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**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
Third session**

Geneva, Switzerland, 17–21 June 2024 and Punta del Este, Uruguay,
15–18 June 2025

**Draft report of the second part of the third session 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**

Introduction

1. On 2 March 2022, the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, in resolution 5/8, decided that a science-policy panel should be established to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution. The Environment Assembly also decided to convene, subject to the availability of resources, an ad hoc open-ended working group that would begin its work in 2022, with the ambition of completing it by the end of 2024.
2. At the first part of the third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group, held in Geneva from 17 to 21 June 2024, it was agreed, in the light of time constraints, that the session would be resumed and that the second part of the third session would be held back to back with the intergovernmental meeting to establish the panel. Accordingly, the second part of the third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group was held at the Punta del Este Convention and Exhibition Centre, Punta del Este, Uruguay, from 15 to 18 June 2025.

I. Opening of the session

3. The session was opened at 10.15 a.m. on Sunday, 15 June 2025 by Gudi Alkemade (Kingdom of the Netherlands), Chair 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. Welcoming participants, she recalled the need to fulfil the mandate set out in United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/8, to ensure that the panel could provide sound scientific information to policymakers, informing their actions and thus enabling the transition towards a pollution-free planet. The outcomes of the first part of the third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group should serve to facilitate finalization of the work of the current session, an endeavour that required the support, constructive engagement and flexibility of all delegations.
4. Opening statements were delivered by Edgardo Ortuño Silva, Minister of Environment, Uruguay; and Inger Andersen, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
5. In his statement, Mr. Ortuño Silva said that 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 was presented with a historic opportunity at the second part of its third session. The ad hoc open-ended working group was on the cusp of creating a mechanism that would harness

scientific knowledge to facilitate informed, efficient and fair political decision-making – just as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) had done. Uruguay was fully committed to that goal. Although it was a small country, Uruguay had played an outsized role in hosting various international conferences, such as the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, and was devoted to public, collective and environmental issues. In recent years, for example, it had created a robust normative framework for chemicals management, incorporating the precautionary principle, life cycle approaches and intersectoral participation, and had transformed its power grid to generate 97 per cent of its electricity supply from renewable sources.

6. His Government strongly supported the establishment of the new panel. While the panel's success depended on the foundations established at the current resumed session, agreements reached should not stifle future ambitions: the panel's procedures and governance structures should be given the time and space to develop organically. To enable the panel to operate in an agile manner, provisional measures needed to be established, strategic partnerships considered and the broad, active and diverse participation of the international scientific community facilitated. Voices from all continents, disciplines and contexts needed to be integrated; gender equality and the leadership and full participation of women and other vulnerable groups needed to be assured; and different sectors and sources of knowledge, including local and traditional knowledge, needed to be incorporated in order to reach fair and sustainable solutions to real-world challenges.

7. His Government believed in the transformative power of open dialogue as the basis on which a solid foundation could be built; it believed in multilateralism as a viable, legitimate and durable means of addressing the challenges facing humankind; and it believed in working together with the United Nations to create a world where humans could live in peace with each other and with the environment. Consumption should not be confused with progress. The opportunity to create a panel that would serve as a new pillar of international governance must not be missed: the planet and future generations depended on it.

8. In her opening statement, Ms. Andersen said that the resumed third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group was being held at a critical time. Every year without a science-policy panel was another year in which countries lacked access to the best peer-reviewed science that would help them manage chemicals, waste and pollution and reduce the harm caused to people and the environment.

9. Achieving agreement on the panel's foundational document was critical. The language needed for establishing operating principles and approaches was already available in Environment Assembly resolution 5/8, which should be used as guidance. She recalled that the establishment of the panel would not impose obligations on Member States, and that countries would be able to decide how to use the panel's output to inform their national policies. With regard to the membership of the panel, the ad hoc open-ended working group could choose between the approach taken by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), whereby membership was open automatically to Member States of the United Nations, or the opt-in system used by Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), under which Governments could decide to join the panel as and when they were ready to do so.

10. She urged the ad hoc open-ended working group to decide at an early stage whether the panel's decisions on substantive matters should be made by consensus or by vote. Given Governments' strongly held views on the matter, achieving agreement would require flexibility and a willingness to compromise. Regarding the role of observers, while noting that Governments would take the leading role, she invited the ad hoc open-ended working group to consider how best to ensure that the panel could benefit from the views of a broad range of stakeholders, as environmental, social and economic issues had to be addressed in tandem. Swift progress could be made on terminology-related issues.

