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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*
Agenda items 4 and 5**

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

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

Compilation of written submissions on the documentation for the resumed third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group

Note by the secretariat

The annex to the present note sets out a compilation of written submissions from Governments and stakeholders concerning meeting documents prepared for the resumed 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. The ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to consider the information provided.

* 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 is being held in two parts. The first part of the session was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 17 to 21 June 2024, while the second part will be held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, from 15 to 18 June 2025.

** UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/1/Rev.1.

Annex

Submissions from Governments and non-government stakeholders

1. At its resumed fifth session, held in Nairobi from 28 February to 2 March 2022, the United Nations Environment Assembly decided, by its resolution 5/8, that a science-policy panel should be established to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution. By the same resolution, the Environment Assembly decided to convene an ad hoc open-ended working group to prepare proposals for the science-policy panel. The working group would commence its work in 2022, with the ambition of completing it by the end of 2024.

2. A call for submissions concerning the working documents prepared for the resumed third session of the open-ended working group was issued on 11 April 2025, with a deadline of 16 May 2025 (later extended to 28 May 2025). The submissions from Governments[1] and non-government stakeholders[2] are set out below, as received, for possible consideration by the working group at its third session.

[1] Submissions were received from Egypt, Chad, the European Union and its member States, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Madagascar.

[2] Submissions were received from the All African Conference of Churches (AACC), Association of Uganda Professional Women in Agriculture and Environment (AUPWAE), Barwaqa Relief Organization (BRO), Caribbean Poison Information Network (CARPIN), Centre For Human Rights And Climate Change Research (C4HRCCR), Chemichemi Foundation, Children and Youth Major Group (CYMG), Cohort for Research on Environment, Urban Management and Human Settlement (CREUMHS), Comparatively for Tanzania Elites Community Organizers (CTECO), Conflict and Environment Observatory (CEO), Global Alliance on Health and Pollution (GAHP), Indigenous Peoples and Their Communities Major Group (IPCMG), Institute of Total Environment (INTEV), International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), Asia-Pacific Major Groups and Stakeholders, NGOs in West Asia, Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC), Women's Major Group (WMG), and the Wote Youth Development Projects Community Based Organization (WYDPCBO).

The Arab Republic of Egypt's Submission on the working documents of the resumed 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 (SPP OEWG 3.2)

EGYPT reiterates its commitment to the international community to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent associated pollution according to the mandate of UNEA resolution 5/8 in 2022 , which mandated the creation of an open ended working group for the establishment of Science-policy panel to strengthen the science-policy interface to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution for the protection of human health and the environment.

EGYPT expresses its appreciation to the efforts of the SPP secretariat and welcomes the proposals for the establishment of the SPP panel, while supporting the finalization of the outstanding issues of the OEWG proposals.

Having said that, **EGYPT** highlights herein its comments to the working documents of the resumed 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 (SPP OEWG 3.2) , which will be hosted by the Government of Uruguay in Punta del Este, Uruguay, from 15 to 18 June 2025 :

I) **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6** Foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel;

Egypt sees merit in maintaining the title of the panel as agreed in the UNEA resolution 5/8, which serves as the mandate of the panel.

We are in favor of paraphrasing the second preambular para of the afore mentioned decision to read as follows:
"Bis [Recognizing that air pollution is <u>one of</u> greatest environmental risk to human health, with a disproportionate impact on women, children and the elderly.

A. Scope, objective and functions of the panel :

We propose herein few textual amendments as follows :

Para 1: After "to prevent", we propose the addition of "associated".
Para 1-c: After "policy makers" we propose the addition of " specially from the global south".
Para 1-e: After "guided by the capacity building priorities " we propose to addition of " and needs".
Para 1-e: After "geographically" we are in favor of the use of "gender balanced" and " gender sensitive" .

B. Operating principles and approaches of the panel

We props herein few textual amendments as follows :

Para 2 (a) bis: delete "Finding", and support "ensuring" consensus in its decision-making process on matters of substance and procedures.

Para 2 (c): add "and technological" after "technical".
Para 2 (c): add "sound" before "management".

Para 2 (f): We prefer to read the whole sentence as follow:
[Producing deliverables that are policy relevant without being policy prescriptive, and, scientifically robust, unbiased and accessible and if appropriate, prevention focused and addressing negative socioeconomic associated implications of policies].

Para 2(i) we suggest replacing "with special attention to those that are vulnerable." With this para " with special attention to those in vulnerable situations".
Para 2 (h): delete "Having the flexibility to".

Para 2 (J) and (J) ter: merge together to read as the follows:
[Recognizing the right to a clean, healthy, and, the right to science, supports in the implementation of the environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste and in the prevention of the associated pollution, and contributes to achieve the sustainable development goals].

Para 2 (k): we prefer the language of the said para to read as follows " [Addressing the prevention approaches of pollution related to the unsound management of chemicals and waste].

II) **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7** 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; an

EGYPT calls for equal representation of both developing and developed countries of the membership of **Interdisciplinary Expert Committee (Rule 22)**, to be added to the criteria of members selection , considering the capacity gap between developing and developed countries, taking into consideration that capacity building is one of the agreed core function of the Panel.

Egypt reiterates its concern over lacking a definition on pollution to be included with the rules of procedures of the panel.

We suggest a replacement of "practitioners or experts from the groups most vulnerable to the adverse effects of chemicals" under the definition of "Expertise" to read as follows: "practitioners or experts from people in vulnerable situations due to the adverse effects of chemicals.

III) **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8** Proposal on interim arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel.

EGYPT calls on the UNEP secretariat to prepare a list of activities to enable the panel start its functions, which will facilitate the selection of the relevant members for interdisciplinary expert committee, without prejudice to the operational and institutional arrangements for the panel's work.

Please find comments provided by Chad at the following links:

UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6:
https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/47723/UNEP-OEWG-DOC-SESSION-06.docx?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7:
https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/47724/UNEP-OEWG-DOC-DOC-SESSION%20-07.docx?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Proposal of the input of the EU+MS regarding the documents OEWG.3/6/7/8

The EU and its Member States would like to thank the Secretariat for the work done to summarise progress made during previous sessions of the Open-ended Working Group and for the preparation of the pre-session documents.
The main objective of the EU and its Member States for the Open-Ended Working Group 3.2 (OEWG3.2) is to successfully finalize the proposed decision to establish the panel and the annexed Foundational Document[1] to enable the Intergovernmental Meeting to reach a broadly supported agreement on the **establishment of a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution.** We think we have a very good basis for reaching these goals with the mandate given by the UNEA resolution 5/8. This meeting should be guided by enabling the scientific independence and effective work of the future panel, learning from the principles and rules of established, well-functioning similar bodies, such as IPBES and IPCC.

In the EU and its Member States' opinion:

- As agreed in the Open-Ended Working Group 3.1 we should focus on the agreement of the elements that are necessary for establishment of the panel, which should be outlined in the Foundational Document. This includes notably the following elements listed in the UNEA resolution 5/8: the institutional design and governance of the panel, the name and scope of the panel, the principal functions of the panel, its operating principles, and financial arrangements.
- The finalisation of the draft Foundational Document, which encompasses institutional design and governance of the panel, including the Plenary/Governing Body, the Bureau, the Secretariat, Interdisciplinary Expert Committee, and other Subsidiary Bodies, and the remaining elements listed in the UNEA 5/8 resolution to facilitate its adoption by the Intergovernmental Meeting. Additionally, decisive progress should be made on the draft rules of procedure for the Plenary/Governing Body of the panel, with a view to transmitting them for consideration and potential adoption at the panel's first meeting. In our view, such an approach is crucial to ensure that the panel will start its work quickly and efficiently, thus, finalising these elements should be the primary objective of the OEWG3.2. Therefore, discussions on these documents ought to be meticulously planned to ensure that challenging topics are resolved promptly, facilitating agreement on other aspects of the documents. Moreover, they should be continuously directed by the ambition for establishing a scientifically independent panel capable of delivering policy-relevant scientific outputs without being policy-prescriptive.
- In the opinion of the EU and its Member States, the draft rules of procedure should reflect and specify provisions included in the draft Institutional Arrangements, therefore we support

[1] UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6 Foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel (link)

proposed clustering of topics to facilitate effective discussions.

- The EU and its Member States support the decision to forward the draft policies and/or guidelines, including a draft conflict-of-interest policy, for further consideration by the Plenary/Governing Body of the panel. The EU and its Member States recognise the necessity of providing arrangements for an interim period to facilitate the operation of the science-policy panel once established, notably in preparation for the first session. We support that the Intergovernmental Meeting should consider the proposal for the establishment of the interim secretariat of the panel, which could be hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme[2] (UNEP) during the interim period. Nevertheless, we believe that the Secretariat of the future panel should be hosted in cooperation with other relevant international organizations since their involvement would be beneficial to the functioning of the panel.
- We are in favour of convening the first meeting of the Plenary/Governing Body of the panel as soon as possible after its establishment, to start the work of the panel.

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[2] **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/INF/8 -** Scenario note for the resumed 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 (link)

Written Comments of Iran

Regarding to the resolution of 5/8 of UNEA, establishing a science- policy panel and platform for sound management of chemicals and waste would help to countries to protect their environment and human health. This panel is expected to serve as an advisory arm to policy makers for sound management their chemicals and waste.

Providing an approach based and peer review data with credibility and impartiality would aid to decision making to take on a reliable decision on sound managing chemicals and waste.

We believe that the efficiency of the panel is in considering to the different starting point of the countries in sound management of chemicals and waste which is due to the different conditions of the countries.

Developing the capacity of the countries in integrated ways through knowledge sharing, international cooperation, best practices and technology assistance and taking a consideration of the specific situation of countries into account in decision making on their sound management of chemicals and waste, also can bring this panel closer to its ultimate goals.

Commentaires de Madagascar sur le document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6 relatif sur le Document fondateur et projet de décision connexe à soumettre à l'examen de la réunion intergouvernementale visant à créer un groupe d'expert(e)s sur l'interface science-politiques.

SECTION	CONTENU	SUGGESTIONS	QUESTION A CLARIFIER
Attributions, objectifs et fonctions	Le groupe aura un rôle clé d'évaluation scientifique, de conseil, de sensibilisation, de renforcement des capacités, et de soutien aux politiques publiques. L'accent est mis sur l'exclusivité, la prise en compte des besoins des pays en en développement, et la diffusion des connaissances.	Détailler les indicateurs de suivi des missions du groupe et prévoir une évaluation périodique de l'impact	Comment seront mesurés les résultats et l'efficacité du groupe ?
Principes de fonctionnement	Insiste sur l'indépendance scientifique, la transparence, la représentativité géographique et de genre, la prise en compte des savoirs autochtones, et la nécessité d'éviter les chevauchements avec d'autres instances.	Définir clairement les mécanismes de gestion des conflits d'intérêts et la procédure de sélection des membres.	Quels critères précis pour la sélection des experts et la gestion de l'équilibre (genre, régions) ?
Structure institutionnelle	Le groupe sera composé d'un organe directeur/plénière, d'un bureau, de comités subsidiaires, d'un secrétariat, etc. Plusieurs variantes sont proposées pour la gouvernance et la composition.	Préciser l'articulation entre les différents organes et les modalités de prise de décision.	Quelle version de la structure sera retenue ? Comment seront choisis les membres des organes directeurs ?
Participation des parties prenantes	Ouverture aux États membres, observateurs, ONG, peuples autochtones, communautés locales, etc. avec des conditions variables selon les versions du texte.	Clarifier les conditions de participation des ONG et des communautés locales, et leur rôle effectif dans les travaux.	Quel sera le statut exact des parties prenantes non-étatiques ?
Financement	Le texte ne précise pas les modalités de financement, ce qui est un point faible pour la viabilité du groupe.	Ajouter une section dédiée au financement (sources, mécanismes, soutien aux pays en développement).	Quelles sources de financement sont envisagées ? Y aura-t-il un fonds dédié ?

Lien avec les autres organes internationaux	Nécessité de coordination avec les conventions existantes (Bâle, Rotterdam, Stockholm, Minamata, etc.) pour éviter les doublons.	Proposer un mécanisme formel de coordination et de partage d'information avec ces organes.	Comment sera assurée la complémentarité et la non-redondance avec les autres instances ?
Livrables attendus	Rapports scientifiques, avis, recommandations, outils de renforcement des capacités, etc.	Préciser la fréquence, la forme et la diffusion des livrables pour garantir leur impact.	Quels seront les livrables prioritaires et leur calendrier de publication ?
Renforcement des capacités	Priorité donnée à l'appui aux pays en développement, à l'accès aux connaissances et à la formation.	Définir un plan d'action concret pour le renforcement des capacités, avec des indicateurs de suivi.	Comment seront identifiés les besoins et évalué l'impact des actions de renforcement ?
Indépendance et transparence	Importance de la revue par les pairs, de l'impartialité et de la transparence des travaux.	Détailler les procédures de revue par les pairs et de publication des résultats.	Quels mécanismes concrets pour garantir l'indépendance scientifique ?

Commentaires de Madagascar sur le document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7 relatif Recommandations pour examen par l'organe directeur du groupe d'expert(e)s sur l'interface science-politiques au service de la gestion rationnelle des produits chimiques et des déchets et de la prévention de la pollution à sa première session et projet de décision connexe pour examen par la réunion intergouvernementale

ARTICLE	CONTENU/COMMENTAIRES	SUGGESTIONS	QUESTIONS A CLARIFIER
Article 1 – Attributions	Règlement intérieur applicable à toutes les sessions. La portée est claire mais manque une phrase d'introduction sur l'objectif global.	Ajouter une phrase introductive précisant la finalité du règlement (ex : garantir la transparence et l'efficacité).	Modalités de la modification du règlement prévues ? Articulation avec autres textes ?
Article 2 – Définitions	Définitions couvrant les termes clés, mais certaines références (paragraphes du document fondateur) manquent Absence de précision sur le rôle des vice-présidents.		Rôle des coprésidents ? les critères pour observateurs ?
Article 3 – Lieu, dates et convocation des sessions	Décision du lieu/date par organe directeur ou Bureau en cas d'impossibilité.	Préciser critères et délais pour la décision du Bureau.	Que se passe-t-il si ni l'organe ni le Bureau ne décident ?

Article 4 – Sessions ordinaires et extraordinaires	Cadre clair pour les sessions annuelles et extraordinaires. Délai de convocation.	Uniformiser délai de convocation et le mettre en valeur. Mentionner la procédure de la convocation extraordinaire.	Délai de 21 jours suffisant ? la procédure en cas de désaccord sur session extraordinaire ?
Article 5 – Composition des membres	Ouverture aux États membres ONU et institutions spécialisées. Procédure d'adhésion peu détaillée.	Détailler la procédure d'expression d'intention (format, délai).	Conditions ou restrictions à l'adhésion ?
Article 6 – Observateurs : participation	La participation renforcée pour UE.	Clarifier les modalités du soutien financier UE.	Participation renforcée ouverte à d'autres organisations ? Modalités financières encadrées ?
Article 7 – Admission des observateurs	Admission automatique pour certains observateurs, la procédure d'admission à adopter en première session.	Ajouter le schéma de procédure d'admission. Préciser où trouver la politique d'admission (annexe).	Que se passe-t-il en cas de la contestation d'admission ? Critères transparents ?
Article 8 – Droits des observateurs	Participation sur invitation du Président, sans droit de vote ni blocage.	Clarifier les critères d'invitation. Rappeler explicitement absence de droit de vote.	Observateurs peuvent-ils participer aux groupes de travail ?
Article 9 – Ordre du jour (élaboration)	Processus clair, consultation secrétariat/Présidence/Bureau.		Les membres peuvent-ils proposer des points à tout moment ?
Article 10 – Adoption et modification de l'ordre du jour	Adoption en début de la session, ajout possible pour points urgents.	Encadré la procédure d'ajout. Préciser les critères d'urgence.	Critères objectifs pour « urgent et important » ?
Article 11 – Ordre du jour sessions extraordinaires	Ordre du jour limité aux points proposés dans la demande.	Préciser l'impossibilité d'ajouter d'autres points sauf décision expresse.	Peut-on élargir ordre du jour en cours de session ?
Article 12 – Représentation, pouvoirs et accréditation	Délégation composée d'un chef et autres représentants.	Préciser la procédure d'accréditation (documents, délais).	Procédure en cas de contestation ?

