

Ad hoc 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 (SPP OEWG)

9 December 2024

16:00 - 16:30 (EAT; GMT + 3) virtual

Meeting Summary

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The Chair, Ms. Gudi Alkemade, welcomed the participants and introduced the provisional agenda. The agenda was adopted with no changes.

Agenda item 2: Venue and dates of the OEWG 3.2

2. The proponents that had offered to host OEWG 3.2 and the intergovernmental meeting were invited by the Chair to provide any relevant updates to the Bureau. Ms. Judith Torres informed the meeting that, since Uruguay does not expect to be able to absorb the incremental costs of hosting the meetings, Uruguay can support the offer to hold the meetings in China. Prof. Li informed the Bureau that China is still keen on hosting the meetings in Hangzhou and that China is flexible on the dates to facilitate a possible back-to-back meeting with the BRS regional meeting for Asia Pacific to be held in the same period, and that discussions on the host country agreement are still ongoing.

3. Upon questions by the Bureau, the secretariat furthermore informed the meeting of the following:

- Given that the fallback option of a date in February in Nairobi may be too soon to prepare well for the meetings, the secretariat has inquired availability of UN offices in April and June, resulting in a new fallback option in Nairobi in June, whilst the premises were not found available for a fallback option in April.
- Confirmation that the issues related to the host country agreement with China so far have not been resolved.
- That the proposed dates in June (14-20 June) are back-to-back with the meeting of the OEWG of the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC), currently planned in the week of 22-27 June in Nairobi.

4. Bureau members thanked once again the governments of China and Uruguay for their offers that are welcomed as a sign of commitment to the process. Some Bureau members emphasized that such offers should be prioritized in considering the dates and venue of the resumed third session and the intergovernmental meeting.

5. Upon receipt of the new information, the Chair summarized the situation as follows:

- The fallback option to hold the meeting in Nairobi in February would not be commensurate with providing delegations to come well prepared to the meeting and she advised Bureau members to consider taking it off the table.

- The proposed revised dates of 6-12 April 2025 would allow the meetings to be held in Hangzhou, China, back-to-back with the BRS regional meeting for the Asia Pacific region. However, this option comes with the uncertainty whether UNEP and the Government of China can resolve the issues in the host country agreement in due time.
- The option of holding the meetings in Uruguay in Punta del Este 14-20 June comes with the uncertainty of the change in government and whether resources can be mobilized to cover the incremental costs. The government of Uruguay is ready to step back and support the meetings to be held in China.
- A new fallback option has been identified for the meetings to be held 14-20 June in Nairobi, that would be back-to-back with the GFC OEWG planned for the week of 22-27 June in Nairobi.

6. Following discussion, the Bureau agreed to recommend the following:

- To take the option to hold the meetings in Nairobi in February off the table;
- To request the secretariat to continue efforts to finalize the host country agreement with the Government of China for the meetings to be held 6-12 April in Hangzhou, China;
- That the fallback option will be the dates of 14-20 June;
- That by the end of December / beginning of January there should be clarity on the feasibility to finalize the host country agreement, and that alternatively the Bureau will recommend in its next meeting in the first half of January on the location of the fallback option to hold the meetings 14-20 June, taking into account the funding situation.

Agenda item 3: Other Matters

7. No other matters were discussed.

Agenda item 4: Closing of the meeting

8. The meeting ended at 17:33 EAT.

Participants

Bureau members

Ms. Gudi Alkemade, Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Policy Coordinator, International Affairs Directorate Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, Netherlands

Ms. Linda Kosgei, Rapporteur of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Head of MEAs, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry of Kenya

Mr. Oumar Diaouré Cisse, Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Point Focal SAICM, Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Assainissement et du Développement Durable, Mali

Prof. Jinhui Li, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Distinguished Professor, School of Environment, Tsinghua University, China

Mr. Michel Tschirren, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Senior Policy Advisor at the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), Switzerland

Mr. Alexandru Roznov, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Assistant Counsellor, Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, Romania

Mr. Roman Filonenko, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Senior Specialist of the Environmental Safety Division of the Government of Ukraine

Ms. Judith Torres, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and International Relations and Cooperation Office of the Ministry of the Environment, Uruguay

Mr. Linroy Christian, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the OEWG SPP and Director of Department of Analytical Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs

UNEP SPP Secretariat:

Ms. Tessa Goverse

Ms. Nalini Sharma

Ms. Irene Galan

Ms. Kaai Tung Chan

Mr. Richard Miesen

Mr. Zhanyun Wang

Observer(s):

Ms. Jacqueline Alvarez, UNEP

Ms. Lesley Onyon, World Health Organization

Regrets

Bureau member:

H.E. Saqlain Syedah, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Ambassador of Pakistan to Germany