

**REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED
WORKING GROUP ON A SCIENCE-POLICY PANEL TO CONTRIBUTE FURTHER TO THE
SOUND MANAGEMENT OF CHEMICALS AND WASTE AND TO PREVENT POLLUTION**

12 DECEMBER 2022, ONLINE

Participants: Mr. Oumar Diaouré Cisse (Mali, representing the African Group), Mr. Cyrus Mageria (Kenya, representing the African Group), Ms. Saqlain Syedah (Pakistan, representing the Asia Pacific), Mr. Michel Tschirren (Switzerland, representing the Western European and Others Group), Ms. Judith Torres (Uruguay, representing the Latin America and the Caribbean Group), Ms. Gudi Alkemade (the Netherlands, in an observer capacity as nominated Bureau Member and Chair from the Western European and Others Group), Mr. Jinhui Li (China, in an observer capacity as nominated Bureau Member from the Asia Pacific Group) and representatives from the UNEP Secretariat.

ITEM 1 OPENING OF THE MEETING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.

1. The second meeting of the Bureau of the ad hoc open-ended working group (OEWG) on a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution was opened at 13:00 CET on 12 December 2022 by the interim OEWG Chair, Ms. Saqlain Syedah. The meeting was convened fully online.
2. Ms. Syedah started by welcoming members of the Bureau and noting that at its previous meeting, the Bureau had discussed all the agenda items, however there remained several issues that needed to be concluded ahead of the resumed first session of the OEWG in January 2023.
3. The chair then invited the Bureau to consider and adopt the provisional agenda circulated prior to the meeting. The agenda was adopted without any modification.
4. Upon request, the Secretariat noted that the first session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution (INC-1) was held in Punta del Este, Uruguay from 28 November to 2 December 2022, and highlighted several lessons learned from that meeting which may be relevant to the resumed first session of the OEWG, including with respect to the election of the Bureau and the organization of work, including delivery of opening statements.

**ITEM 2 ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING FOR THE RESUMED FIRST SESSION OF THE
OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON A SCIENCE-POLICY PANEL TO CONTRIBUTE
FURTHER TO THE SOUND MANAGEMENT OF CHEMICALS AND WASTE AND TO PREVENT
POLLUTION (OEWG1.2)**

a. Update on the election of officers to the Bureau

5. The Chair invited the OEWG Secretariat to provide an update on the status of the election of officers to the Bureau, which is expected to be finalized at the resumed first session of the OEWG.
6. The Secretariat noted that there is no further information regarding the existing nominations to the open seats for the OEWG Bureau since the previous Bureau meeting, and that the Secretariat is preparing for an in person secret ballot to take place at the resumed session of the OEWG as planned. The Secretariat is developing a detailed background note for Member States setting out the formal steps to be followed to elect the remaining officers to the Bureau through a secret ballot, which will be shared with the OEWG Bureau at its next meeting and to all Member States thereafter. The aim is to ensure that all Member State delegations are well informed about the procedure to be applied well in advance of the meeting to avoid unnecessary debate and protracted elections.

7. The Bureau members supported this approach and stressed the importance of providing full clarity on the procedure that will be followed for concluding the elections. The Bureau also requested information on the quorum requirements to ensure the validity of the secret ballot as well as the number of Member states that have registered for the meeting. In addition, the Bureau requested clarity on whether credentials are needed to facilitate participation in the secret ballot and if a Member State not physically present at the meeting that cannot send representatives from their capital to take part in the meeting can instead nominate a representative from the local mission or embassy to take part in the meeting.

8. The Secretariat noted that it is for the meeting to decide on whether to both elect a Chair and to conclude elections of the remaining Bureau members from the Central and Eastern European Group, or whether to postpone the election of Members from this region. With respect to the quorum requirements, rule 32 of the UNEA rules of procedure, which apply *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of the OEWG, states that “*The President may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one third of the members of the United Nations Environment Assembly are present. The presence of a majority of the members of the United Nations Environment Assembly shall be required for any decision to be taken*”. The Secretariat also informed the meeting that, to date, 99 Member states have registered to attend the session of which 60 to 70 participants are receiving financial support to facilitate their participation.

