SP/EB.10/8
1 April 2025

English only

REPORT OF THE TENTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The tenth meeting of the Executive Board of the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm (BRS) conventions, the Minamata Convention, the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC), which took place in hybrid format in Geneva, Switzerland, was opened by the co-chairs, Ms Anna Fransson (Sweden) and Mr Helges Bandeira (Brazil) at 11:00 (CEST) on 17 March 2025.

2. The co-chairs welcomed the participants, both in person and online, and conducted a tour de table before reminding the Board that a second informal meeting with the Executive Board of the Global Framework on Chemicals Fund would take place on Wednesday 19 March 2025. Noting that the Special Programme was experiencing financial difficulties, which would be discussed during the meeting, the co-chairs noted that it was important to celebrate the successes of the Special Programme as this was the tenth anniversary.

3. The meeting was attended by members and/or alternates from all Executive Board constituencies and represented quorum for decision making in accordance with Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure for the Executive Board of the Special Programme.

ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

2.1 Adoption of agenda and organization of work

4. The co-chairs introduced the provisional agenda and the organization of work, for adoption by the Executive Board. In doing so they highlighted relevant provisions of the Executive Board's Rules of Procedure governing the conduct of the meeting, emphasizing Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure, which provides that "In cases where a recipient country that is represented in the Executive Board is involved in a project submitted to the Executive Board for its consideration, the representative of that country shall be excused from decision-making by the Executive Board in relation to the project in question" as well as Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure, which provides that the Executive Board shall make every effort to take its decisions by consensus.

5. The agenda and organization of work were adopted.

ITEM 3. APPROVAL OF THE REPORT OF THE NINTH MEETING

6. The Executive Board was invited to consider and approve the report of the ninth meeting of the Executive Board meeting, held in hybrid format from 8 to 10 April 2024, as contained in document SP/EB.10/2. The report was approved.

ITEM 4. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION

ITEM 4.1 Update on the financial situation

7. On the status of pledges and contributions the Secretariat update the Executive Board as follows:

a. The Secretariat expressed UNEP's gratitude to the donors for their ongoing contributions and support. The total amount from the start of the Special Programme to March 2025 stood at just over US $35,3 million, including amounts yet to be received but underpinned by a donor agreement. One of the Special Programme contributions, in the amount of USD 300,000, was not included in the total amount because it was currently frozen, pending a decision from the donor on whether it could go forward.

b. Following the Executive Board's recommendation at its last meeting to submit requests to three donors for the no cost extension of their grants which were due to expire in 2025, two of the donors had approved the extension. While the third donor had been very supportive and engaged on the matter, a decision had yet to be made.

c. The Secretariat outlined a best-case scenario, where the grant extension would be approved, and a worst-case scenario, in case the grant extension was not approved. Considering staffing needs until the end of the Special Programme, even the best-case scenario was cause for concern and resource mobilization was an ever-growing priority.

8. The Secretariat then provided the Executive Board with an overview of the updated resource mobilization strategy and action plan that was made available in document SP/EB.10/INF/5. The Secretariat noted that:

a. In addition to refining the Special Programme donor management process and working to deepen relationships with existing donors, most of the effort had been spent on trying to identify potential new donors.

b. The first priority in this respect was government donors, and the Secretariat was working with UNEP's regional offices in this regard. Work had also been undertaken in seeking out private sector donors in the form of foundations. The Secretariat noted that access to foundation funding was complex and time consuming but would continue to be pursued.

c. To date the efforts to bring in new donors had not borne fruit; although there was interest in the Special Programme mandate, it was evident that the current constrained funding and geopolitical environment emphasised different challenges and competing priorities.

d. The Secretariat appealed to the Executive Board to consider how they, as Board members and co-chairs could as appropriate support the Special Programme resource mobilization efforts.

9. The Executive Board discussed the financial situation and the scenarios outlined by the Secretariat extensively and noted the importance of ensuring sufficient staffing costs to allow for monitoring and oversight of the country project portfolio through to their end and for the eventual finalisation and closure of the Special Programme itself as a project under UNEP's Programme of Work.

10. After taking some decisions on specific approved country projects under agenda item 4.2 the Executive Board decided that the meeting would go ahead to consider the applications under the eighth round of funding despite the financial situation, given the considerable effort and time that applicants had invested in developing their applications. Any application approvals would be conditional upon the identification of funds to support the implementation of the approved projects. The Board would also consider whether to launch the ninth round of funding at this time given the financial constraints and decided to review the updated application package during the meeting, before taking a decision on whether to adopt them at this time.

