

AHEG 4 – Proposed Draft Chemicals intervention, V2 - 9 November 2020

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- So far, we have heard a number of interventions related to materials management across the lifecycle.

- Due to technical reasons, I was not able to intervene on Monday.
- I give this intervention on behalf of the SAICM secretariat.
- The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) is a voluntary policy framework to promote and implement chemical safety globally that is administered by UN Environment.

- Some plastics contain chemicals that are considered to be harmful for health and the environment, such as phthalates, poly-fluorinated chemicals, bisphenol A (BPA) and brominated flame retardants.
- Harmful chemicals need to be excluded from the value chain as early as possible, in the design phase, the production phase, or, if not possible, during plastics recycling, to protect human health and ecosystems. This will also enable a higher degree of recyclability, and support a toxic-free circular economy of plastics.
- The SAICM secretariat, together with UNEP, released a policy brief on Plastics and Chemicals of Concern In Consumer Products in July 2020.
- The Brief has been uploaded to the portal under agenda item 3.
- The brief highlights:
 - (i) the need to remove chemicals of concern as a preventive measure through the design of products, as well as enhancing regulations and their enforcement.
 - (i) Strengthened science and technical knowledge for chemical additives.
 - (ii) Increased traceability and reliability of information
 - (iii) strengthened commitments and standards to phase-out certain chemical additives.

- (iv) Coordinated actions across the value-chain of plastic products, promoting collective solutions and innovation for circularity.

At the global level:

- Chemicals and waste are addressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under SDG 12, with target 12.4 directly addressing chemicals.
- A number of substances of concern are already controlled at the global level under the Stockholm Convention.
- The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) is unique in its ambition as an inclusive multi-stakeholder and multi-sector framework.
- It provides the space and opportunity for governments, industry, non-government organizations, international organizations and academics to discuss, coordinate and act on chemicals throughout their life cycle in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation.
- SAICM's emerging policy issues already address a number of areas linked to marine plastic litter and microplastics, such as endocrine-disrupting chemicals, nanomaterials and the promotion of chemicals related information within product value chains.
- SAICM stakeholders and the secretariat are working together with other key initiatives and MEAs for streamlined and effective participation of our efforts.
- With the current SAICM objective running to 2020, an intersessional process is underway to prepare recommendations on SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 for consideration by the ICCM at its fifth session in 2021.
- The scope of SAICM today is broad and currently does not expressly address marine plastic litter or microplastics. The on-going discussions for beyond 2020 provide opportunities for new programmatic areas and focus in moving forward, including for capacity building, knowledge sharing and in promoting innovation.
- Stakeholders wishing to participate in the SAICM process should contact the Strategic Approach secretariat at saicm.chemicals@unep.org.