11. She pointed out that the panel would need to set up its own secretariat and reiterated her stance that she expected UNEP to continue providing secretariat functions, working with other United Nations entities with whom the organization had strong partnerships, such as the World Health Organization and others, drawing on their skills and expertise. With regard to financial arrangements, a simple voluntary trust fund managed by the secretariat would be by far the simplest and most effective option; the finer details of the financial arrangements could be finalized at a later stage. Strategic partnerships could be carefully negotiated and established by the governing body of the panel at a future meeting.

12. Following the opening statements, the Chair proposed arrangements for the conduct of the business of the ad hoc open-ended working group, addressing, among other things, the speaking order for the resumed session, time limits for statements and the United Nations practice concerning the right of reply. She recalled, in particular, that the rules of procedure of the Environment Assembly applied *mutatis mutandis* to the meetings of the ad hoc open-ended working group, as agreed at its first session. She also stressed that the United Nations System Code of Conduct to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment, at United Nations system events would apply to the second part of the third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group, as a United Nations meeting, enabling all participants to take part in the session in an inclusive, respectful and safe environment, guided by the highest ethical and professional standards.

13. The ad hoc open-ended working group agreed to the Chair's proposed arrangements for the conduct of its business, including the speaking order for the resumed session, to ensure the efficiency of its work.

II. Election of officers

14. The Chair recalled that the ad hoc open-ended working group had elected its officers in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Environment Assembly, and that the matter had been considered at the first part of the third session and no changes had been made since.

15. Consequently, the Bureau of the ad hoc open-ended working group for the second part of the third session consisted of Ms. Alkemade serving as Chair and the following individuals serving as Vice-Chairs of the Bureau: Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda); Jinhui Li (China); Linda Kosgei (Kenya) (Rapporteur); Oumar Diaouré Cisse (Mali); Saqlain Syedah (Pakistan); Alexandru Roznov (Romania); Michel Tschirren (Switzerland); Roman Filonenko (Ukraine); and Judith Torres (Uruguay).

III. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

A. Adoption of the agenda

16. The ad hoc open-ended working group agreed to work in accordance with the following agenda, as adopted by the working group at the first part of its third session on the basis of the provisional agenda (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/1), and taking into consideration the annotated agenda (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/1/Add.2):

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters:
 - (a) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (b) Organizational matters.
4. Preparation of proposals for the establishment of a science-policy panel.
5. Recommendations to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for the preparation of the intergovernmental meeting to establish the science-policy panel.
6. Other matters.
7. Adoption of the report of the session.
8. Closure of the session.

B. Organizational matters

17. The ad hoc open-ended working group agreed to organize the work of the second part of its third session in accordance with the draft annotated agenda (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/1/Add.2) and the scenario note (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/INF/8), on the understanding that the tentative schedule for the session, including for contact groups, could be updated in the light of the progress achieved in contact group meetings and following consultations in the Bureau.

18. It was agreed that the ad hoc open-ended working group could establish contact and informal groups as it deemed necessary and would provide them with clear and concise mandates, and that any such contact group would be open to participation by all Governments and stakeholders unless otherwise decided by the Chair or the co-facilitators of the contact groups. It was further agreed that efforts would be made to ensure that no more than two groups were scheduled to meet at the same time, with a view to ensuring the participation of smaller delegations and avoiding overlap and duplication of issues.

19. To allow focused discussions and facilitate progress in finalizing the proposals from the ad hoc open-ended working group, it was agreed that the contact groups and potential informal groups would be organized in a way that facilitated an iterative process, as follows:

(a) The groups' mandates would be clear and transparent.

(b) The co-facilitators would set out the topic to be addressed and the organization of work at the beginning of each session or section of the text to be addressed, taking into account the outcomes of previous sessions.

(c) The secretariat would keep the delegations informed to the extent possible, including on possible updates as discussed in the Bureau.

(d) The co-facilitators would provide brief updates on progress in plenary meetings and, when relevant, in other groups.

20. It was also agreed that, in order to keep track of the progress made in the contact groups on tentatively agreed parts of the text for the outcome documents to be delivered by the ad hoc open-ended working group, the tentatively agreed texts from the contact groups would be compiled in draft conference room papers to be made available as in-session documents.