11. The Board agreed to revisit the financial situation at an online ad hoc meeting in April 2025, should the requested extension of the remaining grant not be approved by that time, to take decisions on how to address the shortfall of funding and to comply with the timelines and legal requirements for closure of the grant.

ITEM 4.2 Update on country project implementation

12. The Secretariat provided an overview of progress in implementation of the country projects, highlighting particular projects for consideration and, in some cases decision, by the Executive Board. The portfolio

consisted of 83 approved projects, of which 55 were currently ongoing, two had agreements signed but had not yet been processed further, three had not yet had agreements signed and one had been cancelled. Of the 55 ongoing projects, most of them were less than halfway through implementation, as measured by the expenditure rate against their individual project budgets.

13. The Secretariat then highlighted some of the successes to date of the Special Programme, in capacity building, policy and legal development, international commitments and institutional coordination. For example:

a. 28 countries had undertaken training, awareness raising and technical tools development for the sound management of chemicals and waste.

b. 17 projects had prepared or revised chemical and waste management legislation and 24 had developed or updated national policies, plans or strategies for chemicals and waste management

c. Three countries had made progress on ratification of the Rotterdam Convention and nine were moving towards Minamata Convention ratification; six countries had submitted national reports to the MEAs.

d. 25 countries had established stakeholder coordination mechanisms and had supported establishment of a dedicated entity responsible for chemicals and waste management.

14. A total of 55 extensions had been granted to date on 35 projects, with the co-chairs' approval under the mandate given to them by the Executive Board. The Secretariat noted that these extensions were 'no-cost' in that no additional funds were allocated to the projects. However, there was an inherent cost in terms of time and staff costs for the processing of the required legal amendments extensions. There could also be an effective financial cost if the grant underpinning the project was expected to expire before the period of the extension, thereby necessitating a change of grant and reducing the balance of funds available under the Trust Fund.

15. The secretariat have been working hard to close out projects that have been running for a long time, which could be challenging and time-consuming. That said, several projects had submitted requests for extension that had not yet been actioned pending clarity on the grant extensions. Some of these requests had been approved in principle by the co-chairs, while there are others that had not yet been sent through for approval. The board was invited to consider what approach to take with these.

16. The Secretariat recalled that the Executive Board had adopted a policy on delays in signature of project agreements, which allowed for cancellation of projects if project agreements were not signed within 12 months of approval unless the delay was outside of the control of the partner. Three seventh-round projects had not yet signed their project cooperation agreements and the Executive Board was asked to consider whether to cancel these projects, in light of the financial situation.

17. The Secretariat then described the issues arising in three ongoing projects and requested the Board's decision on these. The Secretariat also provided an update on other project issues arising where the Board's decision was not required at this time. One of the latter was the project in Nauru, on which the Executive Board had taken a decision at its ninth meeting; the project partner had confirmed that the project could not be completed; signed project reports were awaited to facilitate project closure.

18. Two projects had recently signed their project cooperation agreements, but had not yet been processed further pending the Executive Board's guidance in light of the financial situation.

19. The Executive Board discussed the issues raised by the Secretariat and took the following decisions:

a. **Angola2**: given the lack of progress towards signature of the project agreement as a result of the slow finalisation of final reporting on the first project in the country, the Executive Board decided to cancel the project.

b. **Democratic Republic of the Congo:** in light of the slow progress since the start of the project and the tardiness on the part of the project partner in responding to the Secretariat, the Board authorised the Secretariat to invoke the suspension and termination clause in the project agreement.

c. **Eritrea**: given the country's responsiveness and the finalisation of its project documents and project agreements, the Executive Board decided to continue with the project, subject to the availability of funds.

d. **Guinea**: the Executive Board decided to place the project on hold pending clarification of the Special Programme's financial situation. Once the funding was confirmed this project would be prioritized for first disbursement.

e. **Moldova3**: the Executive Board decided to place the project on hold pending clarification of the Special Programme's financial situation. Once the funding was confirmed this project would be the second priority for first disbursement.

f. **Peru**: in light of the cancellation of the agreement with the original implementing partner that could not complete the project owing to changes in national legislation, and the lack of progress in completing a new agreement with the government of Peru to complete the project, the Board agreed to cancel this project.

g. **Sri Lanka:** given the lack of progress towards signature of the project agreement, the Executive Board decided to cancel the project.

h. **Zambia:** in light of the lack of progress since the start of the project and the tardiness on the part of the project partner in responding to the Secretariat, the Board authorised the Secretariat to invoke the suspension and termination clause in the project agreement.

