



**Governing Council
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Environment Programme**

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Policy issues: Environment and development

Chemicals management

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to Governing Council decision 24/3 II of 9 February 2007 on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

The document provides background information for the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at its tenth session.

* UNEP/GCSS.X/1

I. Suggested action by the Governing Council

1. The Governing Council may wish to consider the adoption of a decision along the lines suggested below:

The Governing Council,

Recalling its decision SS.IX/1 of 9 February 2006 endorsing the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management as adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 6 February 2006,

Recalling also its decision 24/3 II of 9 February 2007 on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management,

1. *Acknowledges* the report of the Executive Director on the explorations of the Strategic Approach secretariat of ways to make more effective use of the funding provisions of the Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach to identify those areas that can support implementation of appropriate and relevant objectives of the Strategic Approach, and the endeavours by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals in implementing the Strategic Approach;

2. *Supports* the initiatives undertaken by the Executive Director to inform the heads of the secretariats of the Global Environment Facility and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol of the invitation set out in the Overarching Policy Strategy to consider whether and how they might support implementation of appropriate and relevant Strategic Approach objectives, within their mandates;

3. *Requests* the Executive Director to continue to broaden the funding basis for the Strategic Approach and to report on progress to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its twenty-fifth session;

4. *Urges* Governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and others in a position to do so to contribute financially and in kind to the Strategic Approach secretariat, the Quick Start Programme and its trust fund;

5. *Encourages* the Executive Director to continue the excellent cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme and other participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals;

6. *Requests* the Executive Director to report to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum on progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Approach at regular intervals.

II. Decision 24/3 II on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management.

1. In its decision 24/3 II of 9 February 2007, the Governing Council encouraged the Strategic Approach secretariat to explore ways to make more effective use of the funding provisions of the Overarching Policy Strategy of the Strategic Approach to identify those areas that can support implementation of appropriate and relevant objectives of the Strategic Approach.

2. The Governing Council requested the Executive Director to report to the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its tenth special session on the results of the activities undertaken in that regard.

3. The Governing Council further requested the Executive Director to continue the collaboration between the United Nations Environment Programme and other participating organizations of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals and to prepare a report for consideration by the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its tenth special session on endeavours by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) in implementing the Strategic Approach.

A. Exploration by the Strategic Approach secretariat on more effective use of funding provisions

4. The Overarching Policy Strategy provides that financial arrangements for the Strategic Approach include, among other things:

- a) Actions at the national or sub-national levels to support financing of Strategic Approach objectives;
- b) Enhancing industry partnerships and financial and technical participation in the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives;
- c) Integration of the Strategic Approach objectives into multilateral and bilateral development assistance cooperation;
- d) Making more effective use of and building upon existing sources of relevant global funding;
- e) Supporting initial capacity-building activities for the implementation of Strategic Approach objectives by establishing a programme to be called the Quick Start Programme;
- f) Inviting Governments and other stakeholders to provide resources to enable the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to fulfil its functions.

5. The status of the Strategic Approach secretariat activities on each of the above-mentioned arrangements is as follows:

- a) Preliminary and partial information on action at the national or sub-national levels to support financing of Strategic Approach objectives has been sought from Governments in the context of preparations for regional meetings during 2006 and 2007. It is expected that more detailed information will be gathered as part of the reporting on implementation of the Strategic Approach that is required for the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management to be held in May 2009. Modalities for this reporting are currently being developed with the assistance of an international steering committee and are expected to include the preparation of a baseline report on the state of global chemicals management as of 2006;
- b) On 26 January 2007, the Executive Director of UNEP gave a presentation on the Strategic Approach to senior executives from the chemicals industry during the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The Strategic Approach secretariat participated in a follow-up meeting organized by the Forum secretariat with corporate affairs and other managers of ten major chemicals manufacturing companies in London on 9 May 2007. Companies agreed that they would take stock of their activities before resuming discussions on new initiatives. In the meantime, the chemicals industry has continued to emphasize its Responsible Care and Global Product Strategy initiatives as its principal contributions to SAICM implementation;
- c) Evidence of the integration of Strategic Approach objectives into multilateral and bilateral development assistance cooperation has been seen in funding of the Strategic Approach's Quick Start Programme, for which major contributions have been committed by the development cooperation agencies of the Governments of Norway and Sweden and by the European Commission. The Strategic Approach secretariat arranged for representatives of the secretariat of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank to discuss the integration of chemicals management in development planning at a meeting of Strategic Approach donor Governments in Paris on 11 June 2007. The Strategic Approach secretariat has also facilitated Quick Start Programme trust fund projects for Ecuador, Macedonia and Uganda, which will, with the assistance of UNEP and UNDP, address the Quick Start Programme's strategic priority of "undertaking analysis, interagency coordination, and public participation activities directed at enabling the implementation of the Strategic Approach by integrating – i.e., mainstreaming – the sound management of chemicals in national strategies, and thereby informing development assistance cooperation priorities.";
- d) In order to facilitate more effective use of and building upon existing sources of relevant global funding, on 6 June 2006 the Executive Director of UNEP wrote to the heads of the secretariats of the Global Environment Facility and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and its Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer to inform them of the invitation set out in the Overarching Policy Strategy to consider