C. Attendance

21. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following Governments: [--]

22. Representatives of [--] also attended the session.

23. Representatives of the following United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, secretariats of other intergovernmental organizations, secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements and other entities attended: [--]

24. Representatives of the following non-governmental, industry, academic and other entities attended: [--]

IV. Preparation of proposals for the establishment of a science-policy panel

A. Statements by representatives and observers

25. The Chair invited regional and political groups and stakeholder groups to deliver statements expressing general views on the substantive issues to be considered at the current session.

26. The representative speaking on behalf of the group of Asia-Pacific States said that the panel should be effective and inclusive; reflect the diverse needs, realities and priorities of all regions; respect the sovereign equality of all Member States; and inform, rather than prescribe, national policies. The panel's decision-making should be rooted in consensus on all matters of substance and voting should be reserved exclusively for procedural matters, such as the election of officers. The bureau should play only a facilitative and logistical role; its mandate should be to oversee the implementation of decisions taken by the plenary of the panel and not to reinterpret or modify those decisions. Ensuring balanced representation between developed and developing countries in the composition of the panel's interdisciplinary expert committee, which should serve as an advisory body, was important. The panel's membership should be reserved for sovereign States, and observers should not have the same rights as Member States. He called for the State of Palestine to be granted full membership of the panel in view of its long-standing participation in various multilateral environmental agreements and its status as a member of multiple specialized agencies of the United Nations.

27. He reiterated his group's support for financing based on voluntary contributions, without guidance from the United Nations voluntary indicative scale of assessments. Funding should not be

earmarked, and the plenary of the panel should decide on the allocation of resources. Capacity-building should be integrated into all the panel's functions and work, and the needs and priorities of developing countries should be given particular attention. The panel should serve as a mechanism for providing evidence-based policy advice, taking into account diverse national contexts, and its mandate should not be extended beyond the scope established under Environment Assembly resolution 5/8. Its secretariat should be hosted by UNEP.

28. The representative speaking on behalf of the group of African States said that, at the current session, the ad hoc open-ended working group was expected to fulfil its mandate and deliver on the promise of Environment Assembly resolution 5/8. It was important to complete the agenda items left unfinished at the first part of the third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group diligently and urgently. There were some "low-hanging fruits" with regard to the foundational and other documents that could be resolved as a means of fast-tracking the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group and saving time and energy. With mutual respect, a collaborative mindset, shared commitment and a focus on common goals, it could establish a panel that truly served the global community, including by addressing challenges faced by countries in Africa.

29. Regarding specific elements, the group of African States called for equal representation of developed and developing countries in the membership of the interdisciplinary expert committee. The panel should consider the value chain of chemicals and waste, addressing pollution, and ensure credibility, impartiality, transparency and legitimacy in its operations and delivery. Efforts should be made to avoid duplication of work; ensure geographically balanced, gender-inclusive and gender-responsive participation; and recognize the experience of informal workers and their critical roles in hazardous waste management and recycling. The name of the panel should be aligned with the core elements of resolution 5/8 and with broader international agreements on chemicals, waste and pollution prevention. It was vital that decisions be taken on interim arrangements to ensure continuity in and the effectiveness of the panel's work and enable the current secretariat to continue its work.

30. The representative speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States said that her delegation stood ready to engage in effective cooperation towards the fulfilment of the mandate of the ad hoc open-ended working group and preparation of the recommendations for the intergovernmental meeting to establish the science-policy panel. Moreover, it supported the agreed scope and functions for the panel, which encompassed all aspects of chemicals, waste and pollution prevention. The operating principles guiding the work of the panel should be clear and concise, and the institutional arrangements should include clear definition of the mandates for the bureau, the interdisciplinary expert committee, the secretariat and the governing body. The work of the panel should be scientifically independent, and be policy relevant without being policy prescriptive, which was crucial to its credibility. In addition, certain aspects of the institutional arrangements should be considered alongside the draft rules of procedure. Membership to the panel should be available to regional economic integration organizations. Accordingly, the European Union expressed its interest in joining the future panel and committed to supporting its work through its scientific programmes and resources. All relevant stakeholders should be able to contribute towards ensuring the transparency, expertise and knowledge of the panel, and enhancing the relevance and impact of its products.

31. Reaching consensus on the arrangements required for the establishment of the panel, encompassing all aspects of chemicals, waste and pollution, was crucial. Her delegation was committed to finalizing the foundational document and the decisions needed for the intergovernmental meeting in line with Environment Assembly resolution 5/8. Progress should also be made on the draft rules of procedure annexed to the recommendations to the Executive Director of UNEP for the preparation of the intergovernmental meeting. The first session of the governing body should be convened at the earliest possible opportunity, and no later than one year from the date of establishment of the panel. The selection of a recognizable name for the panel would increase awareness and uptake of its outcomes. The European Union and its member States were committed to collaborating in order to lay the groundwork for the successful establishment of the panel at the intergovernmental meeting.