ITEM 5. CONSIDERATION OF ELIGIBLE AND COMPLETE APPLICATIONS FOR THE EIGHTH ROUND OF FUNDING UNDER THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME

20. Under this agenda item the Executive Board was invited to review and consider the eligible and complete applications submitted under the eighth round of funding, with a view to approving and prioritizing projects that would receive funding subject to the identification of funds to support the implementation of the projects.

21. To facilitate the work of the Executive Board, the Secretariat had made available the full application packages submitted by each country, which included application forms, signed endorsement letters, letters of support and additional information, as well as the appraisals undertaken by the Secretariat and the internal task team set out in documents SP/EB.10/3 and its addenda SP/EB.10/3/Add.1, SP/EB.10/3/Add.2, SP/EB.10/3/Add.3 and SP/EB.10/3/Add.4.

22. Following presentations by the Secretariat on each of the 17 eligible and complete projects submitted under the eighth round of funding, the Board discussed the merits of each project in light of the appraisal criteria set out in the application package and provided comments on each application to further strengthen the applications that were approved for funding and to provide feedback on projects that were not approved.

23. Following its discussion, the Executive Board approved eight projects with budgets amounting to up to US $2,148,725, subject to the identification of sufficient funding to support their implementation. The approved projects were selected and prioritized based on their merits, regional balance, and capacity, while also taking into account the special needs of least developed countries and small island developing states, as follows:

Table 1. Projects approved under the eighth round of funding

	Country	Region/Classification	Project Title	Approved budget
1	**Ethiopia 2**	**Africa/LDC**	Enhancing Institutional Capacity for The Implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions, GFC, in Ethiopia.	$275,000
2	**Mexico**	**LAC/Developing**	Strengthening national capacity for the comprehensive management of chemicals and hazardous waste in Mexico and accelerating the implementation of the	$274,980

			Basel, Stockholm, Rotterdam and Minamata Conventions and the New Global Framework on Chemicals.	
3	**Lebanon**	**Asia Pacific/Developing**	Development of a ministerial decree for licensing activities related to harmful or dangerous chemical substances in Lebanon.	$274,995
4	**Azerbaijan**	**Central and Eastern Europe/CEIT**	Strengthening the Capacity of the Customs of Azerbaijan for Effective Surveillance and Control of Chemical and Hazardous Waste Traffic.	$275,000
5	**Nigeria 3**	**Africa/Developing**	Strengthening Institutional Frameworks for Sustainable Chemicals and Waste Management in Nigeria.	$248,750
6	**Namibia**	**Africa/Developing**	Strengthening Namibia's National capacity to implement the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions.	$275,000
7	**Antigua and Barbuda**	**LAC/SIDS**	Strengthening of the legal and institutional infrastructures for the sound management of chemicals and waste in Antigua and Barbuda through GHS and TDG implementation.	$275,000
8	**Serbia**	**Central and Eastern Europe CEIT**	Building capacity for non-toxic chemicals circularity in Serbia.	$250,000

ITEM 6. PREPARATIONS FOR THE LAUNCH OF THE NINTH ROUND OF APPLICATIONS

6.1 Presentations from the Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention, the Global Framework on Chemicals and the Global Environment Facility

24. Frank Moser, representing the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions Secretariat, provided information on the upcoming meeting of the Conferences of the Parties scheduled from 28 April to 9 May 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland, with a Ministerial Round Table to take place on 29-30 April. He outlined key topics under discussion across the three conventions, including ongoing efforts to strengthen implementation, address emerging issues, and enhance cooperation and coordination among the various multilateral environmental agreements.

25. Irene Rizzo and Alexander Romanov, representing the Minamata Convention Secretariat, provided an update on the outcome of the fourth round of funding under the Specific International Programme which launched jointly with the Special Programme's eighth round. Ten projects were approved with a total amount of around US $ 2 million. They noted that the decision-making had been challenging for the Governing Board under this round given the funding envelope available. They then described the preparations for the upcoming sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to take place in Geneva in November 2025 and provided some updates on the work on mercury trade, mercury compounds and mercury-added cosmetics, as well as describing the knowledge-sharing and capacity building activities.