From: frank wesonga
To: UNEP-SPP Chemicals-Waste-Pollution Prevention
Subject: COMMENTS ON DOCUMMENTS FOR OEWG 3.2
Date: 25 April 2025 09:20:42

My written comments on the following working documents for OEWG 3.2 is as follows
NO -1 The proposed structure of the panel particularly regarding its scope and functions needs future clarity and to ensure the panel can Effectively address the complex interlinkages between chemical waste ,pollution and that is not overly focussed on one area at the expense of others.
NO -2 Funding mechanism should be reviewed to ensure its adequacy and sustainability. The panel has enough resources to carry out its mandate effectively including for Research , Data collection and outreach.
NO -3 The engagement of stakeholders particularly Scientists and Researchers should be a priority. And the panel to establish a clear mechanism for incorporating scientists' evidence and expertise into its work.
NO - 4 We should not have ascope of functions that appears too broad and lacks sufficient focus. I suggest we narrow the focus to specific high priority areas, such as persistent organic pollutants and microplastic to ensure the panel can deliver tangible results .
NO -5 The voting mechanism should not raise concerns about the representation of developing countries and other vulnerable populations. We need to have a more equitable system that reflects the diversity of stakeholders and their interest..
NO -6 The work plan should not be too ambitious and lacks a realistic timeline .I suggest we should prioritise key activities and break them down into smaller manageable steps and lastly we should propose adding a new function to the panels mandate which would monitor and assess the impact of climate change on chemical and waste management
ONLY THAT
THANK YOU

STAKEHOLDERS NAME FRANK WESONGA OMUKUYIA
ORGANISATION -ALL AFRICAN CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES

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Statement by Association of Uganda Professional Women in Agriculture and Environment (AUPWAE)

The Association of Uganda Professional Women in Agriculture and Environment (AUPWAE), an observer and part of the NGO Major Group of UNEP Major Groups and Stakeholders, would like to thank the Chair, all distinguished delegates and the Secretariat for the commendable progress made to-date in the current process of establishing a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution.

On-going scenarios of pollution from chemicals and waste sources that we are currently witnessing, continue to detrimentally affect human health and the environment. Examples include water pollution from industrial discharge, comprising of pollutants such as chemicals, heavy metals and untreated sewage. These affect water quality, human health and aquatic ecosystems well-being among others. Similar cases of air pollution from various emission sources are causing respiratory problems in communities in our region and across the globe. Furthermore soil contamination from hazardous pesticides and other agrochemicals in vulnerable smallholder farming settings, negatively impact agricultural productivity and food safety for both producers and consumers in their communities and beyond.

As AUPWAE, we therefore welcome the future science-policy panel that will adequately provide much-needed holistic evidence for implementation of effective measures and actions at all levels, so as to address the chemicals, waste and pollution crisis at hand, leaving no one behind.

Our recommendations are therefore as follows:

1. **Foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel.** As civil society we welcome the inclusion of language supporting an authoritative, independent, multidisciplinary, transparent and relevant body. We also propose strengthening of text in reference to vulnerable groups such as women, youth and indigenous communities.
2. **Proposal on interim arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel.** We would very much hope to see continued and on-going consultations during the interim period. This would be anticipated to enrich the inaugural meeting of the Governing Body of the Panel. We also welcome engagement that is inclusive, capturing the voices of rural communities and drawing from indigenous and traditional knowledge sources. Scientific information that is disseminated should be adequately communicated through civil society engagement, ensuring appropriate translation of materials for use at local levels.

We look forward to continued engagement during the resumed third session of OEWG-SPP and beyond and are available for further consultations during this process.

Thank you very much

From: barwaqa relieforganization
To: UNEP-SPP Chemicals-Waste-Pollution Prevention
Subject: Submission on OEWG 3.2 Working Documents
Date: 29 April 2025 21:10:45

Dear Members of the Secretariat,

On behalf of Barwaqa Relief Organization (BRO), we are pleased to submit our recommendations for the ongoing work of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) 3.2, focused on establishing a Science-Policy Panel to promote sound management of chemicals, waste, and pollution prevention.

BRO is committed to addressing critical challenges faced by underserved communities in the semi-arid regions of Kenya. Our focus includes access to clean water, sanitation, food security, shelter, and economic stability, particularly for Indigenous communities, women, children, Indigenous youth, and persons with disabilities. These groups are significantly impacted by pollution, flooding, drought, desertification, and land degradation.

We urge the Panel to ensure meaningful participation of grassroots NGOs working with marginalized populations, as their local knowledge is crucial for crafting effective, context-sensitive policies. Additionally, we advocate for equitable representation in decision-making processes, particularly for women, Indigenous youth, and persons with disabilities.
prioritizing capacity building for local NGOs and communities to strengthen their involvement in scientific and policy discussions. This should include providing necessary tools, knowledge, and resources to support their engagement.

Finally, we emphasize that those most affected by pollution, especially Indigenous communities and vulnerable groups, must be prioritized. Their experiences should inform the development of responsive and inclusive policies that truly benefit these communities.

Sincerely,
Balkhisa Bashir
Chairperson, Barwaqa Relief Organization (BRO)
Email: Balkhisabashir192@gmail.com
Phone: +254 759 103 749

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

Comments on documents UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG. 3/6, 3/7 and 3/8

Commenter: Sherika Whitelocke-Ballingsingh

Organization: CARPIN, UTech, Jamaica

Submitted on May 16, 2025

SPP-CWP@un.org no later than 16 May 2025.

Document Sections	Comments
Foundational Document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel	
Page 2 Establishment of the [xxxxx] Reaffirming that the sound management of chemicals and waste and the prevention of pollution are crucial for the protection of [the environment and] human health [and the environment]	**Remove:** The environment and (this should proceed human health) **Keep**: and the environment (human health should precede).
Page 2 *Convinced* that a science-policy panel could support countries in their efforts to take action, including to implement multilateral environmental agreement [and other relevant international instruments]	**Keep:** and other relevant international instruments (this will help in complementing other relevant process for chemical and waste in related conventions).
Preamble **Page 3** Scope, Objective and functions of the panel (d) Facilitating information sharing with countries, in particular developing countries seeking relevant scientific information	There is a significant gap in the availability of scientific information due to varying access to research data. Most research conducted in developed countries requires payment for access, while research from developing countries is often available for free. This creates inequality in the sharing of high-level

	scientific information, which could be valuable to developing nations. ***Add text: The text should therefore reflect this type of access to information.***
Operating principles and approaches of the panel **Page 3** (a) [Being scientifically independent and]	Maintaining **scientific independence** is essential as it reflects ethical scientific practice and ensures complete transparency throughout the process.
Page 3 [(c) Recognizing the technical knowledge and experience of workers.....	**Change text:** Technical knowledge **recognition** does not lead to its inclusion in the process; it simply acknowledges what is known.
Page4 (f) [prevention focussed] [addressing]	**Keep Text**: Focusing on prevention will ensure that processes work within the framework of protecting human health. Addressing these issues will guarantee that they are tackled on a practical level rather than just in theory.
Page 4 [existing and legacy]	**Keep text**: [existing and legacy] Ensuring the prevention and addressing of issues with chemicals and waste should remain a priority for existing and legacy systems.
Page 5 [These rights do not grant the ability to be elected to the Bureau of the Panel]	**Contradictory Text:** The European union is allowed enhance participation in sessions of the plenary..... with that of bracketed text
Page 6 **14 alt ….** comprised of five experts from each of the 5 UN regional groups **Footnote 5** five representatives to serve in this role, one each from health, environment, industry, trade union and public interest groups	Having five experts from each UN region is insufficient for such a scientific process. It is uncommon for just one expert from each region to possess the comprehensive expertise required for the range of scientific knowledge needed. Instead, including two to three experts from each region would yield more fruitful results.
Financial Arrangements	
Page 8 **24 alt** [the amount of contributions from private sources must not exceed the	If the "polluters pay" principle is included, could it lead to private funding sources surpassing taxpayer contributions? A

amount of contributions from public sources in biennium	declaration of funding sources is needed to ensure transparency without compromising the integrity of the process.
UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7Rules of Procedure	
Page 8 Rule 22 [4] ¨..five members nominated by each of the five United Nations regions…….	Having five experts from each UN region is insufficient for such a scientific process. It is uncommon for just one expert from each region to possess the comprehensive expertise required for the range of scientific knowledge needed. Instead, including two to three experts from each region would yield more fruitful results

CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH

SUBMISSION OF THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH TO CALL FOR INPUT TO FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT AND RELATED DRAFT DECISION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING TO ESTABLISH A SCIENCE-POLICY PANEL;

Introduction

The Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research welcomes the foundational document and related draft decision for consideration which we believe well integrates some of our concerns raised in earlier submission to the panel. We have again reinterated some keys issues below and and included text additions.

Scope

We accept the scope of the Panel which we believe is shaped by its objectives, functions and territorial influence, needs of the panel to contribute effectively to the sound management of chemicals and waste and prevent pollution and the realities of stakeholder and member states.

Objective

The objective of the panel to strengthen the science-policy interface to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution for the protection of human health and the environment is trite, in consonance with UNEA Resolution 5/8 and should be unbracketed. Removing the square brackets will serve a very useful outcome, will in no way belittle or beguile the process but will enable the needed focus on other pressing issues for consideration..

Functions

We support the inclusion of capacity building in functions of the interdisciplinary expert committee but call for a more detailed outline on capacity building function of the interdisciplinary expert committee. Refer to the section of this section which outlines capacity building functions. F

We request that further consideration of the issue of capacity building in the third session of the open work group should include consideration on development of scientific research capacity, the use of countries human, scientific, technological, organisational, institutional and national resource and should integrate capacity and knowledge/ technology transfer. We agree with the proposal to consult the results of the mapping of capacity-building in the chemicals, waste and pollution space prepared for its second session.

Furthermore, we request that the Panel should be empowered to exercise not just powers that have been given to it under the resolution but be empowered in addition to exercise all other ancillary powers needed to achieve its mandate through an omnibus clause in its function limited to achieving its objective.

What Should Be The Focus Of Priority Capacity Building Activities For The Panel To Undertake?

- There is need to identify long term and short term capacity building goals.
- Strengthen research capacity building for individuals, institutions and observers especially the ability of developing countries to undertake scientific research on chemicals and disseminate scientific research on sustainable management of chemicals and allied activities.
- Strengthen tertiary-level science-education initiatives
- Strengthen capacity building for communication of scientific aspect of sustainable management of chemicals and invest on increasing awareness and dissemination of research findings
- Maintain a portal for knowledge exchange and establishment of a Web-based information service in relation to fellowships and research grants related to sustainable management of chemicals.
- Support for early careers researcher/scientist
- Build capacity to deliver innovations and applied technologies for sustainable management of chemicals.
- Strengthening broader capacity and research collaborations among nations.

IN PRINCIPLE

- Capacity building functions should integrate both scientific and policy based capacity building interface
- Capacity function should empower member states relevant authorities, national experts, observers and individuals.
- Capacity building functions should identify and specify research and development priorities.
- Capacity building should recognize the need for North-South exchange and cooperation on chemicals
- Capacity should recognize the need to strengthen vulnerable groups and minority to participate in capacity building programmes
- Capacity building should establish Information sharing clearing house
- Capacity building should be solution oriented drawing from broad wealth of resources

Strategies for Capacity Building may include

- -Capacity Audits
- -Horizon Scanning
- -Information disseminate
- -Training courses, workshops and seminars
- -Technical advisory services

- -Fellowship programmes
- -Research and Exchanges
- -Community Dialogue
- -Social Media Campaigns
- -Multidisciplinary Based Interventions on identifying linkages with law, human rights, gender economics perspectives and sustainable development goals.
    - Establish Information Sharing Clearing House

Operating Principles

We commend the work done by the Secretariat in preparing a summary of recommendations of principles and reference to relevant annexure and particularly embrace the inclusion of principles relevant to credibility, relevance, legitimacy, human rights and the adoption of a rights based approach and precaution. We are however worried that some aspects of the operating principles that reflects strong political will and commitment to pollution action are in brackets and call that further consideration of those aspects do not water than the momentum for proactive action. We again reiterate our recommendations on *principles to* guide the panel to include the Participation; accountability; non-discrimination and equality; empowerment; legality and alignment with existing relevant international laws and policies.

Request to Recommendation of Inclusion of Relationships with relevant key stakeholders

We welcome the desire expressed in the document to explore strategic partnerships and believe thay engagement and collaboration with key stakeholders can improve the strength of the panel and increase the likelihood of uptake of its deliverables. We recommend that the description of Stakeholder in all the processes mentioned in the background document be included and integrated in the outcome document. We recommend that the best model for stakeholder role is only achievable by assessing the models set out through consultation with multi- stakeholders and recommend that a consultation on the challenges and prospects of identified models be carried out.

Also, it should be borne in mind the multifaceted impacts associated with the problem the panel seeks to solve and the need for diverse voices and call for a broad definition of ‘ and other [selected][relevant] stakeholders that are active and qualified in the topics covered by the Panel.’ and call for precautions to ensure that no one is left behind.

How Can We Avoid Overlap And Duplication Of Work?

There is a need for greater clarity about the way in which the SPP chemical relates to other science policy panels and related work groups. There is need to ensure that issues pertaining to its mandate across the rolling work programme of other panels, secretariat and work groups are identified.

There is need for mandate identification and clarification of areas of mutual connections to strengthen collaboration through more regular engagement and communications activities.

There is also need to build broader coordination and coherence to avoid duplication especially in terms of funding of activities.

Monitoring and evaluating capacity building programmes and broad dissemination of results and good practices will help avoid overlaps and duplication of efforts.

There is need to ensure that proposed activities and strategies draw on, build on and complement existing experience.

How Can Coordination And Cooperation Be Promoted With Relevant Multilateral Agreements, Other International Instruments And Intergovernmental Bodies, And Others?

Develop and strengthen South-South and South-North regional research and educational networks on sustainable chemical management

Build international network for the availability of scientific publications

The Proposed panel should develop strategies for identifying new sources and strengthen means of financial resources for implementation of the functions of the proposed panel

Capacity building should facilitate technology transfer, in particular to developing countries

Promote cooperation and coordination by strengthening synergy and integrating the synergistic approach which would:

On the Synergistic Approach:

(a) Creating synergies between conventions
(b) Map existing global and regional action plans and agreements to create an overview of coverage and identify interlinkages

(c) Promote integrated reporting
(d) Sharing lessons learned and best practices
(e) Developing implementation guidelines for multilateral environmental agreements
(f) Sharing information among the different scientific panels
(g) Strengthen coordination and coherence at implementation levels to ensure policy coherence.
(h) Apply the general rule of treaty interpretation contained in article 31, paragraph 3 (c), of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties to manage potential conflicts between treaty regimes.

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CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH

SUBMISSION OF THE CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH TO CALL FOR INPUT TO PROPOSAL ON INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING TO ESTABLISH A SCIENCE-POLICY PANEL

The Centre for Human Rights and Climate Change Research welcmes the proposals on interim arrangements prepared by 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 and makes the following recommendations:

- The Centre recommends that in considerations concerning the interim arrangements for a Secretariat, the unique role of the Secretariat, its accessibility to developing countries, its independence, its reletaions and coherence with existing relevant science panel, its fianacing and interface with host state and relevants actors including non stakeholders be put into consideration.
- The Centre recommends that in carrying out the role of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to prepare relevant documentation for consideration at the first session of the governing body, the mandate should include provision of resources and support beeded to carry out its mandates and functions including resources to undertake systematic reviews, gather and analyze technical papers, scientific information related to chemicals, waste, and pollution prevention and to strengthen the science-policy interface to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution.
- The Centre recommends that in carrying out the role of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme should include providing the panel with the necessary administrative, logistical, and technical resouces needed.
- Interim financing arrangemnts to support the interim arrangements should make allowance for developing and least developed coutries encumbered by debts management and draw more voluntry commitments from developed countries.
- The Centre agrees that Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme should in collaboration with member state, international orgamisations and regional groups should convene the first session of the governing body of the Panel at the earliest practicable date, and no later than one year from the date of the establishment of the Panel.