32. The observer speaking on behalf of all the major groups and stakeholders said that science and other forms of knowledge held the key to understanding and preventing pollution, which continued to adversely affect ecosystems and the lives of millions of people. For the panel to be successful, there should be formal mechanisms for the participation of civil society, and scientists from a range of sectors and disciplines should be able to participate as members of the interdisciplinary expert committee. Inclusive and multidisciplinary cooperation was essential to deliver policy advice that was gender sensitive and responsive to the needs of all communities. The panel should have a strong and rigorous conflict-of-interest policy and process that upheld the highest standards of impartiality and transparency.

33. The observer speaking on behalf of the children and youth major group said that, in the light of the urgency of the global chemical, waste and pollution crises, the science-policy panel was vital to uphold the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment for present and future generations. It was a moral imperative to include intergenerational equity as an operating principle of the panel, thus strengthening its legitimacy and impact and enhancing its “horizon scanning” capacities. By considering the needs of present and future generations, the panel could adopt an anticipatory approach to identifying emerging trends, risks and opportunities, in line with the United Nations 2.0 initiative. Today’s decisions, actions and inactions had an intergenerational multiplier effect; it was the responsibility of present generations to protect the well-being of future generations. The panel should also adopt a human rights-based approach to protect health and well-being, including of people and communities who were the most affected and the least heard.

34. The observer speaking on behalf of the International Pollutants Elimination Network said that the meaningful engagement of civil society in the work of the future science-policy panel was key. The early and inclusive participation of civil society in the panel would build trust and help to ensure that its work reflected community needs. Civil society was already actively supporting local and international policy processes and the work of scientific bodies, and actively enhancing their implementation. Such contributions were central to advancing scientific understanding and effective policy action. The foundational documents of the panel should include clear, transparent rules of procedure, work programmes, deliverables and conflict of interest policies that upheld inclusivity, transparency and integrity. The information used by the panel, together with its findings, should be made publicly available and accessible. Recognizing traditional, Indigenous and citizen-generated science as legitimate knowledge was critical. Such an approach, which was consistent with the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Minamata Convention on Mercury, would ensure that the work of the panel was robust, fair and reliable.

35. The observer speaking on behalf of Indigenous Peoples said that chemicals, waste and pollution disproportionately affected Indigenous Peoples within their territories. In that connection, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples should be respected. Indigenous Peoples must be taken into account across all aspects of the future science-policy panel and the relevant United Nations Environment Assembly resolutions, which should emphasize their inclusive participation and highlight their role, while maintaining gender and geographical balance. To ensure genuine inclusivity, the panel needed to foster dialogue between Western science and the scientific knowledge of Indigenous Peoples. The text should affirm the commitment to include references to respect for the rights of Indigenous Peoples across the panel processes. A minimum of two positions on the interdisciplinary expert committee should be allocated to Indigenous experts from different regions. In addition, an Indigenous review committee should be established to conduct reviews of the guiding body for the nomination of experts to the interdisciplinary expert committee and other subsidiary bodies and committees. Indigenous Peoples would continue to lend their support to that process.

36. The observer speaking on behalf of the World Health Organization (WHO) said that the establishment of the science-policy panel would meet an urgent need: almost a quarter of deaths globally were linked to environmental risks, with chemicals and pollution being among the major contributing factors. For that reason, health must be central to any global solutions. WHO fully supported the panel as a platform for driving science-based policies and was ready to provide technical and secretariat support and to fully engage its global networks and health constituencies. An inclusive, interdisciplinary panel aligned with the wider United Nations system was needed: the integration of health was not optional but rather it was essential to protect people and the planet. In addition to the meaningful participation of observers, transparency and expertise in the interdisciplinary expert committee were needed, as was a strong health–environment focus among panel members. Once the panel was established, a model for joint secretariat services could be finalized by UNEP and WHO, drawing on their networks, expertise and constituencies.

B. Introduction of documentation and discussion

37. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to the relevant documents, namely the foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish the panel (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6) and recommendations for consideration by the governing body of the science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution at its first session and related draft decision for

consideration by the intergovernmental meeting (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7), both of which had been prepared based on the outcome of the first part of the third session. The ad hoc open-ended working group also had before it the report of the first part of the third session 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 (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/5) and the draft financial procedures (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/INF/9).