26. Ms Evelyn Swain, representing the Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility, provided an update on the GEF-8 cycle, which was winding down, and the GEF-9 replenishment, which was set to being in July 2026. She noted that allocations for chemicals and waste had been fully programmed for support to the Stockholm Convention and that there was a small allocation left under the 8th cycle for Minamata Convention and the Global Framework on Chemicals. A number of projects were currently under review and were expected to be included in the June work programme for the GEF. The GEF-9 replenishment would cover the period 2026-

2030. The replenishment process was initiated following a decision by the GEF council in December 2024. The process involves discussions over a period of 18 months and preparation of the programming directions and updated strategy and policy documents with the usual consultations. It is expected that the GEF-9 programming directions would build off GEF-8, but with more ambition, integration and inclusion with a whole of society approach.

27. Kay Williams and Rebecca Chudaska, representing the Global Framework on Chemicals Secretariat, provided an update responding to this agenda item during the informal meeting between the Executive Boards of the Special Programme and the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) Fund. They provided an update on the progress with the first round of funding under the Global Framework on Chemicals Fund, which would be considered by the GFC Fund Executive Board in their meeting to be held in the same week. They described the arrangements for the first Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) of the Global Framework on Chemicals, to take place in Punta del Este, Uruguay in June 2025. Preparing for that meeting, the Secretariat outlined the work that had been done so far on developing implementation programmes and a measurability and indicators structure, producing a report on interlinkages with the Global Biodiversity Framework and a gender action plan among others.

28. Following a question-and-answer session, the Executive Board thanked the secretariats for their presentations and took note of the information provided.

6.2 Discussion of the interpretation of ‘in the mandate of the GEF’

29. The Secretariat referring to meeting document SP/EB/10/7 and provided a brief presentation recalling the information provided to and discussed by the Executive Board at its ninth meeting, including the legal opinion provided by UNEP’s Law Division on the interpretation of paragraph 4 and specifically the meaning of ‘in the mandate of the GEF’. It was noted that in the eighth round all applications were identified as having aspects that could fall into the GEF mandate. Applicants were asked to revise their applications to remove references to the Stockholm and Minamata Conventions, which was of concern as this appeared to contradict the cross-cutting nature of the Special Programme’s support to all the chemicals instruments.

30. The representative from the GEF Secretariat commented that it had been asked to review Special Programme applications for funding with an eye to what the GEF could fund and what its mandate was. She noted that the GEF Secretariat does not determine what is funded under the terms of reference of the Special Programme which would be up to the Executive Board to decide. She recalled that GEF acted as the financial mechanism to six conventions, including the Stockholm Convention and the Minamata Convention, based on guidance from the respective Conferences of the Parties. The GEF had always worked across conventions, including institutional strengthening and capacity building with the aim to generate global environmental benefits and many projects included components on policy and legislation development. Some GEF projects might provide co-benefits for implementation of the Basel and Rotterdam conventions, for which GEF did not have a specific mandate, but is linked to the GEF’s mandate under Stockholm and Minamata conventions. She noted that the GEF currently did not fund the following types of activities: chemicals management units, articles under the Stockholm and Minamata Convention where there was no guidance from the respective Conference of the Parties; monitoring except for under effectiveness evaluation for both Stockholm and Minamata or as part of project results; and standalone research, training and awareness raising that was not part of a broader project. In addition to the guidance from the Conferences of the Parties, the GEF programming directions also provided the framework for GEF’s work.

31. Noting that the interpretation of the terms of reference was within the mandate of the Executive Board as the decision-making body for the Special Programme, the Board turned to consider the proposed formulation set out in the legal opinion. It was noted that the intent of paragraph 4 of the terms of reference was to avoid duplication and that the Special Programme funding application form already contained one question on whether the applicant had consulted with the GEF operational focal point in the country and another to request information on relevant projects under the GEF and other funds in order to reduce the likelihood of overlaps.

32. Following its discussion, the Executive Board agreed that paragraph 4 of the terms of reference of the Special Programme should be interpreted as follows:

"The Special Programme should not fund activities that are in the GEF's active project portfolio but may consider funding those within the GEF's potential scope but not yet planned for GEF support".