Contact: rightsandclimatechangeresearch@gmail.com

Chemichemi Foundation

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May 12, 2025

Digital technologies as enablers of chemicals and waste management in alignment with UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7

The UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7 recommendations to the governing body of the Science-Policy Panel highlight the importance of improved access to reliable, science-based knowledge and inclusive mechanisms to address the global challenges posed by chemicals, waste, and pollution. The Foundation notes digital technologies are emerging as transformative enablers of effective and equitable chemicals and waste management, providing innovative pathways for data collection, policy formulation, public engagement, and monitoring. Real-time sensors, mobile applications, artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, and open data platforms, have the potential to fill knowledge and capacity gaps that hinder sound chemicals and waste governance. The tools can support the generation of disaggregated and high-quality data, a priority area identified in the recommendations, by enhancing surveillance systems, facilitating rapid assessments, and enabling stakeholder reporting at local and national levels.

Significantly, digital platforms also enable more inclusive stakeholder participation by making information accessible and understandable. Through online dashboards, visualizations, and AI-assisted translations, communities including those in remote or underserved regions can better engage with technical information and policy discussions. This aligns with the recommendations' emphasis on improving transparency and co-production of knowledge, when addressing the needs of vulnerable populations.

Furthermore, AI and machine learning can enhance decision-making by analyzing complex datasets to identify pollution hotspots, predict chemical risks, and recommend safer alternatives on one hand. On the other hand, for regulators and policymakers, such insights support evidence-based interventions in alignment with precautionary principles and risk management strategies outlined under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the Global Chemicals Outlook.

Moreover, blockchain technology presents additional opportunities in tracking chemical supply chains, promoting accountability and traceability from production to disposal. This is relevant in preventing dumping, monitoring compliance, and promoting extended producer responsibility (EPR) schemes. It also supports the circular economy by providing transparency on material flows, ensuring that waste is viewed as a resource rather than a liability.

Importantly, digital learning and e-capacity building platforms also support implementation by equipping stakeholders especially in developing countries with requisite skills and tools to adopt safer chemical practices and waste disposal methods. These platforms can foster cross-sectoral and intergenerational learning vital for advancing science-policy interfaces.

Conclusively, digital technologies are not just technical solutions; they are enablers of inclusive, efficient, and responsive chemicals and waste management. We recommend the Science-Policy Panel to leverage on the evolving digital ecosystem to accelerate progress toward pollution prevention, environmental health, and sustainable development.

END

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MAJOR GROUP TO UNEP

Written Submission on the Foundational Documents, Youth Priorities, and Engagement Proposals for the SPP on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution Prevention

The Children and Youth Major Group (CYMG) to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the ongoing process toward the establishment of the Science-Policy Panel (SPP) on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution Prevention. As a formal stakeholder constituency recognized as part of the UNEP Major Groups and Stakeholders Mechanism, CYMG represents a broad and diverse network of youth-led organizations, young scientists, and early career professionals working to address environmental challenges across local, regional, and global levels. Our participation in this process is guided by the belief that intergenerational equity, inclusive governance, and scientific integrity must be core pillars of the new Panel. As Children and Youth, we trust that this panel will be important for the future of the environment, and we envision this Panel to raise the ambition, scale up solutions, and be designed to overcome current and future challenges from chemical, waste, and pollution.

This submission reflects the collective perspectives of young people actively engaged in environmental governance and knowledge production. It is grounded in a broad and inclusive consultative process led by CYMG, including preparatory meetings and youth consultations convened ahead of the previous OEWG sessions. Most recently, this included a series of virtual roundtable consultations held in May 2025, engaging over 200 youth and early career professionals. We appreciate the participatory spirit that has characterized the OEWG sessions to date and emphasize the importance of maintaining and enhancing this spirit as the Panel's structure and work modalities are finalized.

This submission is structured as follows:

- **Part I: CYMG's Top 10 Priorities,** highlighting key principles and considerations from youth perspectives to guide the Panel's establishment and long-term functioning.

- **Part II: General Comments and Textual Proposals** offering reflections on the foundational documents.

- **Part III: Proposals for Meaningful Engagement,** outlining recommendations to institutionalize youth participation and ensure sustained, inclusive involvement of early career professionals in the Panel's work programme.

In recognition of the urgent need to strengthen global action on the adverse impacts of hazardous chemicals, waste mismanagement, and pollution, we propose the name **Intergovernmental Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution (IPCWP)** for the newly established science-policy body. This proposed name reflects the Panel's core mandate to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and the prevention of pollution, aligning with UNEA resolution 5/8. The name maintains consistency with existing science-policy interfaces, notably IPCC and IPBES, while clearly communicating the Panel's comprehensive thematic focus. Establishing a clear, purposeful identity for the Panel is essential to ensure its visibility and long-term impact.

Part I: CYMG's Top 10 Priorities for the SPP

Derived from CYMG's intersessional work ahead of OEWG sessions, these priorities reflect a collective youth effort to shape the Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution, emphasizing inclusivity, innovation, meaningful participation, and adaptability in addressing the global environmental challenges.

1. **Prioritize Intergenerational Equity:** Integrate intergenerational equity into the existing operating principles, ensuring that the Panel's structure and work incorporate intergenerational perspectives and foster active engagement of children and youth, particularly those in vulnerable situations, across all levels of decision-making. As Pact for the Future emphasizes, intergenerational equity is key in ensuring that present generations act with responsibility towards safeguarding the needs and interests of future generations.

2. **Inclusive Plenary Functions to Ensure Multistakeholder Collaboration:** Ensure that the plenary's functions reflect inclusivity and broad representation of expertise and perspectives by recognizing Major Groups and other Stakeholders, as referenced in Agenda 21 of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Their inclusion will promote multistakeholder collaboration, strengthen partnerships and coordination, enhance knowledge sharing and transparency, and foster innovation and collective action.

3. **Establish a Youth Expert Advisory Group:** Institutionalize the Youth Expert Advisory Group as a subcommittee of the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee to integrate the voices of youth experts and early career professionals in the panel's work programme, ensuring their perspectives help shape research priorities, outreach strategies, and policy recommendations. The institutionalized inclusion of youth experts and professionals will facilitate engagement and outreach with youth communities and ensure inclusive, forward-looking, and sustainable outcomes. This group should have equal representation across regions and genders, specifically focusing on inclusion from communities in vulnerable situations.

4. **Embed Human Rights-Based Approach:** Adopt a human rights-based approach to the management of chemicals and waste and the prevention of pollution by recognizing, respecting, and integrating the knowledge and practices of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. This approach should also address the intersectional vulnerabilities that affected communities face, particularly in relation to health risks, conflict zones, and socioeconomic disparities, and ensure the inclusion, protection, and empowerment of informal sector workers who are disproportionately exposed yet often excluded from formal decision-making and safeguards.

5. **Flexible and Iterative Approach:** Adopt a flexible and iterative approach that enables continuous learning, evidence-based adjustments, and real-time responsiveness to emerging findings, technological innovations, and evolving social dynamics, including information consumption trends. This approach is essential to ensure that the governance of chemicals, waste, and pollution is adaptive, future-proof, and resilient in the face of rapidly shifting global challenges.

6. **Complementarity:** Support specific principles, including transparency, accountability, and the precautionary approach (as outlined in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration), as mutually reinforcing pillars of the science-policy interface. These principles should enable a proactive, forward-looking approach to protect human and environmental health, particularly in the face of scientific uncertainty.

7. **Embed strong safeguards to prevent conflicts of interest:** Ensure that scientific assessments, policy recommendations, and implementation processes are not guided by actors who may benefit from the unsound management of chemicals, waste, and pollution or from the poor implementation of sustainable policies. Upholding the integrity, objectivity, and independence of the Panel is essential to its effectiveness and maintaining public trust.

8. **Capacity Building:** Ensure long-term, inclusive capacity development that empowers diverse stakeholders to meaningfully engage with the Panel's work. Grounded in the principles of access to information and public participation (e.g., Rio Principle 10, Escazú Agreement, Aarhus Convention), capacity-building efforts should be holistic, incorporate intergenerational learning, and be responsive to regional needs, linguistic diversity, and bottom-up knowledge systems.

9. **Adaptive Outreach and Awareness Raising:** Establish a flexible outreach mechanism that leverages ethical and sustainable technological advancements and integrates best practices from platforms like GEO, IPBES, and IPCC. This mechanism should generate accessible, multilingual, and multimodal outputs tailored to the stakeholders' needs, enable effective dissemination to reach broader audiences, and incorporate continuous feedback to strengthen knowledge-sharing. The Panel should uphold synergy and policy coherence with various multilateral environmental agreements and instruments in its exercise of functions due to the intertwined nature of the issue and to avoid duplication.

10. **Focus on Communities in Vulnerable Situations:** Prioritize solutions and capacity-building efforts for communities in vulnerable situations, taking into account intersecting factors such as poverty, geography, gender, age, and political marginalization. These efforts should be supported by financial and technical assistance, grounded in principles of distributional justice, and include ongoing education, monitoring, and evaluation to assess impact, promote accountability, and guide adaptive policy responses that reflect the needs and active participation of affected communities.

Part II: Foundational Documents: General Comments and Textual Proposals

1) UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6 - Foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel

We acknowledge the efforts reflected in the current draft to structure the future Panel in an inclusive and interdisciplinary manner. The recognition of principles such as gender balance, regional diversity, Indigenous knowledge, and the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment is a positive step toward shaping an equitable and effective Panel.

At the same time, we observe that intergenerational equity, while mentioned, is not yet consistently mainstreamed throughout the document. The draft would benefit from more explicit language on youth engagement mechanisms and clearer operational commitments to inclusive participation by civil society, particularly groups that are underrepresented and disproportionately impacted, including youth, Indigenous Peoples, and informal workers.

Lastly, while the draft outlines a comprehensive institutional structure (including the plenary, expert committee, and bureau), we note the absence of specific provisions ensuring the meaningful participation of civil society beyond generic observer roles. Youth and civil society engagement should be positioned as integral to the success, credibility, and long-term legitimacy of the Panel. To strengthen the foundational document and ensure that the Panel is future-oriented and inclusive, we recommend the following textual insertions and amendments:

Foundational Document Texts	Proposals
1. On the Operating Principles and Approaches (Section B) para 2, subpara j: "[(j) Recognising the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, the right to science, and intergenerational equity and the importance of informed participation.]"	(j) Recognising the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment; (k) Upholding intergenerational equity to reflect the interests of present and future generations; (l) Ensuring inclusive and informed participatory process, including equitable access to science and knowledge; Following the approach used for previously agreed principles, this restructuring ensures that each element (Environmental Rights, Intergenerational Equity, Access to Science, and Informed Participation) is presented as a distinct guiding principle. This enhances clarity, reflects their equal importance, and supports more effective and inclusive implementation by the Panel.
2. On Participation (Section C, para 6) [...] participation as observers to any [...] governmental, intergovernmental or non-governmental, Indigenous Peoples[,] [or other	Participation as observers shall include non-governmental stakeholders, Indigenous Peoples, youth, other disproportionately impacted populations, and local communities.

disproportionately impacted populations and other relevant stakeholders,] and local communities [...]	
3. On the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee (Section III, para 15): 15. Members of the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee are nominated by regions and elected by [the Governing Body during a] Plenary, [taking into account the need to ensure][ensuring] the committee is interdisciplinary, [by] ensuring contributions from experts with a broad range of disciplinary expertise; has inclusive participation, including by indigenous peoples; and has geographical, regional and gender balance	15. Members of the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee are nominated by regions and elected by [the Governing Body during a] Plenary, [taking into account the need to ensure][ensuring] the committee is interdisciplinary, [by] ensuring contributions from experts with a broad range of disciplinary expertise; has inclusive participation, including by indigenous peoples, youth, other disproportionately impacted populations, and local communities; and has geographical, regional and gender balance
4. On Strategic Partnerships (Section VI, para 30) 30. The [Governing Body of the Panel][Panel][Plenary] [may decide to][shall] pursue formal strategic partnerships with United Nations entities, multilateral agreements[, regional entities, funding agencies] and other [selected][relevant] stakeholders that are active and qualified in the topics covered by the Panel. [Formal strategic partnerships [support][can be a means of] [promoting synergies [and avoiding overlap] towards] [achieving the operating principle[s] [of the Panel] [that includes] "avoiding overlap and duplication of work, and promoting coordination and cooperation"] [while delivering on any of the Panel's functions].]	Adding: Strategic partnerships shall include youth-led networks, women's organizations, Indigenous Peoples groups, local communities, and science-policy alliances, with a focus on expanding access to knowledge, innovation, and science-policy dialogues.

2) UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7 - 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

We welcome the structured and comprehensive approach presented in the current draft procedural recommendations for the functioning of the SPP. We acknowledge the efforts to promote scientific rigor, transparency, and inclusiveness across various components of the Panel's envisioned work. At the same time, we would like to share the following preliminary comments and suggestions to strengthen the draft text, particularly in relation to institutional inclusivity and mainstreaming of intergenerational equity.

Early career professionals and youth participation have not yet been explicitly addressed in the draft rules of procedure. We understand that a formal stakeholder engagement mechanism will be developed and adopted by the Panel's governing body during its first plenary sessions. However, we recommend that the current draft include indicative language

that reflects the importance of establishing inclusive and participatory modalities for stakeholder engagement. This would provide early guidance and commitment toward meaningful involvement of non-governmental actors, including youth.

Furthermore, we emphasize that the development of the stakeholder engagement mechanism should be undertaken through a consultative process. Provisions on expert selection and the conflict-of-interest policy could be enhanced by introducing clearer pathways for stakeholder input, including the participation of young scientists and early-career professionals in shaping the Panel's deliverables. Moreover, we call for strengthened facilitation and support for stakeholders engaging with the Panel's works and activities.

We note the absence of references to youth-specific fellowships or knowledge-sharing programmes to support capacity building and sustained early-career engagement. These are crucial for ensuring continuity, diversity, and intergenerational knowledge exchange within the Panel's scientific processes. Proposed Textual Insertions:

Foundational Document Text	Proposals
1. Annex 1, Rule 2 (Observer Definition): "Observer" means any State not a member of the Panel, any regional economic integration organization, any secretariat of a multilateral environmental agreement, or any other body, organization or agency, whether national or international, governmental, intergovernmental or non-governmental, including any organization or representative of Indigenous Peoples or of local communities, that has expertise in matters covered by the Panel and has informed the secretariat of its wish to be represented at sessions of the governing body of the Panel, subject to the provisions set out in the rules of procedure;	"Observer" means any State not a member of the Panel, any regional economic integration organization, any secretariat of a multilateral environmental agreement, or any other body, organization or agency, whether national or international, governmental, intergovernmental or non-governmental, including any organization or representative of Indigenous Peoples, Youth or of local communities, that has expertise in matters covered by the Panel and has informed the secretariat of its wish to be represented at sessions of the governing body of the Panel, subject to the provisions set out in the rules of procedure;
2. Annex 2, Paragraph 4 [Submissions by relevant stakeholders, such as international and regional scientific organizations, trust funds, governmental and non-governmental organizations, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, private sector entities and foundations, whether made individually or jointly, will also be encouraged and taken into account, as appropriate.]	Submissions by relevant stakeholders, such as international and regional scientific organizations, trust funds, governmental and non-governmental organizations, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, Youth, private sector entities and foundations, whether made individually or jointly, will also be encouraged and taken into account, as appropriate.]
3. Annex 3, Section B on Deliverables	Adding:

	Summaries for youth: A “summary for youth” provides a youth-relevant summary of the key findings of a [deliverable] [report] with the aim of increasing accessibility of the [deliverable] [report] to a wider youth audience, including students and grassroots activists. It is typically prepared as a companion to an assessment or a synthesis report.
4. Annex 3, Section B on Deliverables (para 4f bis): [(f) bis Written or audio-visual materials produced either as a complement to another deliverable or as a deliverable itself. Training materials should be focused on a specific audience to achieve specific learning objectives. They are distinguished from information and communication materials (h) intended to create public awareness.]	[(f) bis Written or audio-visual materials produced either as a complement to another deliverable or as a deliverable itself, including materials designed to enhance accessibility and intergenerational learning. Training materials should be focused on a specific audience to achieve specific learning objectives. They are distinguished from information and communication materials (h) intended to create public awareness.]
5. Annex 3, Procedures for Deliverables, Section on Expert Nomination (para 19) 19. The secretariat prepares a call for expert nominations on the basis of the work programme agreed by the governing body and the scoping report if one was prepared.	19. The secretariat prepares a call for expert nominations on the basis of the work programme agreed by the governing body and the scoping report if one was prepared. The expert nomination process should include dedicated outreach mechanisms to encourage applications from underrepresented groups, including youth, Indigenous Peoples, and experts from developing countries
6. Annex I to the Procedures for the preparation and clearance of panel deliverables. Roles and responsibilities for the preparation of assessments	In addition to specified roles, the Panel shall include a dedicated role for early-career professionals and researchers Fellows: Fellows support the development of deliverables by providing technical, organizational, and integrative assistance to author teams while simultaneously receiving capacity-building opportunities. Fellows also contribute to literature reviews, data management, coordination of inputs, and support communication between disciplines and stakeholder groups.