38. The representative of the secretariat introduced documents UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6 and UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7.

39. One representative said that his delegation was willing to use the documents presented as the basis for further work on the understanding that they remained entirely in brackets, with no part of them yet agreed.

40. The ad hoc open-ended working group agreed to work on the basis of documents UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6 and UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7. At the proposal of the Chair, it further agreed to delete, in section II of document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6, the preamble placeholder in the annex to the draft decision, on the understanding that the preambular portion of the draft decision itself would henceforth serve as the preamble.

41. [to be completed]

C. Establishment and work of contact groups

42. The ad hoc open-ended working group agreed to establish a contact group on membership and functions of the bodies of the panel, decision-making and related rules of procedure. The mandate of the contact group was to finalize the draft proposals on the bodies of the panel, including their membership and functions, as well as on decision-making and related draft rules of procedure. Thus, the group was to consider several sections of the foundational document set out in the annex to the draft decision contained in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6 and corresponding sections of the draft rules of procedure set out in annex 1 to the draft decision contained in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7. The co-facilitators of the contact group would be Miguel Ruiz Botero (Colombia) and Toks Akinseye (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). It was agreed that the contact group would hold informal group meetings as necessary to facilitate its discussions with a view to finalizing its work.

43. The ad hoc open-ended working group also agreed to establish a contact group on other foundational elements and related draft rules of procedure, and the draft decision to establish the panel. The mandate of the contact group was to finalize the elements of the foundational document not considered by the first contact group, their related draft rule of procedure and the draft decision to establish the panel. Thus, the group was to consider the elements in the foundational document, as set out in the annex to the draft decision contained in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6, not considered by the first contact group and the corresponding rule 2, paragraph (j), of the draft rules of procedure set out in annex 1 to the draft decision contained in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7, as well as the draft decision on the establishment of the panel (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6). The co-facilitators of the contact group would be Kateřina Šebková (Czechia) and Keima Gardiner (Trinidad and Tobago). It was agreed that the contact group would hold informal group meetings as necessary to facilitate its discussions with a view to finalizing its work.

44. The Chair drew attention to annex III to the scenario note, which included a table specifying the precise paragraphs from the foundational document and the draft rules of procedure to be considered by each contact group.

45. The Chair recalled that, at the current session, the ad hoc open-ended working group would need to prepare, under agenda item 4, the draft decision on the establishment of the panel, including the annex with the foundational document; and the draft decision on the recommendations for consideration by the governing body of the panel at its first session, with its relevant annexes, including annex 1 on the draft rules of procedure of the working group, and annexes 2–4, including the draft process for determining the work programme, the draft procedures for the preparation and clearance of panel deliverables and the draft conflict-of-interest policy, to be forwarded as amended at the first part of the third session for further consideration by the governing body of the panel. In addition, under agenda item 5, it would need to prepare a draft decision on arrangements for the interim period.

46. The ad hoc open-ended working group therefore requested the secretariat to prepare three draft conference room papers, with the first including an outline for the draft decision to establish the panel, including an annex for the foundational document, outlining each section; the second including an

outline for the draft decision to forward the draft rules, procedures and policies to the panel's governing body and its annexes 1–4; and the third including an outline for the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period.

1. Contact group on membership and functions of the bodies of the panel, decision-making and related rules of procedure

47. Reporting on the work of the contact group on membership and functions of the bodies of the panel, decision-making and related rules of procedure, the co-facilitator said that the group had discussed decision-making, institutional arrangements, membership of the plenary, the bureau and subsidiary bodies. The issues of decision-making, membership of the plenary and the participation of observers required further consideration. The contact group had agreed that the decision-making body of the panel should be referred to as “the plenary”. He read out the agreed text in the foundational document, as follows: “the plenary is the governing and decision-making body of the panel”. The Chair instructed the co-facilitators to take forward that agreement in all relevant texts considered by their groups.

2. Contact group on other foundational elements and related rules of procedure, and the draft decision to establish the panel

48. Reporting on the work of the contact group on other foundational elements and related rules of procedure, and the draft decision to establish the panel, the co-facilitator said that the group had discussed the secretariat, financial arrangements, and operating principles and approaches of the panel. The group had reached agreement on the establishment of a trust fund and on the operating principle of ensuring impartiality and transparency.