6.3 Approval of revised application guidelines and forms

33. The Secretariat presented an overview of the updated application guidelines and forms for the ninth round of applications, as outlined in documents SP/EB/10/4, SP/EB/10/4/Add.1, SP/EB.10/Add.2, SP/EB.10/4/Add.3A, SP/EB.10/4/Add.3B and SP/EB.10/4/Add.4.

34. The representative of the Secretariat highlighted the changes in each of the documents comprising the application package components included in the addenda to document SP/EB/10/4 as described in the body of the meeting document itself. The proposed changes included removal of the possibility for regional/multi-country applications and possible reduction in the maximum amount available under the Special Programme, among other more administrative changes.

35. The Executive Board welcomed the updates made to the application documents but decided to defer decision on the two substantive points (relating to regional/multi-country applications and the maximum amount available). The other proposed changes were accepted. The Board agreed to revisit these two remaining changes at the time that it would consider the launch of the funding round.

6.4 Timeline for review and appraisal of applications

36. In light of the financial situation outlined under agenda item 4, the Executive Board decided not to launch a new funding round at this time. Should the financial situation improve before the next formal meeting of the Executive Board, the Secretariat would organise an ad hoc online meeting of the Executive Board to formally adopt the revised application package and approve an updated proposed calendar of activities to launch for the ninth round of funding.

ITEM 7. UPDATE ON THE OPERATIONS OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME

7.1 Matters arising from the informal joint meeting with the Global Framework on Chemicals Fund Executive Board

37. Following the informal meeting with the Executive Board of the Global Framework on Chemicals, held on 19 March 2025 at 9 a.m., the Board was invited to discuss any issues. It was noted that:
    a. The joint meeting primarily discussed the possibility of an arrangement of how the fund secretariats would work together in a structured manner.
    b. This would not involve merging terms of reference or merging the funds themselves but identifying areas of cooperation and coordination to ensure that both funds could run smoothly without duplication of resources.

38. Noting that the Special Programme secretariat had provided support to the GFC Fund Secretariat in the review of the 105 applications for funding received by the GFC Fund, a donor member of the board asked if this would be recompensated. The Secretariat explained that the intent was for the support to be repaid in kind, for example through the GFC Fund Secretariat's dedicated work on resource mobilisation which was a priority for both funds. However, as discussed during the informal meeting, the boards might wish to consider a more formal arrangement between the two secretariats.

39. Another Board member asked whether the terms of reference of the Special Programme staff had been revised to include this support to the GFC Fund. The Secretariat explained the generic nature of UN Secretariat job descriptions, which allowed for flexibility and meant that no such adjustment was required.

40. The Board welcomed the offer made by UNEP during the joint meetings to provide a written document for their consideration.

7.2 Update on Secretariat activities

41. The Secretariat presented an update on its activities since the last meeting, as outlined in SP/EB.10/5.

Update on Communications

42. The Secretariat updated the Board on its communications-related activities since the last Board meeting. These included a second webinar on fraud, corruption and sexual exploitation and abuse for country project focal points (which took place in January 2025), participation in a Minamata Online Panel on gender in projects and conducting a joint information campaign with the Specific International Programme's 4th round. In addition to the usual webinars for prospective applicants, the secretariat conducted clinics in the margins on the BRS COPs, and participated in person and virtually in regional meetings under the Basel Convention. The quarterly newsletter was an ongoing tool to keep the stakeholders updated.

43. The Secretariat participated in four inception workshops for new projects, and also completed the overhaul and restructure of the Special Programme webpage.

Knowledge management

44. The Secretariat had revised its online PowerBI tool making it clearer and more accessible. The tool provided an overview of the Special Programme, an interactive compilation of the types of activities in the approved projects, which were grouped thematically; and detailed information on each project including the rate of implementation.

45. The Secretariat had also developed an internal dashboard to help with the ongoing monitoring and oversight of the country projects.

Study on domestic financing mechanisms that can promote the sustainability of outcomes of projects funded through the Special Programme

46. The Secretariat provided an update on the development of the study on sustainable domestic financing options being undertaken with funding from the government of Germany. The study, prepared through collaboration between the Stockholm Environment Institute and the University of Cape Town, has been completed and is undergoing review through UNEP's publications process with the intent to publish it soon. The study was intended to support Special Programme projects to identify mechanisms that could promote sustainable domestic financial for the SMCW, as well as a roadmap to develop and implement the mechanisms.