The inclusion of Fellows draws from successful models in other intergovernmental science-policy processes, including the IPCC, which has embedded Chapter Scientists into author teams to assist in drafting, coordinating, and contributing to different sections of the assessment reports. IPBES operates a Fellowship Programme that has engaged several early-career researchers through direct engagement in assessments. The GEO process incorporates early-career fellows into its author teams.

These models have consistently demonstrated that engaging early-career professionals not only builds future capacity but also:

- Infuses assessments with fresh interdisciplinary perspectives, especially from the social sciences, innovation, and technology domains.
- Bridges generational knowledge gaps and creates long-term ownership and engagement in science-policy work.
- Improves inclusivity and regional representation.
- Strengthens the future credibility and sustainability of the Panel by building a pipeline of trained professionals ready to contribute to future assessment cycles.

Relevant additional paragraph to the respective Procedural Section (Annex III, para 18–20):
The secretariat, in collaboration with the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee, shall establish and issue regular calls for nominations of Fellows, ensuring regional and disciplinary balance, and shall include at least one Fellow per chapter or major deliverable.

3) UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8 - Proposal on interim arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel

We welcome the proposed interim arrangements and commend the pathway to ensure a smooth transition from the establishment of the Panel to its first plenary session. We underscore the importance of clearly defining the mandate of the interim secretariat to ensure effective technical and procedural preparation for the first meeting of the governing body. We believe that the first plenary of the governing body represents a critical milestone in shaping an inclusive, effective, and representative science-policy panel. In this regard, we strongly recommend that the interim secretariat not only prepare the required documentation and logistical arrangements but also maintain the participatory spirit that has guided the progress of the OEWG thus far.

Specifically, we encourage the continuation of inclusive engagement with civil society and major groups, including youth, in the preparatory process leading to the first plenary. We also urge that the interim period be used to build momentum around the Panel's future work, including through outreach and awareness-raising.

Part III: Proposals for Meaningful Youth Engagement with the SPP

The following recommendations and proposals reflect the principles of intergenerational equity, inclusivity, and scientific integrity:

1. Youth Expert Advisory Group:

Establish a Youth Expert Advisory Group as a sub-committee under the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee (IEC) to provide structured and consistent input from youth scientists and policy advocates into the Panel's work.

Objectives:

- Ensuring systematic and ongoing youth engagement beyond ad hoc consultations.
- Creating a bridge between grassroots knowledge, academic youth research, and SPP deliverables.
- Promoting co-creation, capacity-building, and knowledge exchange with senior experts.
- Aligns with existing successful models of Advisory Groups and Youth Programmes in different Panels and multilateral environmental agreements.

2. Fellowship Programme:

Launch a Youth Fellowship Programme to embed early career professionals in the technical and procedural processes of the SPP, including support roles to lead authors and committees.

Objectives:

- Supporting intergenerational learning and mentorship within SPP structures.
- Providing early career professionals with hands-on experience in science-policy interfaces.
- Enhancing the capacity of youth from all regions to contribute substantively to assessments.
- Addressing barriers to entry often faced by young people in global processes.

3. PhD Scholarship Programme:

Establish an SPP PhD Scholarship Fund to support young researchers, especially from developing countries, to pursue doctoral studies aligned with the thematic focus of the Panel.

Objectives:

- Addressing structural inequalities in access to higher education and scientific research.
- Encouraging new knowledge generation directly relevant to SPP priorities.
- Building a pipeline of diverse expertise to feed into future assessments and expert groups.
- Supporting national and regional capacity-building objectives.

4. SPP Youth Network:

Create an SPP Youth Network, an open, recognized stakeholder platform that allows youth organizations, academic groups, and individual youth experts to submit collective inputs and engage across the Panel's processes.

Objectives:

- Facilitating coordination, peer learning, and collective consultation among youth constituencies.
- Enabling structured participation in submission processes, work programme consultations, and regional dialogues.
- Supporting the inclusion of youth from rural areas, marginalized communities, and non-English speaking backgrounds.
- Serving as a platform to support translation, accessibility, and outreach efforts.

5. Youth-Friendly Deliverables and Outreach:

Require the development of Youth Summaries and outreach materials for each major deliverable, accompanied by outreach materials and capacity-building training.

Objectives:

- Making complex scientific outputs accessible to a wider youth audience, including students and grassroots activists.
- Enhancing the uptake, application, and dissemination of scientific findings.
- Contributing to awareness-raising, education, and youth-led action at the community level.
- Helping addresses language and digital accessibility barriers.

Find out more about CYMG's engagement with the SPP OEWG:
https://www.cymgenv.net/youth-oewg-spp

Read the policy brief on the best practices of young engagement in existing science-policy interfaces:
https://www.cymgenv.net/_files/ugd/b938c6_62f1298263dd4bf5941a2566aa97c911.pdf

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For additional information, feel free to reach out to the following thematic facilitators:

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"While the world debates parts per million of toxins, now is the need for measuring the *parts per million of broken spirits, forgotten minds, as silent trauma* pollution is destroying both ecosystems and emotional ecosystems."

1. "Chemical exposure leaves behind more than toxins. This leaves behind trauma."
2. "We don't just collect waste data; we collect stories of mothers miscarrying from heavy metal exposure, children dropping out of school from cognitive decline, and workers self-medicating with alcohol to numb the pain of poisoned lungs. That's the unseen cost of pollution."
3. "Mental health is not a luxury. It's a missing metric in pollution management."
4. "We call on this Panel to redefine 'pollution exposure' to include psychological toxicity because the mind cannot heal in a poisoned environment."

Call for Action

"Let the SPP be remembered as the first science-policy panel that declared: **there is no environmental health without mental health**. Let us integrate trauma-informed frameworks into pollution response. Let us build communities where cleaning up a landfill also means cleaning up despair."

Unique Solutions to Propose

- Incorporate the first "Mental Health approach in Waste Zones". This calls for a Global Pilot Project combining chemical monitoring, therapy, and non-violent communication.
- Establish a "Psychosocial Resilience Scorecard" as a mandatory part of national chemical impact reports.
- Create a "Pollution & Mental Health Innovation Fund" at UNEP or the Science-Policy Panel level.

To end, "We're not just fighting for clean air and clean water. We're fighting for clean minds, restored hope, and a world where healing the planet means healing its people."

This is a pivotal moment. We must no longer silo environmental science from human wellbeing. Let us rise as a global coalition, scientists, policymakers, government,member states, NGOs and communities united in reshaping not only our planet but the emotional and psychological landscapes of the people who live on it to thrive without leaving anyone behind.

Contact:

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Date: 25th April 2025

REF: WC/UNEP/002/OEWG-3.2

To The Secretariat, The ad hoc OEWG,
United Nations Environment Program (UNEP),
UN Avenue, Gigiri, Nairobi,
P.O. Box 30552 – 00100,
Nairobi – Kenya.

Dear Madam/Sir,

RE: Written Comments

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the OEWG 3.2 working documents. On behalf of Comparatively for Tanzania Elites Community Organizers (CTECO), an Accredited UNEP NGO Observer, we respectfully submit our recommendations — grounded in our steadfast commitment to sustainability, inclusivity, dynamic governance, and robust multi-stakeholder collaboration.

A. Context and Opportunity

As we approach the resumed third session of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on a Science-Policy Panel (SPP OEWG 3.2) scheduled for June 14–19, 2025, in Punta del Este, Uruguay, followed by the Intergovernmental Meeting on June 19–20, 2025, we see a pivotal moment. This period is an opportunity to create a framework for chemicals, waste management, and pollution prevention that is both comprehensive and forward-thinking. We propose a multi-tiered governance model that integrates national, regional, and international dimensions through effective Technical Working Groups (TWGs).

B. Key Priorities and Observations

1. **Multi-Level Science-Policy Panel Coordination**

- **Structured Panel Operations:** The Science-Policy Panel (SPP) should operate effectively at national, regional, and international levels to cultivate localized solutions, promote robust regional cooperation, and foster a cohesive global strategy.
- **Role of National TWGs:** Establish dedicated TWGs in every member state with clear mandates to verify policy proposals, address local challenges, and harmonize scientific recommendations in the fields of chemicals, waste management, and pollution prevention.
- **Transboundary Collaboration:** Align national and regional strategies with global frameworks such as the IPCC, IPBES, and the Great Green Wall Initiative, and integrate multilateral agreements (Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm, and Minamata Conventions) to ensure policies are evidence-based and contextually relevant.

2. **<u>Enhancing Institutional and Coordination Structures</u>**

- **Coordinated Governance:**
  - ✓ **National Level**: A unified National SPP Platform should be established to oversee policy implementation, promote the exchange of best practices, and collaborate effectively with the National Technical Working Groups (TWGs).
  - ✓ **Regional Level:** At the regional level, form a **Regional SPP Platform** as part of the **Global Advisory Platform on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution (GAP-CWP)**. This platform should comprise science experts nominated by each National SPP Platform to foster collaboration and regional alignment.
  - ✓ **International Level:** Under the guidance of UNEP, create an **International Global Advisory Platform on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution (GAP-CWP)**. This global platform should include representatives from each National SPP Platform, ensuring cohesive and globally integrated governance.
- **Composition of the National SPP:** Chaired by the Permanent Secretary from the national science coordinating ministry, the body should include representatives from all science-related ministries, development partners, CSOs/NGOs, grassroots organizations, Faith-Based Organizations, networks for People Living with Disabilities (PLWD), Indigenous communities, and elder persons. This diverse composition will ensure transparent discussions and enhance accountability.

3. **<u>Investing in Research and Educational Outreach</u>**

- **Enhanced Funding and Technical Support:** Prioritize investments in research addressing climate adaptation, pollution prevention, and sustainable waste management to ensure that evidence is translated into effective policy.
- **Promoting Educational Engagement:** Establish science-policy panel clubs in schools, universities, and local communities to empower students, children/youth, and vulnerable groups, thereby nurturing a culture of sustainable chemical and waste governance.

4. **Empowering Stakeholders and Fostering Inclusive Participation**

- **Community Engagement:** Ensure active involvement of researchers, policymakers, and marginalized groups by employing inclusive, gender-responsive, and children/youth-inclusive participation mechanisms.
- **Clear, Measurable Outcomes:** Define transparent objectives that address the disproportionate impacts of chemicals and waste hazards on vulnerable populations, including appropriate compensation for loss and damage.
- **Inclusive Governance Frameworks:** Maintain transparent, merit-based National SPP TWGs with published terms of reference, equitable recruitment, and structured reporting. Strengthen partnerships with governments, academic institutions, private sectors, and civil society to capture a broad range of perspectives.

5. **Sustainable Advocacy and Cross-Sector Leadership**

- **Recognition of Leadership:** Recognize and reward leaders for their commitment to advancing chemicals, waste management, and pollution prevention, thereby enhancing community resilience.
- **Building Strategic Coalitions:** Collaborate with entities such as the Africa Forest Forum, African Group of Negotiators Experts Support (AGNES), the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI), the Berlin Forum on Chemicals and Sustainability, the Geneva Environment Network, IPEN, and other UNEP-affiliated organizations to promote evidence-based policymaking and share best practices.

- ♣ **Dispute Resolution:** Develop fair mediation mechanisms to address non-compliance and foster collaborative solutions.

C. Recommendations for SPP Governance and Interim Arrangements

- ✓ **Renaming the Panel:** We propose renaming the Science-Policy Panel (SPP) to be the **"Global Advisory Platform on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution (GAP-CWP)".** This new title clearly reflects its mission, integrative approach, and focused mandate.
- ✓ **Transparent Reporting and Oversight:** Implement standardized reporting frameworks, clear performance indicators, and independent audits to ensure accountability for all Member States.
- ✓ **Capacity Building and Financial Support:** Introduce tailored training programs, technology transfer initiatives, and resource-sharing to empower LDC Member States, Civil Societies and stakeholders. Additionally, link LDC Member States, Civil Societies and stakeholders to international funding mechanisms with flexible, development-oriented terms, mentioning but not limited to:
    - **i.)** Green Climate Fund (GCF)
    - **ii.)** Global Environment Facility (GEF)
    - **iii.)** Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)
    - **iv.)** Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF)
    - **v.)** UNEP Special Programme Trust Fund
    - **vi.)** Adaptation Fund
    - **vii.)** Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol

D. Conclusion

CTECO remains dedicated to advancing global environmental governance through science-driven policies for chemicals and waste management. By ensuring transparency, accountability, inclusivity, and fairness, we can secure the effective implementation of sustainable environmental resolutions. We call on all Member States, environmental experts, and stakeholders to join us in refining and endorsing these recommendations as we work toward a sustainable and equitable future.

Sincerely,

Mr. Musa Mussa Wawuyo,
Director

<u>On behalf of Comparatively for Tanzania Elites Community Organizers (CTECO)</u>

Conflict and Environment Observatory

Open-Ended Working Group on a Science-Policy Panel (OEWG 3.2) – 16 May 2025

The role of the Science-Policy Panel in addressing the health and ecological impact of conflict pollution and the toxic remnants of war.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments on the following pre-session documents for the OEWG 3.2:

(i) **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6** Foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel;

(ii) **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7** 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; and

(iii) **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8** Proposal on interim arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel.

We welcomed adoption of resolution 5/8 in March 2022, and have submitted earlier joint statements on the role the **Science-Policy Panel** can play in addressing the '*health and ecological burden of conflict pollution'*. Regarding **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7**, we **strongly support** the following, which can each contribute in supporting people from conflict-affected regions:

1. Page 16, Annex 2, para 4 – and the inclusion of submissions by relevant stakeholders, such as international and regional scientific organizations, trust funds, governmental and non-governmental organizations, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, private sector entities and foundations
2. Page 18, Annex 3, para A 1 c – and the inclusion of experts from Indigenous Peoples, local communities, those engaged in citizen science and vulnerable groups, in the definition of "expertise"
3. Page 20, Annex 3, para C 14 i - and the inclusion of individuals with Indigenous knowledge, or local expertise from communities with relevant knowledge
4. Page 23, Annex 3, para E 37 & 38 – and the inclusion and acknowledgement of the value of "grey literature", which may include outputs from citizen science initiatives and the importance of Indigenous Peoples and local knowledge as primary sources of data and information

We **do not support** the inclusion of any exemption or clause which reduces transparency and risks potential misuse, and as such do not support inclusion of the following:

1. Page 34, Appendix A, para 7 bis - [Notwithstanding paragraphs [3 and 5] an individual may decline to disclose information related to activities, interests and funding where its disclosure would adversely and materially affect:
   (a) Defense, national security or imminent public safety…]

This is of particular relevance for individuals with links to the military or military-related activities, given the longer-standing exemptions and derogations often applied to this sector, and the need for greater transparency and accountability linked to conflict-related pollution and hazardous materials used in military materiel.