whether and how they might support implementation of appropriate and relevant Strategic Approach objectives, within their mandates. The secretariat of the Multilateral Fund placed the matter before its Executive Committee in July 2006, but it has not yet been considered by the Parties to the Montreal Protocol. While the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility has not yet responded to the Executive Director's letter, in July 2007 it finalized a new strategy on sound chemicals management that is aligned with the Strategic Approach's overall objective of sound management of chemicals by 2020. The strategy envisages activities under current focal areas of the Global Environment Facility that are compatible with many of the individual objectives set out in the Overarching Policy Strategy;

e) The Quick Start Programme has been initiated, including through the establishment of a UNEP-administered trust fund. As at 31 October 2007, resources for the trust fund had been contributed in 2006–2007 by the Governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, India, Madagascar, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. Details of the work of the Programme to date are provided in the chapter on UNEP in the note by the Executive Director on chemicals management (document UNEP/GCSS.X/INF/7).

f) As of 31 October 2007, the core budget of the Strategic Approach secretariat has been supported in 2007 by contributions from the Governments of Australia, Denmark, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States and from the European Commission, the UNEP Environment Fund and the World Health Organization. Secretariat activities, such as the organization of regional meetings, have been supported in 2007 by the Governments of Germany, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

B. Endeavours by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals to implement the Strategic Approach

6. In 1995, IOMC was established following recommendations made by the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro. Its members comprise seven organizations: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), OECD, UNEP, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and WHO. In addition, two observer organizations are participating in IOMC: UNDP and the World Bank.

7. The objective of IOMC is to strengthen international cooperation in the field of chemicals and to increase the effectiveness of the participating and observer organizations' international chemicals programmes. It promotes coordination of policies and activities, pursued jointly or separately, to achieve the sound management of chemicals in relation to human health and the environment. The vision statement of IOMC is to be the pre-eminent mechanism for initiating, facilitating and coordinating international action to achieve the goal agreed at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development of ensuring that, by the year 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on the environment and human health.

8. IOMC was a co-convenor, together with UNEP and the Intergovernmental Forum for Chemicals Safety (IFCS), of the International Conference on Chemicals Management held in Dubai in 2006 which adopted the Strategic Approach. Ongoing activities on chemicals within the participating and observer organizations of the IOMC support the main goal of the Strategic Approach as specified in the Overarching Policy Strategy. IOMC plays a key role as executing agency for the implementation of government-mandated priorities agreed for the Strategic Approach.

9. IOMC has specifically addressed the issue of coordination of participating organizations' activities relating to Strategic Approach implementation and has established mechanisms for sharing information. At each bi-annual IOMC meeting, for example, participating organizations discuss and coordinate their new activities supporting Strategic Approach implementation. In this respect, each participating organization has agreed to prepare (and regularly update) papers listing these activities. These papers are posted on the respective participating organization website and links are being established between the participating organizations' websites and the Strategic Approach page of the IOMC website (www.who.int/iomc/saicm/). Participating organizations have also nominated Strategic Approach focal points to facilitate contacts and exchanges about issues related to the Strategic Approach, in particular with its secretariat.

10. A report on the activities of IOMC and its participating organizations in implementing the Strategic Approach is provided in the note by the Executive Director on chemicals management (UNEP/GCSS.X/INF/7).
