



**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**

Third session

Geneva, 17–21 June 2024

Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Preparation of proposals for the establishment of a science-policy
panel**

**Proposals to give effect to arrangements to be considered by the
intergovernmental meeting**

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Environment Assembly, in its resolution 5/8 of 2 March 2022, decided that a science-policy panel should be established to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, and decided to convene an ad hoc open-ended working group to prepare proposals for the science-policy panel, with the ambition of completing its work by the end of 2024. Resolution 5/8 also contained a request that the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), upon completion of the proposals, convene an intergovernmental meeting for the purpose of considering the establishment of the science-policy panel.
2. At its second session, the ad hoc open-ended working group requested the secretariat to prepare proposals on interim arrangements to be considered and possibly approved by the intergovernmental meeting, for consideration by the ad hoc open-ended working group at its third session. The proposals prepared by the secretariat pursuant to that request are set out in section II of the present note.
3. On 6 March 2024, the Bureau of the ad hoc open-ended working group considered a proposal by the secretariat to convene the intergovernmental meeting back-to-back with the first session of the governing body of the panel. Taking into account experiences in establishing other panels and intergovernmental bodies, a back-to-back meeting would provide an opportunity for the panel to commence its work in a timely manner, in particular to give effect to the institutional and financial arrangements. Other factors that informed the proposal included cost-effectiveness considerations. The Bureau supported the proposal, while recognizing the Executive Director's mandate to convene the intergovernmental meeting.
4. The proposals set out in the present document include the following draft decision for consideration and possible adoption by the intergovernmental meeting: Draft decision [--]: Recommendations to give effect to arrangements in the foundational document.

* UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/1.

5. The ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to consider the draft proposals included in the present document as a basis for finalizing these to give effect to arrangements for the establishment of the panel for subsequent consideration and possible adoption by the intergovernmental meeting.

II. Proposals on arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting and by the governing body of the panel

6. The ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to consider the following proposals for the arrangements that the intergovernmental meeting and the governing body of the panel will be invited to decide on in order to give effect to arrangements emanating from the foundational document:

(a) **Election of officers:** The governing body of the panel at its first session will be invited to elect its own officers to constitute the Bureau. The first session of the governing body of the panel may be opened by a representative of UNEP, and the governing body of the panel will be invited to elect a Chair. Upon election, the Chair may preside over the session and take further measures to give effect to the institutional arrangements in the foundational document. The governing body of the panel will be invited to consider for adoption rules of procedure and a conflict-of-interest policy to govern its work, including with respect to the election of officers. The governing body of the panel may be invited to continue consideration of election of officers to constitute the Bureau of the panel. The governing body of the panel may also be invited to consider the election of officers of subsidiary bodies, including the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee and the Conflict-of-Interest Committee.

(b) **Secretariat:** The governing body of the panel at its first session will be expected to agree on the administrative and financial arrangements of the secretariat. The panel will incur personnel costs to carry out the functions outlined in the foundational document, including developing the first work programme, to be considered for adoption at the second session of the governing body. The Environment Assembly requested the Executive Director of UNEP to provide a secretariat for the ad hoc open-ended working group and to convene the intergovernmental meeting. During the period between the third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group and the intergovernmental meeting as well as during the intergovernmental meeting, the Executive Director will serve as the secretariat of the intergovernmental meeting. In line with paragraph 11 of resolution 5/8, following the intergovernmental meeting, the Executive Director will report on the outcomes of the ad hoc open-ended working group and any ensuing activities, including the intergovernmental meeting, to the United Nations Environment Assembly at a future session and to relevant multilateral agreements and other international instruments and intergovernmental bodies. The governing body of the panel may, at its first session, request the Executive Director to provide administrative arrangements for the panel's secretariat, in accordance with the rules and practices of the United Nations.

(c) **Financial arrangements:** The governing body will be expected to take measures to give effect to the financial arrangements outlined in the foundational document, including the trust fund. The governing body will also be invited to consider adopting its financial procedures, as well as a budget for the intersessional period between its first and second sessions.

(d) **Strategic partnerships:** The governing body may, at its first session, consider mandating the secretariat to prepare guidelines for strategic partnerships.

(e) **Process for determining the work programme, including prioritization:** At its first session, the governing body may be invited to consider and possibly adopt a process for determining the work programme, including prioritization. This is to enable the panel to initiate the preparation of its first work programme for consideration by the governing body at its second session.

7. A proposed draft decision on recommendations to give effect to arrangements in the foundational document, for consideration and possible adoption by the intergovernmental meeting, is set out in the annex to the present note.