Thank you for the opportunity, and we look forward to seeing the SPP implemented in full.

Global Alliance On Health and Pollution

Chemin des Mines 9
1202 Geneva
Switzerland

15 May 2025

GAHP's Pre-Session Comments on the Documents prepared for the resumed 3rd Session of the SPP CWP OEWG to be held 15 – 18 June in Punta del Este

GAHP is a network of 70 international and national-level agencies and NGOs committed to a collaborative, multi-sectoral approach to address the global pollution crisis and its health and economic impacts. GAHP undertakes advocacy, research, and projects to identify actions that developing countries can take. GAHP works across the globe, assisting low- and middle-income countries in prioritizing health outcomes by addressing pollution through its Health and Pollution Action Plans (HPAPs), solutions planning, and resource mobilisation.

GAHP thanks the Chair, the Bureau and the Secretariat for the timely preparation of the documents and the extensive outreach efforts made.

General Approach

Pollution is a leading global health crisis. The Lancet Commission on Health and Pollution, to which GAHP contributed, found that pollution was the deadliest environmental risk factor worldwide, responsible for **16% of global deaths** in **2015**[1] and **2019**[2]**. This means that in the year since we met in Geneva, pollution has caused at least 9 million premature deaths.** This is a very conservative estimate but is more than 3 times the combined death toll from AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis yet, unlike those terrible diseases, pollution deaths remain invisible and are not targeted by effective global action.

UNICEF, and GAHP's sister organisation, Pure Earth, have calculated that about half of the children in developing countries have blood lead levels that affect their capacity to learn, and the World Bank suggests that for each of these children who enter the labour force, their lifetime's earnings are reduced by 11%. These figures are shocking, yet reducing pollution hardly features in national budgets or international aid programmes. The future Science Policy Panel will be vital in raising awareness of this silent crisis and in showing that there are cost-effective solutions. We cannot afford to wait any longer to establish the Panel.

We have only 4 days left for the OEWG to reach agreement. GAHP will do all it can to help bring our work to a successful conclusion. We are inspired by Inge Anderson's advice in Geneva when she urged us to pare back the Foundational Document to its bare essentials. Her advice should apply equally to the Decisions and the Rules of Procedure.

[1] http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(17)32345-0

[2] Pollution and health: a progress update

As observers, we cannot insert language in texts, but we are willing to work with all Governments to draft compromises.

We may not need to solve all the thoughts that are currently bracketed. As we approach each contentious issue, we should be asking whether a solution is needed now or can the Panel itself decide, on the basis of experience. If the issue is not essential, we should leave it out. The alternative is to leave brackets in the documents we submit to the Intergovernmental Meeting, when the text in those brackets will almost certainly be deleted. It is our duty as professional negotiators not to give the decision-makers a polluted draft. Our common ultimate aim is a clean and healthy environment – surely we can produce a clean and healthy text.

GAHP's Key Messages

- **Scope.**
  Unsound management of chemicals and wastes are two forms of pollution, but it will also be important for the Panel to work on pollution in different media – air, water including oceans, and soil. States might want to take this into account in the name of the Panel, using the term Pollution as an overarching umbrella. Additionally, the current draft of the Foundational Document has Scope as a title but no corresponding text. Paragraph 2(k) in Section B of the Foundational Document listing operating principles and approaches contains elements for defining scope.

- **The right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment** was **recognised as a human right** by the UN General Assembly in 2022[3]. Using this universally agreed language should not be controversial, but some States are apparently uncomfortable about listing this as an operating principle[4] applied to the way the Panel undertakes its work. Perhaps recognising this human right in the agreed UNGA language, could form a very short **Preamble to the Foundational Document** setting the overall rationale for promoting a science policy interface.

- **Participation of Stakeholders in the work of the Panel.**
  Experience in Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and elsewhere has shown the value of drawing on knowledge held by non-State actors in strengthening the science policy interface and their role in making the outputs of a Panel accessible to a wide audience. **Participation should include the right**

[3] Paragraph 1 of UNGA Resolution 76/300
[4] Foundational Document B.2.k

Global Alliance On Health and Pollution

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to speak in Plenary and to propose drafting amendments to reports and decisions while accepting that, as the Panel will be an intergovernmental process, Governments alone will decide on eventual outcomes. **GAHP strongly supports the proposal in Rule 22.1 of the Rules of Procedure (Annex I of OEWG.3/7) that 5 members nominated by observers** of the Governing Body of the Panel should be members of the **Interdisciplinary Expert Committee** (IEC). Given that Rule 22.2 names several organisations that can be invited to the IEC as observers, GAHP would not expect these bodies to stand for election as members. GAHP fully accepts that the members of the IEC drawn from observers to the Governing Body would have to act in their personal expert capacity in accordance with Rule 22.4 and meet the selection criteria set out in Rule 23. **Section C.III. of the Foundational Document on the IEC needs to be brought into conformity with the Rules of Procedure and could be shortened to take out elements already covered by the Rules**.

- **Financial Arrangements**

  GAHP would like clarification on what is to happen to the Draft Financial Procedures in Document OEWG.3/INF/9 since they are being submitted to the OEWG simply as an information document. The Procedures are not included in OEWG.3/7 and so will not be forwarded by the Intergovernmental Meeting to the first session of the Panel. The Financial Arrangements in Section C.V of the Foundational Document do not seem comprehensive enough to reassure the Intergovernmental Meeting that the Panel will have the sound financial procedures needed to attract contributions at its First Session.

  Moreover, GAHP is concerned about discrepancies between the Financial Arrangements in Section V of the Foundational Document and the Draft Financial Procedures. GAHP hopes that a financial expert from UNEP will be available in Punta del Este to provide advice. In particular, the Financial Arrangements do not seem to abide by UNEP's Financial Rules, which make the Executive Director of UNEP and staff to whom they give delegated authority, solely accountable for spending money in a UNEP-administered Trust Fund. Such Trust Funds are set up by the ED on an invitation by the Governing Body of an organisation but are not established by that Governing Body as suggested in C.V.23 of the Foundational Document. Setting a budget and approving a work programme are the prerogative of the Governing Body as all members should be involved in these decisions. A Bureau may receive reports and review budget information, as set out in C.V.27, but should not *approve* budget decisions proposed by the Secretariat as suggested by paragraphs 7 and 13 of the Draft Financial Procedures.

Paragraph 7 might be accepted as a permanent delegated authority from the Governing Body to the Bureau to scrutinise some earmarked contributions on its behalf. However, this authority should make clear that the specific activities must be part of the Work Programme established by the Plenary and a floor of $2 million for any scrutiny seems excessive. The equivalent IPBES provision states that their Bureau can approve earmarked contributions of up to $300,000 for activities in their Work Programme but requires Plenary approval above that level.

Paragraph 13 is anyway redundant since paragraph 11 already makes clear that the Executive Secretary cannot spend more than the resources actually available in the Trust Fund.

- **The Role of WHO**. Given the broad agreement that the objective of the Panel is to strengthen the CWP science policy interface for the protection of human health and the environment, GAHP has long advocated a strong role for WHO in the work of the Panel.

  GAHP supports including an explicit reference to the World Health Assembly in paragraph 3 of the draft Decision of the Intergovernmental Meeting establishing the Panel (OEWG.3/6). This would invite WHA to consider the decision and would allow it to be brought to the attention of the 2026 World Health Assembly. This should not be controversial, as the WHA asked the WHO Director General in 2023[5] to actively contribute to the OEWG and explore the full range of options for the future involvement of WHO. As the custodian of the Global Burden of Disease data, WHO can make a major contribution to our Panel. The 78th Session of the WHA this month is expected to start a process leading to the adoption of a Global Action Plan on Lead Mitigation by 2027, and the WHO will encourage scientific and interdisciplinary research in the Plan.
  GAHP understands why the Draft Decision in OEWG.3/8 on Arrangements for the interim period before the Panel's first session foresees UNEP alone providing the interim secretariat. However, **GAHP would hope that proposals for a permanent Secretariat with WHO involvement would be prepared for the Panel's consideration in 2026**.

Submitted by M.P. Lia, Executive Director, GAHP mp.lia@gahp.net
Please copy comments to GAHP Senior Advisor, Jill.hanna@cantab.net

[5] Resolution 17 of the 76th Session of the WHA

Comments on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples and Their Communities Major Group on the working documents for OEWG-3.2 (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6, .3/7, and .3/8)

Date: May 16, 2025

Context

We bring to your attention the importance of this science policy panel for Indigenous Peoples who are disproportionately impacted by chemicals, waste and pollution in our territories, waters, air, wild foods, and medicines. Our communities are too often on the frontlines of pollution from industrial activities and aggressive developments, including impacts from plastic pollution at all stages of the plastic lifecycle, from extraction and production to the widespread dispersal of microplastics in our territories and environment. Despite generations of settler colonial impacts, we Indigenous Peoples maintain deep connections to our territories, and we are participating in this process to remind delegates that the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) must be upheld in all science policy panel bodies, committees, assessments, implementation mechanisms, financial supports, and other deliverables.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Indigenous knowledge systems, including Indigenous science, are rooted in intergenerational knowledge, grounded in living relationships with the land and the natural world, and based on cultural teachings of respect, responsibility, and reciprocity. Indigenous science weaves together relationships and responsibility, with Indigenous approaches for observing, monitoring, and protecting the natural world that centers the health and wellbeing of our human and more-than-human kin. The holistic approach of Indigenous science is vital to enable the transformative change required to solve the global crises of chemicals, waste, and pollution. It is critical that Indigenous knowledge systems are recognised, respected, and meaningfully included in all science policy processes.

Western Science Bias

Unfortunately, when Indigenous knowledge is mentioned in international agreements and assessments, it is predominantly just words, tokenized, stripped of context, and lacking both protection and the guarantee of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). There are rarely adequate safeguards for how this knowledge will be accessed or used, nor assurances of the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples who are the only rightful holders and experts of Indigenous knowledge systems. In these

processes, Indigenous knowledge systems are described as only "complementing" Western science (see E.38. in UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6), rather than contributing equally to assessments and solutions. This bias can be avoided through the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples.

Full and Effective Participation of Indigenous Peoples

We would like to highlight that the resolution for this process presented the ad hoc open-ended working group with the responsibility **to ensure that that the science policy panel: "Is interdisciplinary, ensuring contributions from experts with a broad range of disciplinary expertise; has inclusive participation, including indigenous peoples[1]; and has geographical, regional and gender balance"** (UNEP/EA.5/Res.8, in 6b). If the science policy panel is to be truly representative as called for in the resolution, the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, protections for Indigenous knowledge systems including science, and the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples must be assured and mainstreamed throughout the subsidiary bodies, committees, and assessments.

We therefore call on the ad hoc open-ended working group to:

1. **Ensure that the future science policy panel upholds the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** as enshrined in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Text affirming this commitment should be added, at a minimum, to the preamble of the foundational document, and mainstreamed in the panel's bodies, assessments and processes.

2. **Provide for a minimum of two seats in the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee (IEC) specifically for Indigenous experts** from different regions, with funding provided to enable their in-person participation in all meetings required for this role. See Article 18 of UNDRIP.[2]

3. **Establish an Indigenous Advisory Committee** to review and advise the governing body on nominations of Indigenous experts to the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee, as well as to other subsidiary bodies, committees and assessments, and to advise on mainstreaming the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Indigenous knowledge systems, with the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in the science policy panel processes.

[1] We respectfully remind honoured delegates that "Indigenous Peoples" should always be capitalized.

[2] Article 18: Indigenous Peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions. (UNDRIP)

Association
Institute of Total Environment
P.O. Box 31314 Yaoundé, Cameroun
Recépissé de Declaration d'association N° 00000786/RDA/J06/BAPP
INTEV

Yaoundé, May 28, 2025

To: SPP OEWG Secretariat

Object: Written Comments on the *OEWG 3.2 Documents of the Resumed 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 to be held in Punta del Este from 15 to 18 June 2025 and associated meetings*

INTEV welcomes,

the historic **resolution 5/8**, of the United Nations Environment Assembly at its resumed fifth session in 2022 (UNEA-5.2) deciding that a science-policy panel should be established to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution.

INTEV also welcomes,

the same **resolution 5/8** where the Environment Assembly decided to convene an ad hoc open-ended working group (OEWG) to prepare proposals for the science-policy panel, including its scope, objective, functions and operating principles, institutional arrangements, rules of procedure, and relationships with key stakeholders.

INTEV recognizes,

the need for the establishment of an international institution such as science-policy panel, capable to contribute strongly for the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution in developing countries such as in Sub-Sahara African countries where there is a total absence of any institution working on this triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste. And even in case that such institution exists, its work is usually hampered by the lack of resources and poor governance.

INTEV appreciates the documents:

- UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6 **(1)** Foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel;
- UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7 **(2)** 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; and

- UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8 **(3)** Proposal on interim arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel.

The comments regarding these documents above are as follows:

(1) *(a) Emphasize in the Preamble of the section **II** of this document that this science-policy panel is very important for countries with poor management of chemicals and waste such as developing countries*
(b) INTEV appreciates that Developing countries were highly emphasized in the Preamble of Annex I of the draft decision in section A (b), (d) and (e), and B (h).

(2) *No comments on this document*

(3) *No comments on this document*

Thank you very much.

Sincerely Yours!

Samuel TETSOPGANG

President and Co-Founder
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IPEN
for a toxics-free future

May 2025

QUICK VIEWS ON THE RESUMED THIRD SESSION OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON A FUTURE SCIENCE-POLICY PANEL ON CHEMICALS, WASTE AND TO PREVENT POLLUTION

In 2022, governments at UNEA-5 decided that a Science-Policy Panel (SPP) should be established to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution (see resolution 5/8). An ad hoc open-ended working group (OEWG) was established with the mandate to develop proposals for the panel.

The resumed third session of the OEWG (SPP OEWG-3.2) will be held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, from June 15-18 and will be followed by an Intergovernmental Meeting on June 20 where the SPP will be officially established.

The objective of the panel is to strengthen the science-policy interface to contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution for the protection of human health and the environment. In order to achieve this objective and to safeguard the integrity of the future panel, it is important that the panel and its work is

Inclusive and Participatory, ensuring that:

- There is integration of views, information, and data from stakeholders and communities impacted by chemicals, waste, and pollution, including groups in especially vulnerable situations, Indigenous Peoples, and workers.
- There is gender, regional, and sectoral balance.
- Information from local, regional, and national contexts is collected and included in relevant deliverables, and conclusions reached by the panel are communicated at national, regional, and local levels.
- Civil society representatives are included in all the work of the panel and its subsidiary bodies.
- A broad definition of knowledge is used that encompasses traditional and Indigenous Knowledge systems, as well as citizen science, grassroots monitoring, and data collection initiatives. These should be recognized as legitimate sources of evidence, with declared channels for submission and consideration.

Transparent, ensuring that:

- Work processes, prioritization of issues, funding, sources of information, and decision-making are traceable.
- Documentation is publicly available and accessible.
- No information or data submitted to the panel and its subsidiary bodies or used by the panel and its subsidiary bodies should be treated as confidential, to safeguard the integrity of the panel and align with other science-policy panels.

Free from conflicts of interest (COI), through the development and implementation of a COI policy that:

- Considers both current and past engagements.
- Applies to all experts and participants involved.
- Covers the decision-making body, subsidiary bodies, committees, and all related processes.
- Requires disclosure of all real, potential, and apparent conflicts of interest.
- Establishes procedures to actively prevent conflicts of interest throughout all work and decision-making processes.
- Ensures that all information related to conflicts of interest disclosures, including evaluations, is publicly available online.

