

Taking Stock and Exploring the Future of Global Chemicals Management in a Sustainable Development Context

13-14 April 2016 Geneva, Switzerland

Background and context

The Global Chemicals Outlook (GCO-I) was published in February 2013 as a first comprehensive overview of issues and challenges related to the sound management of chemicals globally. GCO-I assessed the status of health, environmental, economic and institutional factors related to the production, use, and disposal of chemicals, with a focus on issues relevant to developing countries and countries with economies in transition. While alerting ministers and decision-makers on the most pressing challenges pertaining to the changes and trends, it also gathered a set of facts, evidence and arguments to make a convincing economic case for investing in sound chemicals management.

The twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum held in Nairobi, 18–22 February 2013, recognized the significance of the findings of the GCO and its recommendations. The Governing Council requested UNEP to continue its work on Global Chemicals Outlooks, particularly in areas where data were found to be lacking or inadequate, and to enhance transparency through regionally balanced stakeholder involvement, inter alia, with a view to developing in the future a tool for assessing progress towards the achievement of the sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes, including the existing 2020 goal, taking into account and building upon other existing sources of information.

The adoption of the SDGs and its recognition of sound management of chemicals for sustainable development, as well as the outcome of ICCM4 and its decision to advance a post 2020 SAICM agenda, have created a window of opportunity to shape the future of global chemicals management within the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. With the goal to be forward looking and policy relevant, the GCO-II is expected to capture the state of scientific, management and policy knowledge relevant for an effective chemicals management and to support policy makers and key stakeholders in their search to shape a post 2020 global approach to chemicals management.

Objectives of the Meeting

In the above context, and responding to the Governing Council request, UNEP will convene a consultative expert meeting on 13-14 April 2016 in Geneva to discuss the development of GCO-II. The overall goal of the meeting is to provide advice on a range of aspects relevant for preparing GCO- II, including identification of strategically relevant chemicals management topics considered to be essential for a post 2020 global approach, which would have as its ultimate goal to advance sustainable chemistry globally in a sustainable development context.

The outcomes of the meeting will be available for UNEA2 in May 2016.

The consultative experts meeting will be composed of regionally balanced, multi-sectoral scientific and technical experts from governments, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society organizations, including NGOs and academic representatives.

Partners

The GCO II project is implemented by UNEP Chemicals and Waste Branch, working in close consultation with the SAICM Secretariat located in the Branch, the BRS Secretariat, and the UNEP Resource Efficiency Sub Programme and its two Branches, the Economics and Trade Branch and the Sustainable Lifestyles, Cities and Industry Branch. Following the practice for GCO I, the project will closely collaborate with OECD, WHO, as well as other participating organizations of the Inter Organization Programme of the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC).