

Bonn Declaration for a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste

We the ministers, heads of delegation, and stakeholder leaders, having gathered in Bonn, Germany, during the high-level segment of the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, on 28 and 29 September 2023, to strengthen action to tackle the crisis of pollution from chemicals and waste, hereby declare the following:

1. Pollution is the world's largest risk factor for disease and premature death, with pollution from chemicals contributing to millions of those deaths, illnesses and disabilities each year.
2. The sound management of chemicals and waste is essential for achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Chemical pollution jeopardizes sustainable development; the market and non-market cost of inaction could be as high as 10 per cent of the global gross domestic product.¹ Chemical pollution hinders the enjoyment of a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and of the right to a safe and healthy working environment. The impacts of chemical pollution disproportionately affect people living in poverty, informal workers, Indigenous Peoples and other groups in vulnerable situations. Chemicals often have impacts on human health, particularly that of women and children. Gender equality can support the sound management of chemicals and waste.
3. The crises of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss are closely interrelated and need to be addressed in an integrated manner. The sound management of chemicals and waste will contribute significantly to the achievement of the climate objectives of the Paris Agreement and the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and will thereby assure the long-term integrity of vital ecosystem services and their productive capacity.
4. At the same time, chemicals are, and will continue to be, an integral part of our everyday lives. Annual global chemical sales were projected to double between 2017 and 2030.² The impacts of chemical pollution are higher in countries with limited chemicals management capacity.
5. The global goal of achieving the sound management of chemicals by 2020 was not met, despite efforts made under several global agreements and guidelines. In 2006, the international community adopted the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (Strategic Approach) to strengthen the coherence and synergies between existing relevant international instruments, bodies and agencies. The Strategic Approach provided an international multisectoral and multi-stakeholder platform for voluntary partnerships and cooperative initiatives.
6. The sound management of chemicals and waste requires urgent action across all sectors of society and the economy. It should promote a just transition worldwide, with no one left behind, in line with the principles as set out in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, taking into account regional and national circumstances and capabilities in terms of availability of skills, technology, institutional capacity, and finance, as well as countries' respective sustainable development priorities.
7. We therefore endorse the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste, which, together with this declaration, reflects our unwavering shared commitment to strengthening action towards the sound management of chemicals and waste, building on the lessons from and cooperative efforts under the Strategic Approach.
8. We will prevent exposure to harmful chemicals, phase out the most harmful ones, where appropriate, and enhance the safe management of such chemicals where they are needed. We will actively promote and support transitions to circular economies, including through the development of safe chemical and non-chemical alternatives and substitutes that protect health and the environment and lead to reduced waste, recycling free from harmful chemicals, and efficient resource utilization.
9. In accordance with United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 4/8 on sound management of chemicals and waste, we will strengthen our coordination and cooperation efforts at all levels to enhance coherence and complementarity in the chemicals and waste sectors, including

¹ *Global Chemicals Outlook II: From Legacies to Innovative Solutions: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (United Nations Environment Programme, 2019), p. 170.

² Ibid.

through integrating and mainstreaming the sound management of chemicals and waste in national development plans, domestic budgets and relevant sectoral policies.

10. We will actively promote research and innovation for the development of safe and sustainable chemicals, materials, products and processes, including solutions coming from Indigenous Peoples and traditional knowledge systems.

11. We are committed to strengthening capacity-building, technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, and financial support, including from domestic sources, regional and international development cooperation and assistance, as well as from the private sector and philanthropy.

12. We are committed to the effective and efficient management of chemicals and waste through accountability, transparency, and access to information on chemicals relating to the health and safety of humans and the environment, and access to justice, as well as inclusive and meaningful participation that enables multisectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

13. We will engage in the international efforts currently under way to establish a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, as well as to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

14. We invite United Nations entities and other relevant international organizations, including the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization, to strengthen their role in generating reliable chemicals- and waste-related data, and to facilitate relevant action and collaboration based on scientific evidence. We further invite the governing bodies of those organizations, in accordance with their respective mandates, to strengthen their cooperation and coordination to support the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste, and to integrate its goals into their programmes of work and budgets, as appropriate.

15. We consider the active leadership, commitment and partnership roles of the private sector and industry throughout chemical value and supply chains essential to the success of the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste. We strongly encourage efforts to significantly strengthen investment by the private sector and industry in the implementation of robust life-cycle management, due diligence and resource efficiency policies and measures for a just transition, thereby creating business and growth opportunities.

16. We recognize that inclusive and meaningful participation of and progressive action by all relevant stakeholders across all sectors will be essential for achieving the strategic objectives and targets of the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste and all the Sustainable Development Goals.

17. We note General Assembly resolution 76/300 of 28 July 2022 on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and its importance for the promotion of human well-being and the full enjoyment of all human rights.

18. We are determined to reach our vision of a planet free of harm from chemicals and waste for a safe, healthy and sustainable future. We therefore commit ourselves, in a spirit of solidarity and partnership, to implementing the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste to increase global ambition and action, including:

(a) Protecting and respecting human rights for the benefit of present and future generations;

(b) Developing and adopting the necessary national chemicals and waste frameworks, strategies, legislation and action plans to improve the management and control of pollution from chemicals and waste;

(c) Enhancing national action that supports the implementation, and complements the achievement, of other existing relevant chemicals- and waste-related United Nations multilateral agreements, standards and commitments;

(d) Enhancing the safe production of food, feed and fibre by preventing or, where prevention is not feasible, minimizing the adverse impacts of pesticides on health and the environment;

(e) Protecting human health, particularly the health of women and children, with special attention to early childhood;

- (f) Promoting decent, safe, healthy and sustainable work throughout value and supply chains;
 - (g) Strengthening sustainable, predictable, adequate and accessible long-term financing from all sources so that no one is left behind;
 - (h) Strengthening the development and provision of safe and sustainable chemicals with reduced adverse impacts for downstream industry users, workers and consumers;
 - (i) Enhancing cooperation to combat the continued illegal traffic of hazardous chemicals and waste.
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