Below is a summary of key working documents and IPEN's views on the parts of the text that remain to be negotiated.

Working documents for OEWG 3.2

For the upcoming meeting, the OEWG is expected to:

- continue discussions and finalize a foundational document and its related draft decision on the establishment of the panel (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6).
- continue discussions on the recommendations for consideration by the governing body of the future panel at its first session and their related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7/).
- discuss interim arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8).

Foundational Document

The foundational document and its related draft decision can be found at UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6.

Preamble

The preamble currently consists of a placeholder with the understanding that aspects that are no longer covered in the Operating Principles may be considered for inclusion here.

IPEN views: The precautionary principle should be included in the preamble.

Section A. Scope, objective, and functions of the panel

The objective was agreed upon during earlier OEWGs. The five functions of the panel have also been agreed upon, to consist of: a) horizon scanning; b) conducting assessments; c) providing up-to-date and relevant information; d) facilitating information sharing; and e) capacity building. Discussions at OEWG 3.1 focused on the description of the fifth function of capacity building and reached agreement within the contact group on a text but with two brackets remaining to be negotiated—whether one, both, or neither of the terms [gender inclusive][and gender responsive] will be included.

IPEN views: Overall, IPEN supports the proposed objective and functions and recommends retaining both terms "gender inclusive" and "gender responsive," as they can serve complementary purposes. "Gender inclusive" would call for equal participation of all genders, while "gender responsive" could help address the specific needs and exposure pathways associated with gender. These include, for example, the higher exposure of women to hazardous chemicals through work in informal waste recycling or their use of personal care products. Inclusion of the term could also address the unique risks to pregnant individuals and fetuses from endocrine-disrupting chemicals.

Section B. Operating principles of the panel

The operating principles are intended to guide the work of the future panel. Several brackets remain in the text following the work of the contact groups at OEWG 3.1.

IPEN views: In order to safeguard the integrity and legitimacy of the panel, it is important that the OEWG retains language on:

- ensuring impartiality and transparency;
- the inclusion of a broad range of relevant knowledge, including Indigenous knowledge; and
- promoting inclusivity of participation.

Moreover, the OEWG needs to ensure that the operating principles lay the groundwork for relevant future work in line with the functions and objective of the panel, including through retaining language on the following aspects:

- integrating gender equality and equity in all relevant aspects of its work.
- deliverables that are focused on preventing pollution.
- incorporating the need to protect human health and the environment, with special attention to those in vulnerable situations.
- integrating capacity building into all relevant aspects of its work.
- recognizing that the sound management of chemicals and waste and prevention of pollution contributes to the full enjoyment of human rights for present and future generations.
- retaining and un-bracketing the proposed text referencing the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, the right to science, and intergenerational equity. These rights are essential for guiding the ethical foundation of the panel.

In operating principle (a ter Alt 3), the phrase "[Ensuring] [Finding] consensus…" is proposed. This language should be reconsidered, as it is not appropriate for a Science-Policy Panel that has horizon scanning as one of its primary functions. Scientific assessments must be grounded in evidence, methodological rigor, and openness to uncertainty—not constrained by the pursuit of political consensus. It is important to recognize and communicate where there is scientific consensus and equally important to protect scientific integrity from political influence. The panel must remain focused on precaution and prevention of pollution and must not risk oversimplification and face undue influence from attempts to manipulate science wherein a "consensus" process could be used to disrupt or delay actions needed to address toxic pollution.

Section C. Institutional arrangements for the panel

This section includes six subsections that outline the setup of the panel's decision-making body (plenary/governing body), a bureau, a secretariat, committees and subsidiary bodies, the financial arrangements, and strategic partnerships.

IPEN views: IPEN supports the overall suggested design of the panel (as outlined in subsections I-IV) of including a decision-making body, a bureau, and a secretariat that are supported by committees and subsidiary bodies. Noting the importance of ensuring the integrity of the work of the panel, the inclusion of a Conflict-of-Interest Committee is strongly supported. However, subsidiary bodies that are outside the scope of the mandate of UNEA resolution 5/8 or could delay or limit the outputs of the panel should not be included. Therefore, IPEN does not support the proposed Socioeconomic Subsidiary body and Prospective Error Analysis Committee.

It is important that the decision-making body and all subsidiary bodies must be open to participation and contributions from civil society to ensure transparency, credibility, and trustworthiness of the work of the panel and its outputs. This is already an established practice in all chemicals and waste-related Conventions (including Stockholm, Rotterdam, Basel, and Minamata) and their subsidiary bodies.

Regarding financial arrangements (subsection V), the proposed new trust fund will be a suitable way forward, since it is suggested that it will also accept contributions from the private sector. However, noting concerns around conflicts of interest, it needs to be guarded by strict transparency measures and guardrails that ensure that contributions do not influence the work, deliberations, and decision-making of the panel in any way.

Regarding strategic partnerships (subsection VI), it is vital for the credibility of the panel that stakeholder engagement and any partnerships are transparent and have clearly defined boundaries to prevent influence from stakeholders with conflicts of interest. Any partnerships must be based on agreed criteria, including measures preventing partnerships with entities that have conflicts of interests.

Section D. Evaluation of the operational effectiveness and impact of the panel
This section includes provisions for evaluating the efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of the panel.

IPEN Views: Periodic, independent evaluation of the work of the panel will be very important to verify that it is functioning as intended. Evaluation criteria should include transparency, inclusiveness, conflicts of interest, and relevance of outputs. An evaluation can be helpful in identifying obstacles, weaknesses, and limiting factors, and propose ways to strengthen the panel.

Recommendations for consideration by the governing body of the future panel at its first session

The draft recommendations can be found in (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7/). They include four annexes on:

1. Annex 1: Draft rules of procedure.
2. Annex 2: Draft process for determining the work programme, including prioritization.
3. Annex 3: Draft procedures for the preparation and clearance of the panel deliverables.
4. Annex 4: Draft conflict of interest policy.

Relatedly, there is also a proposal on interim arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8) and an INF document forwarded from OEWG 3.1 on draft financial procedures (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/INF/8).

Draft rules of procedure
The draft text of rules of procedure was prepared by the secretariat and discussed in the contact groups at OEWG 3, where some progress was made. The OEWG is expected to finalize the draft rules at OEWG 3.2.

IPEN Views: IPEN notes that the draft rules of procedure overall contain similar language as in other chemicals and waste frameworks, but there are some instances where there is a lack of clarity that needs to be addressed. These include:

- for future decision-making (Rules 35-45 and 49), the right to vote is an important mechanism, and it is important that the OEWG ensures that both procedural and substantial issues can be determined, when necessary, by a majority vote.
- ensuring that the decision-making body and subsidiary bodies are open to participation and contributions from observers.

Draft process for determining the work programme, including prioritization
This draft was prepared by the secretariat, and discussions were started in contact groups during OEWG 3.1, where several brackets were introduced. The discussions were especially focused on what would fall under the responsibilities of the secretariat, the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee, and the bureau. New text was introduced in brackets, including text that would increase transparency and stakeholder participation.

IPEN Views: Current bracketed text allowing for observer input should be retained. Provisions on conflicts of interest need to be added to Annex 3 to ensure that any submitters and commenters publicly declare any potential, actual, or perceived COIs.

Draft procedures for the preparation and clearance of panel deliverables

This draft was prepared by the secretariat, and discussions were started in contact groups. However, the discussions did not cover the full draft text.

IPEN Views: To protect the integrity and credibility of the panel, it is important:

- To include conflict-of-interest provisions at all stages, including the review stage. Therefore, paragraph 25 should be deleted. In addition, "industry" should be removed from paragraph 37. Instead, a separate paragraph should specify the review process for information from industry.
- That all stages of this process are transparent, including through public access to data and sources. Therefore, review comments and the final draft of the deliverable should be made publicly available online. Also, Section E should include the same language as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES): the secretariat "should provide access to these materials on request."
- That the process ensures connecting the local to the global, for example, through ensuring that the scoping processes ensure information gathering from experiences at the national, regional, and local levels and that deliverables are adapted to local needs.
- That the process is science focused. Therefore, paragraph 28 should be deleted, as well as the word "socioeconomic" in paragraph 29.
- That section G on "Procedures to safeguard commercially sensitive information" and the related Annexes II-III are deleted or significantly edited to only include a statement that information on the health and safety of humans and the environment cannot be regarded as confidential, similar to Article 9(5) under the Stockholm Convention. Neither IPBES nor the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have procedures for safeguarding commercially sensitive information (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/INF/7) and including such a process in this panel would counter principles on transparency and significantly jeopardize the credibility of the future panel. For further information, see IPEN's previous submission on the topic.

Draft conflict of interest policy

The draft text on the conflict-of-interest policy was discussed in part during OEWG 3.2; however, several brackets and discussions remain.

IPEN Views: To ensure that the future panel is viewed as credible and trustworthy and able to provide independent, scientifically sound data suitable to inform policy work, the development and implementation of a strong Conflict of Interest (COI) policy will be crucial, and the COI policy will need to ensure:

- That the evaluation of potential conflicts of interest accounts for current potential conflicts of interest and also potential conflicts of interest resulting from recent engagements. Therefore, "from the past four years" should be retained in paragraph 12, and "current" should be deleted from paragraph 15.
- That information on potential conflicts of interest for all participants is made public, including outcomes of COI investigations, to ensure transparency of work and secure public confidence in the legitimacy of the work of the panel.
- That the scope of the COI policy applies to all involved experts and partnerships that are engaged in the work of the panel. Therefore, all roles mentioned in Part B, paragraph 7, should be retained.
- That the COI policy and form require disclosure of all real, potential, and apparent conflicts of interest.
- That the mandate of the COI committee goes beyond reviewing the submissions but also includes procedures for managing identified conflicts and making recommendations on measures needed to prevent conflicts of interest.

For more information, see IPEN's previous submission.

Proposal on interim arrangements

It is important to ensure transparent work and decision processes, as well as observer participation, during the preparatory activities and any intersessional work.

Financial procedures

This draft was prepared by the secretariat, but there was no time to consider it in the contact groups during OEWG 3.1. It has been forwarded to OEWG 3.2 as an information document (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/INF/8).

IPEN Views: IPEN supports the draft financial procedures and notes that both financial and in-kind contributions should also be published on the SPP website to ensure transparency. This would also help show the importance of the engagement by non-governmental organizations, developing countries, and countries in transition, which are often only able to provide in-kind contributions.

As noted above, in regard to financial arrangements, the proposed new trust fund will be a suitable way forward, since it is suggested that the panel may also accept contributions from the private sector. However, noting concerns around conflicts of interest, it needs to be guarded by strict transparency measures and guardrails that ensure that contributions do not influence the work, deliberations, and decision-making of the panel in any way.

The Secretariat of the ad hoc open-ended working group
Science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals, waste and to prevent pollution
United Nations Environment Programme
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The Asia-Pacific region—home to extraordinary biodiversity, Indigenous cultures, and rapidly urbanizing societies—faces increasing challenges from hazardous chemicals, waste mismanagement, and widespread pollution. These threats are worsened by climate vulnerability, economic inequalities, and limited scientific infrastructure in many countries.

As the Science-Policy Panel (SPP) evolves under the mandate of UNEA Resolution 5/8, the Panel's structure, scope, and operations must reflect and respond to the unique realities, capacities, and priorities of the Asia-Pacific region. This submission outlines key regional priorities and specific recommendations for consideration at OEWG 3.2 – Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on the Science-Policy Panel.

Regional Priorities for the Science-Policy Panel

1. Strengthening Regional Scientific and Technical Capacities

Many Asia-Pacific countries, especially Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), face systemic gaps in scientific infrastructure, research capacity, and access to funding. To address this, the SPP must:

- Embed long-term capacity building as a core function, with a focus on improving chemical monitoring systems, waste tracking, and pollution data infrastructure;
- Provide dedicated financial and technical assistance to strengthen national laboratories, research institutions, and early warning systems;
- Support region-specific training for scientists, policymakers, and civil society to ensure widespread capacity for evidence-informed decision-making.

These investments are critical for empowering regional stakeholders to contribute meaningfully to the global science-policy interface.

2. Advancing Equitable and Inclusive Participation

To uphold the SPP's legitimacy and effectiveness, it must reflect the diversity of Asia-Pacific voices. This includes:

- Guaranteeing equitable geographic representation across all SPP bodies, including the Bureau and scientific working groups;

- Actively involving civil society, including women and community scientists, Indigenous knowledge holders, youth, and representatives from frontline and environmental justice communities;
- Ensuring nomination processes are transparent, inclusive, and grounded in principles of gender equality and social equity;
- Institutionalizing diversity and inclusion through operational guidelines and accountability mechanisms.

3. Leveraging Regional Scientific Knowledge Systems

The Asia-Pacific region possesses deep reservoirs of scientific, community-based, and Indigenous knowledge on pollution, health, and sustainable practices. The SPP should:

- Establish mechanisms for contribution and ensure integration of Indigenous and local knowledge systems into assessments, methodologies, and policy guidance;
- Collaborate with existing regional institutions and civil society networks such as the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), and the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), including the Asia Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (APRCEM).
- Establish decentralized regional science hubs or focal points to support two-way knowledge exchange and regional coordination.

4. Prioritizing the Unique and Urgent Needs of Pacific Island States

Pacific Island countries are on the frontlines of pollution impacts, particularly from transboundary marine plastic waste, toxic chemical exposure, and climate-induced vulnerabilities. The SPP must:

- Prioritize research on the health and ecological impacts of pollution in island ecosystems.
- Support the development of regional early warning systems and citizen science-based monitoring tools and platforms;
- Ensure the leadership and representation of Pacific stakeholders in SPP processes and decisions.

5. Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)

Pollution and toxic exposure are not gender-neutral. The SPP must apply an intersectional approach by:

- Requiring the use of gender-disaggregated and socially disaggregated data in research and assessments;
- Including gender and social inclusion experts across the Panel's governance and technical work;
- Supporting community-led and participatory research that centers the lived experiences of women, children, marginalized groups and vulnerable communities.

6. Safeguarding Independence, Integrity and Transparency

To ensure credibility and public trust, the SPP must:

- Adopt and enforce robust conflict of interest (COI) policies that apply to all experts, stakeholders, and partnerships;
- Require transparent disclosure of funding sources, affiliations, and institutional ties;
- Maintain open and inclusive stakeholder engagement, particularly in the development of assessments and policy recommendations.

Comments on Specific Documents

I. UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6 – Foundational Document and Draft Decision

We welcome the inclusion of capacity building as one of the Panel's core functions and stress the need for technical assistance and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies.

- **Scope and Functions (Section A):** Enhance regional capacities, ensure support for research infrastructure, and promote policy coherence through data-driven strategies.
- **Operating Principles (Section B):** Embrace multiple knowledge systems, including Indigenous and local knowledge. Establish regional databases and harmonize data collection methodologies to enable joint assessments and regional policy responses.
- **Institutional Arrangements (Section C):** Ensure openness to civil society, grassroots, and local scientific participation. Representation from all Asia-Pacific subregions—including LDCs and SIDS—must be guaranteed. Promote gender balance, inclusive education, and public awareness campaigns. Mobilize diverse funding streams, including green financing tools, while safeguarding against donor influence.

We further recommend:

- Affirming principles of equity, inclusion, and participation for marginalized and under-resourced stakeholders;
- Ensuring language accessibility, including translations into key regional languages;
- Recognizing and incorporating non-formal knowledge systems and Indigenous structures.

II. UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7 – Draft Rules and Procedures and Related Decisions

- **Decision-Making and Representation:** Ensure meaningful participation from across Asia-Pacific, with a dedicated role for civil society observers.
- **Work Programme and Deliverables:** Maintain transparency in agenda-setting, review processes, and knowledge dissemination. Observer input should be actively solicited.
- **Conflict of Interest Policy:** We strongly support the application of the COI policy to all experts and partnerships, with clear disclosure requirements and procedures for managing both real and perceived conflicts.

III. UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8 – Interim Arrangements and Financial Procedures

- Maintain transparency in interim arrangements and ensure observer access to all preparatory and intersessional processes;

- Financial procedures should mandate full public disclosure of all contributions—monetary and in-kind—to prevent donor overreach and safeguard Panel independence.

Conclusion

The establishment of the Science-Policy Panel presents a critical opportunity to address the accelerating environmental and health crises driven by chemicals, waste, and pollution. For the Asia-Pacific region, this means ensuring inclusive and equitable participation, strengthening science-policy capacities, embracing local and Indigenous knowledge systems, and upholding environmental justice.

We call on the OEWG and the Secretariat to ensure that the SPP is built on the principles of transparency, diversity, accountability, and regional equity. The Panel must serve as a truly inclusive platform, responsive to the complex realities and aspirations of the Asia-Pacific and other underrepresented regions.

Asia Pacific Major Groups and Stakeholders

Regional Facilitators

Chinkie Peliño-Golle - cpelino@ecowastecoalition.org
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Comments on behalf of NGOs – West Asia Region On the Working Documents for OEWG-3.2 (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6, .3/7, and .3/8) Date: May 28, 2025

Context

As NGOs from the West Asia region, we speak on behalf of communities who continue to bear the brunt of environmental degradation and toxic exposure—particularly women, youth, and people living in areas affected by war and protracted conflict.

In our region, armed conflict, political instability, and weak environmental governance have exacerbated the impacts of chemical pollution, hazardous waste, and plastic contamination. Toxic exposure is not only an environmental issue—it is a humanitarian and human rights issue, affecting health, livelihoods, food security, and the intergenerational wellbeing of millions. Women and youth are disproportionately affected due to their roles in caregiving, informal work, and their limited access to decision-making spaces.

We emphasize that the development of the Science-Policy Panel must prioritize those who have been historically excluded and most heavily impacted, including frontline communities in war-torn and environmentally degraded regions of West Asia.

Local and Traditional Knowledge in Conflict-Affected Contexts

Communities in West Asia—despite displacement, environmental destruction, and conflict—continue to uphold valuable traditional knowledge and local practices that help safeguard natural resources, recover from crises, and rebuild ecosystems.

This knowledge, passed through generations, is essential for environmental monitoring, resilience-building, and pollution reduction, especially in the absence of institutional support. It must be respected, protected, and included in the panel's assessments, alongside formal scientific expertise.

We are concerned that in current drafts of the working documents (e.g. UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6), community-based knowledge is often minimized or overlooked, seen only as a complement to Western science rather than an integral contributor to science-policy discussions. This must change.

Meaningful Inclusion and Representation

If this panel is to serve global communities equitably, it must not replicate the structures that have excluded war-affected, marginalized, and under-resourced regions like ours.
We therefore call on the ad hoc open-ended working group to:
Ensure that the Science-Policy Panel centers the voices of communities impacted by armed conflict and environmental degradation, including women and youth from affected areas of West Asia.
Affirm the value of traditional, local, and experiential knowledge in all assessments, ensuring it is treated with respect and included in decision-making processes with appropriate safeguards and consent.
Provide financial and logistical support for the participation of civil society experts from conflict zones and fragile states, ensuring that participation is not only nominal but effective and sustained.
Include equity, justice, and conflict sensitivity in the guiding principles of the Panel—recognizing that pollution and environmental harm are not experienced equally, and that remediation must reflect this reality.

Conclusion
For West Asia and other conflict-affected regions, pollution is not a distant or future threat—it is a daily reality. Our communities, particularly women and youth, live with the toxic legacies of war, poor governance, and extractive development. They also hold the solutions and lived knowledge necessary for recovery and sustainability.
We urge Member States and UNEP to ensure that the Science-Policy Panel does not only serve the scientifically privileged, but amplifies the voices of those at the frontlines of pollution and environmental injustice.
Justice, inclusion, and conflict-aware science must guide the future of this panel—so no region or community is left behind.

Statement on behalf of all NGOs in West Asia

Eng. Marie Therese Merhej Seif-Regional Co-Facilitator
Prof. Dr. Mohamed Alzuhairi- Regional Co-Facilitator

Final submission to OEWG3.2 May 2025

The Royal Society of Chemistry's Written Statement to OEWG3.2, as it relates to the establishment of a science-policy panel for chemicals, waste and the prevention of pollution (SPP-CWP).

About the RSC

With about 50,000 members in over 100 countries and a knowledge provider that spans the globe, the Royal Society of Chemistry is an international not-for-profit professional body for chemical scientists, supporting and representing our members and bringing together chemical scientists from all over the world. Our members include those working in academia, large multinational companies and small to medium enterprises (SMEs), students, teachers, retirees, NGOs and government scientists and regulators. Surplus generated from membership fees and publishing revenues are used for the RSC's charitable purpose activities.

Contact

The Royal Society of Chemistry would be happy to discuss any of the issues raised in our statement in more detail. Any questions should be directed to the RSC Policy & Evidence Team at policy@rsc.org. This document was prepared by Dr Camilla Alexander-White FRSC CChem ERT (Lead Policy Adviser – International Chemicals Policy, RSC) and Professor Tom Welton OBE (the RSC's ambassador for Sustainable Chemicals Policy, Emeritus Professor of Sustainable Chemistry at Imperial College, London). Our positions are developed from focus group discussions, events such as the Burlington Consensus series and perspectives from the RSC Engagement Group. The RSC SPP Engagement Group comprises of approximately 60 senior level scientists from the RSC membership and representatives from other global national chemical societies. It is led by Dr Alexander-White and Professor Welton.

This document presents the RSC positions on the following themes:

1. The **General status** of the Foundational Document, Decision Document, Draft Rules of Procedure.
2. **Stakeholder participation**: a focus on the Foundational Document
3. **A call for Openness and Transparency** in all of the work of the SPP
4. **Conflict of Interest (COI) procedures** - General points on managing COI
5. What '**Capacity Building'** can realistically include in the SPP

1. General Status of the Foundational Document, Decision Document, and Draft Rules of Procedure

The Royal Society of Chemistry is a UNEP accredited member of the science and technology community, and as such, primarily looks at the negotiations from a science community perspective. The current status of the legal text is encouraging. There is still much work to be done to finalise the documents in relation to establishing the panel. It is clear however that, if the political will is there from member states, agreed text can realistically be achieved in Uruguay, based on the status of the current proposed text.

Upon analysing the current texts in the pre-session documentation, there are two areas where choices of wording and intent could impact on the quality and credibility of the science that would be performed by the panel, namely:

i) **Civil society science and technology participation in all aspects of the work of the panel** – to ensure adequate input and coverage from multidisciplinary civil society scientists – that those with the technical knowledge have access to meaningfully contribute - enabling governments to be aware of all potential scientific solutions and technologies and thus enabling successful policy development.

ii) **A call for openness and transparency** as it relates to all of the work of the SPP, and the effective implementation of a conflict-of-interest policy.

2. Stakeholder participation: a focus on the Foundational Document

Referring to pre-sessional paper UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6 - Foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science policy panel.

The Royal Society of Chemistry welcomes the text in

B. Operating principles and approaches of the panel' point
(b) Taking an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach that incorporates a broad range of relevant disciplines and sources, including appropriate sectoral expertise, and relevant forms of knowledge, including Indigenous knowledge.'

We strongly suggest retaining this as an Operating Principle for this panel.

Examples of the many types of scientific and technological disciplines that are likely to be called upon in the work of the panel are highlighted in the Royal Society of Chemistry's poster '***Evidence and Insights From Cross-disciplinarians on the New Multi-disciplinary Science Skills and Expertise Needed for the UN Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution Prevention***' presented at the recent SETAC Europe conference in Vienna 11-15 May 2025 – see Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

C. Institutional arrangements for the panel

UNEP accredited stakeholder organisations, such as the Royal Society of Chemistry, have to date had appropriate access to provide constructive input to inform the OEWG process, and been active and effective observer participants. Scientists from accredited organisations have worked well together, as part of the S&T Major Group in the OEWG process for the SPP. We call for this positive way of working to be able to continue in all aspects of the SPP.

The Royal Society of Chemistry advocates for the continued involvement of UNEP accredited Science & Technology Major Group community representatives in all aspects of the SPP when it is established, to strengthen the science-policy interface and connect governments to the best evidence and scientific opinion that is available through a 'network of networks' approach.

Governing Body/Plenary: the RSC fully respects the decision-making powers of governments and member states and the role that the Governing Body/Plenary will perform in the SPP-CWP, in deciding its structure, composition and work programme.

***III. Committees and subsidiary bodies. Interdisciplinary Expert Committee (IEC)*:**
the RSC would like to see members nominated for the IEC who are cross-disciplinarians; individuals that are sufficiently connected to 'networks of networks' in the scientific community. IEC members need to be able to have access to a broad knowledgebase to ensure decisions are based on sound science, the latest solutions and technical achievability.

Paragraphs 14 and 17, and their alternative texts, in the Institutional Arrangements, are expected to be a particular focus of negotiation relating to stakeholder participation. From the science and technology community perspective, we urge governments to keep doors open to civil society scientist participation in the IEC, and that mechanisms are sought for the inclusion of the widest range of technical expertise in its deliberations.

We understand governments will nominate scientists for delivering the work of the SPP, but we advocate for professional bodies such as the Royal Society of Chemistry, as a UNEP accredited stakeholder organisation, to also be able to nominate expert scientists for the IEC and Assessment Groups of the SPP. It would be an ideal outcome if the IEC were to include an equal number of member scientific representatives drawn from civil society (i.e. the same number as there is expected to be for each of the UN regions). Such a group may bring effective non-political objectivity and impartiality to IEC discussions.

Working Groups/Assessment Groups: when it comes to the technical work of the SPP, the RSC stands ready to assist national and regional governments in connecting the panel to relevant expert scientists. The RSC has a great deal of experience in developing mechanisms of science advice and offers its support to the IEC at the appropriate time.

3. A call for Openness and Transparency in all of the work of the SPP

The RSC calls for the Panel, when established, to promote a culture of objectivity, openness and transparency from all involved and across the whole SPP process. Transparency, accountability and impartiality as demonstrated through an effective conflict-of-interest process are practical tools that can help ensure the credibility and legitimacy of scientific advice in a politically complex landscape.

It is proposed that words such as *objective, transparent, open, verifiable* may be useful in certain contexts to reflect the expectation that all involved in the work of the panel will be truthful, transparent and act with dignity and integrity, independent of political processes and/or personal or organisational commercial gain. It is expected that scientists will present an honest appraisal of the scientific evidence in front of them, working towards the aim of reducing pollution and its associated harms, from mismanaged chemicals and wastes, for the wider benefit of humanity, wildlife and the environment.

It is unlikely that any scientist would be truly independent of every aspect of the Panel's work, with all participants having some form of employer or commitment. Yet, scientists with relevant working knowledge on the issue in hand need to be able to share that knowledge with the Panel. Here, rather than invoking the concept of only '*independent scientists'* being allowed to be involved, it is suggested to focus on behaviour, with words such as *transparency*, *openness, impartiality, objectivity*, and *acting in good faith*.

In the document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6

Section II. Draft Decision

Establishment of the [insert full name of panel]

2. [page 2] *Confirms* that the [insert full name of panel] is an **independent** intergovernmental body with a programme of work approved by its [members] [Governing Body] to deliver policy-relevant scientific evidence without being policy prescriptive;

Here, the use of the word independent is referring to a level of political independence (e.g. from other UN Conventions) rather than a comment on the nature of the science. This use of the word 'independent' has precedent in IPBES and is understood well and should be retained here.

Annex I to the draft decision

Section B. [page 3] Operating principles and approaches of the panel.

2(a) In carrying out its work, the science-policy Panel will be guided by the following operating principles and approaches: (a) [**Being scientifically independent**, and] ensuring credibility and legitimacy including through peer review of its work. (a) bis Ensuring impartiality and transparency. (a) ter [Ensuring][Finding] consensus in its decision-making process on matters of substance.

The RSC supports the language in (a)…, and would be equally content with (a) bis….

However (a) ter is really about how decisions are made and reached by consensus. This is a different and separate issue about consensus in decision-making. Scientific consensus on an issue may not be possible, but instead an output of the Panel could reflect where there is scientific agreement and scientific differences of opinion on the evidence.

PROPOSED TEXT here, regarding an operating principle, combining (a) and (a)bis may more simply read:

> a) ***Ensuring credibility, impartiality, transparency and legitimacy of its work, including through peer review***

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4. General Points on Managing Conflicts of Interest

We refer the reader to our pre-session and in-session submissions to OEWG2, Nairobi and OEWG3 Geneva on the subject of conflicts of interest procedures.

The Royal Society of Chemistry takes conflicts of interest very seriously**. **All participants in the SPP must be asked to record and declare their interests and those of close family members or connected individuals who could benefit from the work of the SPP.

It should be noted that the RSC encourages using the COI process as a tool for *enabling* contribution and reducing risks of bias, rather than creating barriers. To support this, it is suggested that anonymous examples of potential conflicts be made available to help participants, especially those in politically sensitive environments, to recognise what might constitute a conflict. Also, guidance is needed on the level of detail that needs to be shared. It is usually only necessary to go back for a period of 4 or 5 years in declaring historic interests.

All interests must be declared, not just interests that individuals themselves may view as a potential or real conflict of interest. A COI committee should review whether interests present a conflict of interest with the work being performed. **A procedure for COI management can reasonably be developed later by the Governing Body but before the IEC is established.**

5. What ‘Capacity Building’ can realistically include in the SPP

The RSC have identified three main types of science-policy capacity that need to be developed:

- **Individual capacity** – equipping scientists with the skills to participate in and influence policy, and equipping policy-makers to understand the relevant science as relevant to policy.
- **Institutional capacity** – building the strength and longevity of national institutions that can train, support, and retain skilled individuals.
- **System capacity** – enabling politicians and national structures to understand, trust, and apply scientific evidence in their decision-making.

The SPP should:
i) **Fund science-policy networks and events to develop skills and competencies in science-policy interface work**. Core funding from the SPP for ‘capacity building’ should be focused on improving the science-policy interface in nations and regions, through the establishment of new networks, events and training sessions. These should be for the sharing of knowledge and connecting people together, such that opportunities for further projects and training can be fostered.

ii) **Collate a ‘capacity building’ database** of the identified capacity building needs/gaps for different nations, which are expected to be different in different parts of the world. The SPP can highlight areas that require capacity building and work with developing nations to define the needs.

iii) **Seek to connect nations and experts together**; if organisations/governments have experience to share and similar ambitions, new funded projects could meet the needs of capacity building, through research institute funding, government funding or industry funded projects. It is considered unlikely that budgets from governments alone will be available from the SPP to deliver capital infrastructure, equipment, paid internships/placements, data sharing, in person training courses etc. The role of the SPP could be to highlight the needs while industry, professional organisations, entrepreneurs, national governments etc. can seek to fund and develop new project ideas where there are shared interests, possibly via a blind trust fund.

Appendix 1

ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY

SETAC Vienna 2025 Poster ID **6661**
Session 6.03 - Scientific Input to the New Global Science-Policy Panel

Evidence and Insights From Cross-disciplinarians on the New Multi-disciplinary Science Skills and Expertise Needed for the UN Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution Prevention

Camilla Alexander-White[1], Frank Adiga[2], Angeliki Balayannis[3], Chris Barber[4], Natalie Burden[5], Rhys Charles[6], Matthew Davidson[7], Matthew Davies[6], Anthony Gachanja[8], Joshua Kelly[9], Alastair Lewis[10], Yolanda López-Maldonado[11], Catherine Ngila[12], Ovnair Sepai[13], Richard Thompson[14], Michael Walker[15], Mengjiao Wang[16], Paul Whaley[17], Christian Zerfaß[18] and Tom Welton[19].