Risk management

47. In addition to the fraud prevention webinar, the Secretariat had begun implementation of the risk management strategy adopted by the Board at its ninth meeting. Individual risk assessments on each approved project had been undertaken, with the monitoring approach to the project adjusted accordingly. Higher risk projects had more frequent engagement with the partner to help resolve issues and encourage compliance with reporting requirements. The upcoming country visit to Viet Nam was also a part of the risk management approach.

48. However, given the financial situation, the Secretariat was curtailing its travel to reduce costs and would not be able to participate in person in inception workshops pending an improvement in the financial situation.

49. At the level of the Special Programme, as discussed extensively earlier in the meeting, the biggest risk currently was the financial situation.

Independent assessment of closed projects

50. The Secretariat provided an overview of the results of the second independent assessment of closed projects under the Special Programme (Angola, Gambia, Ghana, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Nigeria, North Macedonia, South Africa and Tajikistan), highlighting lessons learned and the achievements of the various projects when measured against the core indicators of the Special Programme. The Board expressed

appreciation for the assessment, noting the good results achieved which reinforced the value of the Special Programme's support to the countries and which could underpin the Special Programme's resource mobilization efforts.

Special Programme logo

51. The Executive Board considered the logo of the Special Programme which had been adopted in 2019 by the Executive Board with the branding 'Chemicals and Waste Management Programme'. The logo had been developed for the Special Programme by UNEP's Communications Division at no cost to the Special Programme Trust Fund. In order to align with UNEP's corporate policy on the use of logos, the Secretariat had proposed a revised logo for consideration by the Executive Board. The communication materials developed with the old logo, e.g. the Special Programme comic book, could continue to be used.

52. The Executive Board endorsed the following new logo:

UN environment programme

Special Programme
on Institutional Strengthening
for Chemicals and Waste

8.2 Proposed Special Programme budget from Q2 2025 to Q1 2026

53. The Executive Board approved the proposed budget as presented, as set out in Annex III. It was noted that the budget might need to be revisited in April 2025 should there not yet be a decision on the extension of the remaining grant or if the extension was not approved.

ITEM 9. DATE AND VENUE OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

54. During the discussion of the financial situation the Executive Board had indicated that, in the event the remaining grant not being extended, or no decision on the extension provided by 15 April 2025, it would hold an online meeting of the Executive Board to take further decisions on next steps. It was agreed that the meeting, if required, would take place on 15 April 2025 in the afternoon, to accommodate different time zones.

55. The Executive Board also agreed to the possibility of an online ad hoc intersessional meeting to agree on arrangements for the launch of the ninth round of funding, should sufficient funds be identified to support this before the next formal meeting of the Board. In that event the Secretariat would consult with the co-chairs and the Board members on an appropriate time for such a meeting.

56. The Executive Board then considered two options for the eleventh formal meeting of the Executive Board. The first option, in the event that additional funding to support the operations of the Special Programme was identified, would be to hold an in-person meeting in Geneva, from 17-19 March 2026. The second option, in the event that the funding situation had not sufficiently improved, would be to hold an online meeting of the Executive Board from 17-19 March 2026 in the afternoons, Geneva time.

57. The Secretariat reminded the Executive Board that the membership would rotate in February 2026. The nominations process to launch in August 2025.

ITEM 10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

58. One Board member raised two issues under this agenda item:
a. As regional representative, it was difficult to reach out to the focal points to inform them about the call for proposals because of the difficulty in identifying up to date contact details and requested the secretariat to

support in this. The Secretariat indicated that the best resource for this purpose would be the secretariats of the Conventions and the Global Framework on Chemicals, which maintained databases of the official government focal points.

b. The fact that a number of the eighth-round applications did not have final feedback from one member of the internal task team, but that they intervened during the meeting to provide inputs, was concerning. The Board member proposed that in future, if the opportunity for feedback from one of the internal task team members had been given and the feedback on the final version was not provided, and assuming the applicant had responded to the feedback provided, that member should be deemed to have cleared the revised application. The Secretariat explained the circumstances leading to this situation. The co-chair noted that the Board's new decision on interpretation of paragraph 4 of the terms of reference should simplify matters for future funding rounds.

