3) (Geneva, Switzerland, 17th -21st June 2024).

Madame Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is my privilege to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States are very pleased to gather here in the lovely city of Geneva and would like to express their gratitude to the host country and to UNEP for the work undertaken to organize this meeting. We would like to thank the Chair, the Bureau and the Secretariat for the hard work carried out in preparing this meeting. We greatly appreciate the timely availability of the advanced English versions of the meeting documents. This allowed the EU&MS to exchange views with other parties and regional groups on a number of important issues to explore and discuss possible ways forward during OEWG3.

The EU&MS consider the document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/2 “Compilation of proposals for establishing a science-policy panel” with its proposed addenda, and the documents UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/3 and UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/4 as a good basis for further negotiations during this OEWG 3.

We look forward to engaging this week in fruitful and constructive discussions. We are committed to working closely with all the participants in this meeting to fulfill the mandate of the OEWG and prepare the foundation for an Intergovernmental meeting to establish the SPP early in 2025.

Thank you.

4. Opening of agenda item 4 on the Preparation of proposals for the establishment of a science-policy panel.

Madame Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is my privilege to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

We welcome this opportunity to share our general position on some of the outstanding issues with regard to the proposals for the establishment of this science policy panel.

The EU&MS support the agreed broad scope, that encompasses all aspects of chemicals, waste and prevention of pollution. To advance with the negotiations efficiently, the EU&MS wish to focus on the important issues that are still open. Concerning the fifth function on capacity building, we understand that more discussions are needed, and we are ready to further engage with colleagues.

Regarding operating principles, the EU&MS believe they should be concise, simple, clear and should stand on their own, as they should guide the panel's work in all its facets. We look forward to engaging in a streamlining exercise of the current section B in the respective document.

With respect to the institutional arrangements, the EU+MS believe that the OEWG can draw inspiration from the arrangements of both the climate and the biodiversity panel. We would like to invite the secretariat or the co-facilitators to present an overview of the structure of the panel and connections between the different bodies at the start of the relevant contact groups, to advance discussions more quickly and avoid misunderstandings. As we already highlighted, it is of high importance for the EU+MS to ensure that REIOs are a full member of the plenary. Furthermore, we want to stress that clear mandates should be assigned to the Bureau, the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee, the Secretariat and the plenary. Lastly, we believe that some elements that are now under the Institutional arrangements might fit better under Rules of Procedure, and we welcome discussions on this during this OEWG.

As in IPCC, IPBES, and other scientific advisory bodies, a clear 'Policy on Conflict of Interests' is essential for ensuring the credibility of the future Panel. The EU&MS are in favour of a clear and transparent procedure for addressing potential and actual past, present or future professional, personal or financial conflicts of interest.

The EU&MS attach great importance to the involvement of stakeholders in the work of the panel at appropriate levels, to contribute to transparency in the work of the Panel, to incorporate the best available expertise, and to enhance the relevance and impact of its products. We strongly support engagement of all relevant sectors with the future Science Policy Panel. We support in particular the full involvement of WHO in this panel, to benefit from their expertise and ensure that health considerations are integrated in the Panel's work.

Regarding the other work-related processes and procedures, we believe that the processes and procedures established under IPBES and IPCC could be valid models to be adapted to the work of the future Panel. We encourage this meeting to make substantive progress on the work-related processes and procedures, such as the draft process for determining the work programme and the draft procedures for the preparation and clearance of the panel deliverables, as these are important for initiating work at the first session of the future Panel.

We look forward to engaging this week in fruitful and constructive discussions. We are committed to working closely with all the participants in this meeting to fulfill the mandate of the OEWG and prepare the foundation for an Intergovernmental meeting to establish the SPP early in 2025.

Thank you.

5. Opening of agenda item 5 on the Recommendations to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for the preparation of the intergovernmental meeting to establish the science-policy panel.

Madame Chair, Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is my privilege to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

The EU&MS are convinced that finding an agreement on the necessary arrangements for establishing a science-policy panel that encompasses all aspects of chemicals, waste, and pollution during this session is crucial. We need to fulfill the mandate that we received from UNEA 5.2 by finalizing our important task by the end of 2024.

Therefore, we strive to finalise the foundational document and the decisions needed for the Intergovernmental meeting at this meeting with the ambition set in Resolution 5/8. We also seek to make progress on the draft Rules of Procedure, financial procedures and other work-related processes and procedures. In this regard, the EU&MS would like to see a timeframe set for the first meeting of the plenary of the Panel after the establishment, that takes into account the necessary preparation time for this meeting.

Being aware of the relevance of both health and pollution issues, the EU+MS see merit in a potential joint secretariat with WHO and UNEP. We would like to invite the Executive Director of UNEP and the Director-General of WHO to prepare together the appropriate arrangements for consideration by the Intergovernmental meeting.

We are committed to working closely with all the participants of this OEWG to prepare the ground for an Intergovernmental meeting to establish the SPP early in 2025.

Thank you.