3. Contact group on other rules of procedure, the draft decision to forward the draft rules, procedures and policies, and the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period

49. Reporting on the work under agenda item 4 of the contact group on other rules of procedure, the draft decision to forward the draft rules, procedures and policies, and the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period, the co-facilitator said that the group had considered the draft decision on recommendations for consideration by the plenary of the panel at its first session. The contact group had decided to delete the operative paragraph inviting the governing body to convene the first session of the panel, given that the Executive Director would be requested to convene the first session in the decision on arrangements for the interim period.

D. Further discussion

50. In the ensuing discussion, one representative asked for the inclusion of brackets in text under discussion. Some members sought clarification of how to deal with text at different stages of discussion. Responding to questions and comments raised by representatives, the Chair recalled that the task of the contact groups was to produce an agreed text, meaning that the text to be sent to the ad hoc open-ended working group in plenary meeting would have to be agreed ad referendum. Thus, the approach taken by the co-facilitators was to take up issues that were still being discussed to try to resolve them first, whereas parts of the text that had been discussed, and where in some cases compromises had been made, were not being prioritized for discussion in the first instance. Furthermore, before the text was sent back to the ad hoc open-ended working group in plenary meeting, representatives would have an opportunity to confirm agreement on paragraphs that had been tentatively agreed in earlier discussions.

51. With respect to the starting point for the discussions, she asked representatives to bear in mind the state of the negotiations at the close of the first part of the third session and, where they had an issue with text that had been intensively discussed and agreed, to try to resolve it elsewhere in text.

52. With regard to issues with the rules of procedure related to elements being addressed in the contact group on membership and functions of the bodies of the panel, decision-making and related rules of procedure, such issues had been put aside pending the discussions on the foundational document. Consequently, that text could be modified, either to resolve the language or to introduce brackets reflecting delegations' views or concerns. Regarding the status of the annexes to the draft decision on the recommendations for consideration by the governing body, the Chair clarified that, owing to a lack of time, annexes 2–4 had not been finalized and, as indicated in the relevant draft decision, would be forwarded to the plenary of the panel at its first session as they were, to be finalized by the plenary.

53. [to be completed]

V. Recommendations to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme for the preparation of the intergovernmental meeting to establish the science-policy panel

A. Introduction of documentation and discussion

54. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to a draft decision on arrangements for the interim period for consideration and adoption by the intergovernmental meeting (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8). The document had been prepared by the secretariat in response to a request by the Bureau for a document on the minimum arrangements required in the interim period, in particular the interim secretariat, to prepare for the meeting of the governing body of the panel until the secretariat was formally in place.

55. The representative of the secretariat introduced document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8.

56. The open-ended working group agreed to work on the basis of document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8.

B. Establishment and work of contact groups

57. The ad hoc open-ended working group agreed to establish a contact group on the other draft rules of procedure, the draft decision to forward the draft rules, procedures and policies to the governing body of the panel, and the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period. The mandate of the contact group was to finalize the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period, the draft decision to forward the draft rules, procedures and policies to the governing body of the panel and the draft rules of procedure not considered by the first and second contact groups. The contact group would consider the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8), the draft decision forwarding the draft rules, procedures and policies to the first session of the governing body of the panel for its consideration (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7) and the remaining draft rules of procedure set out in annex I to the draft decision in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7. The co-facilitators of the contact group would be Sam Adu Kumi (Ghana) and Itsuki Kuroda (Japan). It was agreed that the contact group would hold informal group meetings as necessary to facilitate its discussions with a view to finalizing its work.

58. The Chair drew attention to annex III to the scenario note, which included a table specifying the precise paragraphs from the foundational document and the draft rules of procedure to be considered by each contact group.

Contact group on other rules of procedure, the draft decision to forward the draft rules, procedures and policies, and the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period

59. Reporting on the work under agenda item 5 of the contact group on other rules of procedure, the draft decision to forward the draft rules, procedures and policies, and the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period, the co-facilitator said that the group had held general discussions on the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period and an operative paragraph had been added as a placeholder for elements that required further consideration. Two of the preambular paragraphs had been bracketed, as they referred to documents that had yet to be finalized, and the wording of the operative paragraph requesting the Executive Director of UNEP to provide the interim secretariat had been agreed ad referendum.

60. [to be completed]

VI. Other matters

61. [to be completed]

VII. Adoption of the report of the session

62. [to be completed]

VIII. Closure of the session

63. [to be completed]