9. The Secretariat confirmed that any delegate wishing to participate in the meeting and in the voting must register online and upload a note verbale or letter from the government formally confirming their affiliation and be present in person at the meeting. The Secretariat also indicated that credentials are not needed to participate in the secret ballot procedure, however, each delegation must nominate a Head of Delegation who will be required to be physically present to cast the secret ballot on behalf of their Member State. The Secretariat also noted that while there is an established procedure in the General Assembly whereby a Member State can vote on behalf of another Member State which is absent from the meeting, this procedure is generally not applicable in other UN bodies, and it is therefore strongly recommended that any Member States wishing to take part in a vote will ensure that a representative is present in person at the meeting to cast the secret ballot.

10. With regard to opening statements, the Bureau noted that opening statements were already delivered at the first meeting of OEWG 1 on 6 October, and that while all delegations will be given the right to speak at the opening session, delegations should be encouraged not to repeat their opening statements at the resumed session in Bangkok, and instead focus on substantive agenda items.

11. The Secretariat confirmed that this approach will be clarified in the scenario note and communicated through a letter to participants ahead of the meeting.

12. Most of the Bureau members agreed that given that this is a resumed session, dedicating additional time for general statements is not necessary and agreed that notifying participants accordingly in advance of the meeting would be useful. They also considered that any Member State or observer wishing to deliver an opening statement to OEWG 1.2 are encouraged should so do in writing.

b. Organization of work

13. The Chair invited the OEWG Secretariat to provide an update on the proposed tentative timetable for the organization of work for OEWG 1.2.

14. The Secretariat presented a tentative timetable that will be included in the meeting OEWG 1.2 scenario note and highlighted some changes following the suggestions put forward at the previous Bureau meeting. This included dedicating Sunday 29 January 2023 to meetings under the regional and political groups, organizing a Bureau meeting on the evening of 29 January 2023, opening agenda items 5 and 6 on the first day of the meeting, and moving the informal technical deep dive session on scope and functions to the lunch breaks on 30 and 31 January 2023.

15. The Bureau welcomed the changes made and inquired further on the technical deep dive session, specifically regarding its main purpose and whether stakeholders will be invited to speak and/or participate in these sessions, noting the importance of inviting scientists and academia to such conversations and reflecting on the usefulness of technical briefings that facilitate capacity building held at other meetings, for example held under the Minamata Convention, SAICM and the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.

16. The Secretariat clarified that the deep dive sessions would provide an analysis of relevant scientific findings and lessons learned relating to options for the scope and functions of the Panel, with the view to facilitating an informed discussions on this topic. The sessions will build on information shared during the previously held webinars and will bring together speakers with diverse views to discuss relevant economic, sector and health specific issues and bring in perspectives from academia. The Secretariat also noted that several information documents could support and supplement the technical deep dive discussions.

c. Update on the preparation of meeting documents

17. The Chair invited the OEWG Secretariat to provide an update on the status of the proposed documents that are being prepared for consideration by the OEWG 1.2.

18. The Secretariat noted that advance English versions of the working documents are expected to become available online by 13 December 2022 with the translations available at the end of the month, 6 weeks prior to the meeting. The Secretariat further noted that several information documents, including a scenario note, will be made available by 19 December 2022.

d. Dialogues on key aspects of functions and scope of the Panel

19. The Chair noted that this agenda item had already been considered under the item on organization of work.

20. The Secretariat further noted that several outreach activities have been organized since the previous Bureau meeting, including a briefing to the Geneva Environment Network, the Burlington Consensus webinar, and an analysis of the results of the recent online stakeholder engagement survey.

ITEM 3. NEXT MEETING OF THE BUREAU

21. The Secretariat proposed that the next Bureau meeting will be scheduled during the week of 9 January 2023. The Bureau agreed with the proposed dates.

ITEM 4. OTHER MATTERS.

22. The Bureau requested that the Secretariat provide an update on its resource mobilization efforts, inquired on the number of participants eligible for travel support from the UN, and requested a list of participants that participated in the first part of the first session of the OEWG in October 2022.

23. The Secretariat reported that thanks to pledges from additional donors such as the European Commission, the Secretariat is now in a better position to plan and budget for the intersessional work and the second meeting of the OEWG. The Secretariat also reported that the number of applications for travel support to attend the resumed first session of the OEWG was high and still under review by the Secretariat, and that while for UNEA, up to two participants from each eligible country may be funded, the available budget for OEWG1.2 will allow for a maximum of one funded participant. Finally, the Secretariat indicated that a list of participants will be released with the report of the first part of the first session of the OEWG.

ITEM 5. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING.

24. The meeting closed at 14:32 CET on 12 December 2022.