ITEM 11. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

59. Noting that the Secretariat would, as per its usual practice, circulate a draft meeting report for review by the members of the Executive Board, the co-chair thanked the members of the Executive Board, the observers and the Secretariat for their contributions and hard work over the past few days.

60. The meeting was closed at 2pm on Wednesday 19 March 2025.

ANNEX I
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

10th MEETING OF THE SPECIAL PROGRMAME EXECUTIVE BOARD
17-19 March 2025, Geneva, Switzerland
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX II

LIST OF ELIGIBLE AND COMPLETE APPLICATIONS UNDER THE EIGHTH ROUND OF FUNDING CONSIDERED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Africa

	Country	Country Status	Project Title	Funding requested
1	Djibouti	Least Developed Country	Strengthening the institutional, technical, and legal framework and capacities for the environmentally sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste.	$195,000
2	Eswatini	Developing Economy	Institutional Capacity Development and Strengthening for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste in the Kingdom of Eswatini.	$275,000
3	Ethiopia	Least Developed Country	Enhancing Institutional Capacity for The Implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions, GFC, in Ethiopia.	$275,000
4	Namibia	Developing Economy	Strengthening Namibia’s National capacity to implement the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions.	$275,000
5	Nigeria	Developing Economy	Strengthening Institutional Frameworks for Sustainable Chemicals and Waste Management in Nigeria.	$243,000
6	Somalia	Least Developed Country	Strengthening Chemical and Waste Management Capacity in Somalia: A Strategic Approach to Environmental Sustainability	$273,000
7	South Africa	Developing Economy	National Action Plan for Combating Illicit Trade of Hazardous Chemicals (Highly Hazardous Pesticides, Mercury, Mercury Added Products (Excluding Cosmetics), Paints and Coatings.	$470,000
	Total			**$2,006,000**

Asia Pacific

	Country	Country Status	Project Title	Funding requested
1	Kyrgyzstan	Country with Economy in Transition	Establishment and strengthening of institutional capacity of the Kyrgyz Republic for chemicals and waste management.	$275,000
2	Lebanon	Developing Economy	Development of a ministerial decree for licensing activities related to harmful or dangerous chemical substances in Lebanon.	$274,995
3	Maldives	Small Island Developing State	Maldives Chemical Watch: Institutional Strengthening for the Interception and Elimination of Illegal Chemical Trafficking.	$250,000
4	Tajikistan	Developing Economy	Enhancing environmental compliance: a framework for implementing Stockholm, Basel and Rotterdam Conventions.	$243,622
5	Turkmenistan	Developing Economy	Development of proposals for strengthening of institutional base and legal regulations for coordination, interaction of economic sectors in the field of hazardous and other waste management.	$497,259
6	Viet Nam	Developing	Strengthening institutional capacity across the plastic value chain to reduce plastic and chemical pollution.	$274,365

		Economy		
	Total			**$1,815,246**

Central and Eastern Europe

	Country	Country Status	Project Title	Funding requested
1	Azerbaijan	Country with Economy in Transition	Strengthening the Capacity of the Customs of Azerbaijan for Effective Surveillance and Control of Chemical and Hazardous Waste Traffic.	$275,000
2	Serbia	Country with Economy in Transition	Building capacity for non-toxic chemicals circularity in Serbia.	$250,000
	Total			**$525,000**

Latin American and the Caribbean

	Country	Country status	Project Title	Funding requested
1	Antigua and Barbuda	Developing Economy	Strengthening of the legal and institutional infrastructures for the sound management of chemicals and waste in Antigua and Barbuda through GHS and TDG implementation.	$275,000
2	Mexico	Developing Economy	Strengthening national capacity for the comprehensive management of chemicals and hazardous waste in Mexico and accelerating the implementation of the Basel, Stockholm, Rotterdam and Minamata Conventions and the New Global Framework on Chemicals.	$274,980
	Total			**$549,980**

ANNEX III

APPROVED BUDGET FOR Q2-Q4 2025 AND FIRST QUARTER OF 2026

	Staff/ Personnel	Contractual services	Travel	Implementing partners	Operating costs	Total
Budget from available funds:						
Salaries	1 300 000					**1 300 000**
Operating costs					65 000	**65 000**
Subtotal						**1 365 000**
Subject to identification of funds to support their implementation:						
8th round projects				2 148 725		**2 148 725**
11th Board meeting (in person)		10 000	40 000			**50 000**
Total						**3,563,725**