

Statement by the Members of the Environment Management Group

Chemicals are an integral part of our daily life. They can contribute positively to human well-being, if managed well, while the unsound management of chemicals and waste has serious negative impacts on sustainable development.

We therefore underscore that the sound management of chemicals throughout their lifecycle, and the appropriate and safe disposal of waste, particularly hazardous waste, is essential in order to avoid significant risks to human health and ecosystems.

Sound chemicals management is a broad, diverse and cross-cutting issue that requires a multi-sectoral, multi-level and multi-stakeholder approach, central to achieving the objectives of the broader development agenda. Many stakeholders, including Member States through global and regional multilateral agreements and processes such as the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and many of the agencies of the UN system, are active in the field of chemicals management.

This highlights the importance of continuing to enhance cooperation and coordination among international bodies. This importance has been recognized for example, in the Joint Statement on “Participation in the Implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management” made in February 2006 by the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC),¹ which, together with other UN entities, contribute significantly to international efforts towards sound chemicals management.

To step up our joint and coordinated efforts to promote the sound management of chemicals as a critical component of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, we, the Executive Heads of Members of the Environment Management Group, hereby, as appropriate, commit to:

1. continuing to promote and raise the profile of sound chemicals management within the UN system;
2. promoting the integration of chemicals management issues across sectors and in the broader context of economic and social development planning;
3. ensuring additional synergies, between our respective UN organizations and with related organizations, in supporting countries in activities to achieve sound chemicals management by 2020 (the World Summit on Sustainable Development 2020 goal).

We make this commitment with a view to continuing our cooperation and demonstrating what a strengthened multisectoral approach can bring to the development and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and what enhanced system-wide cooperation can bring to other key international processes, agreements, and initiatives that directly or indirectly address chemicals and waste management.

¹ FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO, UNITAR, World Bank, WHO and OECD participate in IOMC.