Annex

Draft decision [--] of the intergovernmental meeting to establish the panel

Recommendations to give effect to arrangements in the foundational document

The intergovernmental meeting,

Having established [insert full name of panel] (hereinafter “the Panel”),

Acknowledging that the Panel is an independent intergovernmental body, and welcoming the opportunity to provide recommendations to the governing body of the Panel for its consideration, to give effect to arrangements in the foundational document, and towards operationalizing the Panel,

1. *Takes note* of the proposal by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for a cost-effective secretariat for the Panel, in accordance with the rules and practice of the United Nations;
2. *Takes note* of the proposal by the Executive Director for hosting of the [insert name of panel trust fund];
3. *Invites* the Executive Director to submit an indicative budget to the governing body of the Panel at its first session, including an indicative budget for the intersessional period [insert years], in order to give effect to secretariat and financial arrangements for the Panel;
4. *Recommends* that the governing body of the Panel, at its first session, consider, for possible approval:
 - (a) The proposal by the Executive Director to provide the administrative arrangements for the Panel’s secretariat established pursuant to [paragraphs [--] to [--]] of the foundational document, in accordance with the rules and practices of the United Nations;
 - (b) The proposal by the Executive Director to provide the financial arrangements for the Panel, including hosting the [trust fund for the Panel] established pursuant to [paragraphs [--] to [--]] of the foundational document;
 - (c) The indicative budget contained in [document [--]] to give effect to secretariat and financial arrangements for the Panel, including an indicative budget for the intersessional period [insert years];
5. *Also recommends* that the governing body of the Panel, at its first session, consider draft decision [--] on measures to give effect to arrangements outlined in the foundational document, as set out in the annex to the present decision.

Annex to draft decision [--]

Draft decision [--] of the governing body of the panel at its first session

Measures to give effect to arrangements in the foundational document

The governing body of the [insert full name of panel],

Noting that a secretariat and trust fund have been established pursuant to [paragraphs [--] to [--]] and [paragraphs [--] to [--]], respectively, of the foundational document,

Considering that effect should be given to arrangements in the foundational document comprising secretariat and financial arrangements, strategic partnerships, and the process for determining the work programme, including prioritization, in a timely manner,

Noting the proposal by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to provide the administrative arrangements for the Panel’s secretariat, as recommended by the intergovernmental meeting,

Welcoming the contributions received by the United Nations Environment Programme since the adoption of United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/8 of 2 March 2022 leading to the

establishment of the Panel, and additional contributions that have been and will be provided through other organizations to support the activities of the Panel, which have been acknowledged as in-kind contributions from those contributors to the Panel,

Noting the proposal by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to provide the financial arrangements for the Panel, including hosting the trust fund for the Panel, as recommended by the intergovernmental meeting,

Noting that the foundational document, in its paragraphs [--] to [--], provides for strategic partnerships for the Panel,

Noting the proposal on the process for determining the work programme, including prioritization, and the need for that proposal to be taken into account in the development of the Panel's first work programme,

Secretariat

1. *Accepts* the proposal submitted by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme contained in [document [--]] to provide the administrative arrangements for the Panel's secretariat;
2. *Requests* the Executive Director to provide administrative arrangements for the Panel's secretariat in accordance with the rules and practices of the United Nations;
3. *Also requests* the Executive Director to recruit the Executive Secretary of the Panel as soon as possible;
4. *Further requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to:
 - (a) Finalize a host country agreement with the Government of [host country] for the presence of the secretariat of the Panel in [city];
 - (b) Make any arrangements necessary for the secretariat of the Panel to operate, with a view to having a functioning secretariat by the start of the second session of the governing body of the Panel, at the latest;
 - (c) Fill posts in the secretariat in an incremental manner, subject to the availability of resources and taking into account the development of the work programme;

Financial arrangements

5. *Adopts* the financial procedures set out in the annex to the present decision;
6. *Considers* that the administrative and financial estimates contained in [document [--]] provide a basis for financial arrangements for the Panel;
7. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to provide the financial arrangements for the Panel, including hosting the trust fund for the Panel in accordance with the rules and practices of the United Nations;
8. *Requests* the United Nations Environment Programme to continue to receive financial contributions that are provided for the Panel until administrative arrangements for the trust fund for the Panel are finalized, and to transfer any fund balance from the interim fund structure to the trust fund once the latter has been established;
9. *Invites* pledges and contributions to the trust fund from Governments, United Nations bodies, intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholders, including foundations and others in the private sector, to support the work of the Panel;

Strategic partnerships

10. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare guidelines for formalizing strategic partnerships for the Panel;

Process for determining the work programme, including prioritization

11. *Considers* that the proposal contained in [document [--]] provides a basis for the development of the Panel's first work programme for consideration by the governing body of the Panel at its second session.

ADVANCE