- **Advanced materials**
- **Adverse outcome pathways (AOPs)**
- Air Quality sciences, aerosols and metrology
- Allergy - clinical
- Analytical chemistry techniques
- **Artificial intelligence and machine learning**
- Behavioural and psychological sciences
- **Bioinformatics**
- **Biological monitoring** – in humans, plants and animals
- **Cheminformatics**
- Chemical Engineering
- Chemical Metrology
- Chemistry
- **Circular Economy**
- **Citizen science data**
- **Computational exposure estimation**
- **Computational toxicology/QSAR**
- Data Sciences
- Ecology
- Econometrics and socioeconomics
- Ecotoxicology
- **Engineering Biology**
- Environmental monitoring – air, soil, water, waste, chemicals in products
- Epidemiology.
- Exposure sciences (modelling estimation and measurement)
- Geological sciences
- **Gene editing and CRISPR technology**
- **Green chemistry**
- Human Clinical studies
- Human Health Toxicology -**new approach methods (NAMs) – Toxicity in the 21st century**
- **Informatics**

On 14-18 June 2025, United Nations member state governments and civil society stakeholders will be meeting in Punta del Este, Uruguay. The goal is to finalise the Foundational, Decision and Rules of Procedure documents, to establish a new science-policy panel for chemicals, waste and pollution prevention (SPP-CWP). An intergovernmental meeting 19-20 June will be held in Uruguay to consider and, if the political will is there, adopt the documents, legally.

Here we share insights and perspectives on establishing the SPP-CWP from science-policy engagement activities, such as RSC Burlington Consensus 3 (Sept 2024 – see QR codes for videos), a panel discussion at the Pan Africa Chemistry Congress (PACN)(Oct 2024) and ongoing focus discussion groups and stakeholder interviews. Involvement of hundreds of scientists in our work shows they are ready and engaged.

Fig. 1 RSC Burlington Consensus 3, London, UK.

Appropriate mechanisms need to be factored into the operations of the SPP-CWP to enable future access to multidisciplinary advice from scientists, particularly on state-of-the-art science, as and when needed. These include natural, computational, social, behavioural, socio-economic and political sciences (**see banners left/right for a more detailed but non-exhaustive list of science disciplines**).
It is envisaged that the SPP-CWP will comprise a) a governing/plenary body taking decisions, b) an interdisciplinary expert committee (IEC) recommending the work programme and selection of experts, and c) assessment groups working on producing evidence reports (involving many scientists).
The individuals selected by governments for the IEC roles ideally need to be cross-disciplinarians connected into 'networks of networks' of civil society scientists. The rapid pace of science innovation, in academia and the private sector, means civil society holds the majority science knowledge and solutions.

Fig.2 Ideas of how the IEC could draw upon science expertise from civil society networks

Key recommendations

- The **scientific community urges member state governments to establish the SPP-CWP in Uruguay** with a sense of urgency, as global pollution issues grow and cause harm to the environment and human health.
- The **IEC should comprise cross-disciplinarians** who are connected to networks of scientists.
- A Supplementary Science Advisory Group of experts, drawn from civil society, may be useful and could act as **a 'consultative' bridge between IEC and science networks to advise**, as requested, during work programme development to check for technical achievability of solutions and policy recommendations.
- A **'Roster of Specialists' or group of 'Special Technical Representatives' could also be created**, as overseen by the IEC, to ensure agile flexible access to the breadth of many different areas of expertise.
- **The RSC advocates for developing a rigorous conflicts of interest (COI) process**, such that the knowledge and expertise from all civil society scientists, including those from the private sector can be accessed. In the public interest, **ALL prospective expert participants in the panel must declare transparently all their financial and non-financial interests**, for a dedicated COI committee to review and determine whether interests present conflicts, before any work on the panel is performed by the expert. This will build trust and value in the outputs of the SPP-CWP.

- **Indigenous science and evidence**
- **Life Cycle Assessment (LCA)**
- Marine sciences
- **Materials science**
- Mathematical Modelling
- Microbiological sciences
- **Nanoscience**
- **Next generation risk assessment (NGRA)**
- Nutritional Sciences
- Occupational Hygiene
- **Omics technologies - Transcriptomics, Proteomics, Metabolomics**
- Paediatric endocrinology and toxicology
- **Physiologically-based kinetic (PBK) modelling**
- Political sciences
- **Probabilistic exposure modelling**
- Psychological sciences
- Radiological sciences
- **Novel Recycling technologies**
- **Novel Remediation technologies**
- Risk assessment methods
- Social Sciences
- Soil sciences
- Statistics
- **Sustainable Chemistry & Sustainability**
- **Systematic Review techniques**
- **Systems biology**
- Waste analysis technology
- Water sciences
- Veterinary sciences

Classical (black) and newer (blue) science disciplines that will be important for the new UN SPP CWP. This is not an exhaustive list but illustrative of the breadth of new skills and expertise that will need to be accessible to the panel.

You may also be interested in the public recorded webinar below:

Strengthening Scientists Engagement: Shaping the Future of Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution Prevention | Road to OEWG 3.2 |

GENEVA ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/strengthening-scientists-engagement-shaping-the-future-of-chemicals-waste-and-pollution-prevention-road-to-oewg-3-2-gen-25/

Watch the Burlington Consensus and find out more

You can find further information and watch highlights or the event in full on our YouTube channel – use these QR codes:

For the morning sessions: **youtube.com/live/8QkYFcOpXj8**

For the afternoon sessions: **youtube.com/live/Q038ZCLNI3k**

A short Highlights video can be viewed at: **youtu.be/vLmYT57YyDI**

UNEP official site **unep.org/oewg-spp-chemicals-waste-pollution**

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3.2 OEWG Science-Policy Panel to Contribute Further to the Sound Management of Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution Prevention

Accredited Scientific and Technological Community Major Group Stakeholder Statement

Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC)

Background

SETAC is a professional scientific society and is a UNEP accredited Scientific and Technological Community Major Group stakeholder. SETAC is very concerned with the global threat that poorly managed chemicals and waste pose to human and environmental health. We firmly believe that our mission to advance environmental science and management and our principles of multidisciplinary approaches, sectoral balance, and science-based objectivity, as well as our global network of environmental experts, make SETAC especially suited to partner in any endeavor when the shared goals are to better understand and improve our environment.

As such, SETAC was delighted with the adoption of resolution 5/8 at UNEA 5.2. Following that decision, SETAC established an advisory panel on chemicals management (SETAC CheM Panel) to coordinate SETAC's contributions to the policy dialogue at UNEP and the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) for the establishment of a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution (SPP CWP). The members of the SETAC CheM Panel are appointed by the SETAC World Council, guided by the SETAC principles, to ensure geographic and sectoral balance, interdisciplinarity, and focus on science-based objectivity. As such, the SETAC CheM Panel includes members from Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and North America, across Academia, Business, Government, and NGO sectors. The panel is composed of Michelle C. Bloor (Chair, University of Glasgow, U.K.), Stijn Baken (VITO, Belgium), Adriana Bejarano (University of Glasgow, based in North America), Tarryn L. Botha (University of Johannesburg, South Africa), Michelle Embry (Health and Environmental Science Institute (HESI), North America), Darren Koppel (Australian Institute of Marine Sciences (AIMS), Australia), Todd Gouin (TG Environmental Research, U.K.), Lorraine Maltby (University of Sheffield, U.K.), Amanda Reichelt-Brushett (Southern Cross University, Australia), Helena Silva de Assis (Federal University of Paraná, Brazil).

The Institutional Arrangements of the Governing Body and Plenary

SETAC acknowledges and respects the decision-making powers of governments and Member States and their role in determining the SPP CWP procedures, the program of work, and the configuration of the Governing Body and Plenary. In all aspects of the SPP CWP when it is established, SETAC would urge for the continued involvement of civil society representatives, non-government scientists and other relevant actors. Including these groups as observers in the Governing Body and Plenary would be an inclusive approach and would ensure that the widest possible range of perspectives and independent robust evidence are available for governments in their decision-making processes.

Composition of the Interdisciplinary Expert Group

While SETAC appreciates that the Interdisciplinary Expert Group needs to be agile, which is sometimes more easily achieved with smaller groups, and acknowledges that the expertise required will rotate depending on the questions under investigation and the expertise needed for that particular focus, we encourage the inclusion of 'Honest Brokers' (Pielke, 2007). These individuals can facilitate the transfer of expertise and knowledge from civil society representatives, non-government scientists and other relevant actors into the Interdisciplinary Expert Group. This would be a streamlined approach, which would not significantly impact the structure and operation of the Interdisciplinary Expert Group, but it would create a transparent mechanism for expertise and knowledge transfer in a manner that has been effective in many other settings.

Reference

Roger Pielke Jr. (2007). The Honest Broker *Making Sense of Science in Policy and Politics*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 169 -182. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511818110.012.

Dear Secretariat of the ad hoc open-ended working group
Science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals, waste and to prevent pollution
United Nations Environment Programme,

On behalf of the Women's Major Group, we are pleased to submit our consolidated comments on the following working documents of OEWG 3.2:

- **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6**: Foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel;

- **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7**: 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;

- **UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8**: Proposal on interim arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting.

We appreciate the opportunity to participate in this process and contribute our perspective. This submission is informed by the expertise and lived experiences of a diverse group of women, including scientists, technical experts, grassroots leaders, and feminist organizations engaged in environmental justice, human rights, and sustainable development. The comments are structured below, following the order of the documents and relevant paragraphs.

Our submission emphasizes the importance of gender equality, inclusivity, and transparency across all aspects of the Panel's governance, operations, and deliverables.

UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG. 3.6. Foundational document and related draft decision for consideration by the intergovernmental meeting to establish a science-policy panel

Comments on the text

I.Introduction

> 6. In finalizing the draft decision and its annex, the ad hoc open-ended working group may wish to consider United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 5/8 and build on the agreements reached in its previous sessions.

Our comment: In our view, the working group must ensure the draft decision reflects not only the technical and procedural priorities but also the urgency of establishing an inclusive, transparent, and science-driven panel that effectively addresses global challenges related to chemicals, waste, and pollution. This would help align the foundational work with the broader objectives of sustainability, equity, and evidence-based policymaking.

II.[Draft decision [--] of the intergovernmental meeting to establish the panel[1]

Establishment of the [insert full name of panel]

> *Reaffirming* that the sound management of chemicals and waste and the prevention of pollution are crucial for the protection of [the environment and] human health [and the environment],

Our comments: Remove: The environment and (this should proceed human health). Keep: and the environment (human health should precede).

> *Convinced* that a science-policy panel could support countries in their efforts to take action, including to implement multilateral environmental agreements [and other relevant international instruments]; promote the sound management of chemicals and waste and address pollution by providing policy-relevant scientific advice on issues; and further support relevant multilateral agreements, other

[1] The draft decision and its annex are presented without formal editing.

international instruments and intergovernmental bodies, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders in their work,]

Our comments: Keep: and other relevant international instruments (this will help in complementing other relevant processes for chemical and waste in related conventions).

Annex I to draft decision [--]

Proposals for the establishment of a science-policy panel: outcome 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

A.Scope, objective and functions of the panel

(a) Undertaking "horizon scanning" to identify issues of relevance to policymakers and, where possible, proposing evidence-based options to address them;

Our comets: Horizon scanning is about issues that are most probably new and unknown, saying that only the "evidence-based" option will be presented is limiting. It should be just "present options to address them."

(b) Conducting assessments of current issues and identifying potential evidence-based options to address, where possible, those issues, in particular those relevant to developing countries;

Our suggested text: Conducting **participatory** assessments of current issues and identifying potential evidence-based options to address, where possible, those issues, in particular those relevant to developing countries;

(d) Facilitating information-sharing with countries, in particular developing countries seeking relevant scientific information;

Our comments: There is a significant gap in the availability of scientific information due to varying access to research data. Most research conducted in developed countries requires payment for access, while research from developing countries is often available for free. This creates inequality in the sharing of high-level scientific information, which could be valuable to developing nations. Add text: The text should therefore reflect this type of access to information.

B.Operating principles and approaches of the panel

(a) [Being scientifically independent, and]ensuring credibility and legitimacy including through peer review of its work,

Our suggested text: (a) [Being scientifically independent, and]ensuring credibility and legitimacy ,including through peer review of its work, including also UNEP's MG in the review.

Our comments:

- Maintaining scientific independence is essential as it reflects ethical scientific practice and ensures complete transparency throughout the process.
- It should be "Be free of conflict of interest" rather than scientifically independent

[(c) Recognizing the technical knowledge and experience of workers[, including informal workers], involved in the management of chemicals and waste, and promoting a safe and healthy work environment.]

Our comments: Change text: Technical knowledge recognition does not lead to its inclusion in the process; it simply acknowledges what is known.

[(f) Producing deliverables that are policy relevant without being policy prescriptive, and, scientifically robust, unbiased and accessible and if appropriate, [prevention focussed] [while also [highlighting] [addressing] [negative socioeconomic][relevant] aspects of policies].]

Our comments: Keep Text: Focusing on prevention will ensure that processes work within the framework of protecting human health. Addressing these issues will guarantee that they are tackled on a practical level rather than just in theory.

[(k) Addressing [the prevention of] all forms of [existing and legacy] pollution[, including pollution] related to chemicals and waste and pollution released into the air, water [(including oceans)] and soil.]

Our comments: Keep text: [existing and legacy]. Ensuring the prevention and addressing of issues related to chemicals and waste should remain a priority for both existing and legacy systems.

Participation of [observers] [States not members of the Panel, United Nations bodies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations]

7. [The [Governing Body][Plenary] is open to participation by regional economic integration organizations as observers. The European Union is allowed enhanced participation in sessions of the Plenary, including the right to speak in turn; the right of reply; the right to introduce proposals; the right to provide views; and the ability to support the implementation of the work programme of the Panel through financial support, among other means. [These rights do not grant the ability to be elected to the Bureau of the Panel].]

Our comments: Contradictory Text: The European Union is allowed to enhance participation in sessions of the plenary..... with that of bracketed text

III.Committees and subsidiary bodies

Membership of the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee

14 alt The Interdisciplinary Expert Committee will be comprised of five experts from each of the 5 UN regional groups. The membership of the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee may be modified by a further decision of the Governing Body.

Our comments: Having five experts from each UN region is insufficient for such a scientific process. It is uncommon for just one expert from each region to possess the comprehensive expertise required for the range of scientific knowledge needed. Instead, including two to three experts from each region would yield more fruitful results.

Functions of the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee

19. The functions of the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee include:

(a) Providing advice to the Plenary and the Bureau on, and coordinating the delivery of, scientific and technical and capacity building aspects of the Panel's programme of work;

(b) Providing advice and assistance on technical and/or scientific communication matters;

(c) Developing a transparent peer review process to ensure the highest levels of scientific quality, independence, inclusivity, integrity, and credibility for the Panel's deliverables following procedures and processes set out in relevant documents

(d) In consultation with the Bureau, advising on and overseeing the process for defining the scope of deliverables;

(e) Selecting experts for Panel activities as agreed in the Work Programme taking into account the need for different disciplines and forms of knowledge, regional and gender balance and effective contribution and participation by experts from developing countries;

(f) Engaging the scientific community and other knowledge holders with the work programme;

(g) Assuring scientific and technical coordination among other bodies set up under the Panel and facilitating coordination between the Panel and related processes to build upon existing efforts.

(h) Reporting to the Governing Body.

Our comments:

- Recognition and strengthening of knowledge diversity, taking into account the need for different forms of knowledge, including Indigenous, traditional, and local knowledge systems.
- Emphasis on the representation of marginalised voices from women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, youth ,and experts from least developed countries and small island states
- Recommendation of designating a standing expert or sub-group within the committee to assess all deliverables and processes via a gender and social equity lens aligned with UNEP's Gender Action Plan and the SDGs.
- Recommend establishing ethical protocols and safeguards when engaging with Indigenous knowledge holders, ensuring free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) while respecting community ownership of knowledge.

Other subsidiary bodies

20. The Governing Body may establish other subsidiary bodies under the Panel, in line with the rules of procedure.

Our comments:

- Proposing that all subsidiary bodies established by the Governing Body should:

1) Adhere to the same principles of inclusivity, equity, and gender balance as the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee.
2) Integrate representatives or liaisons from civil society, including women's groups, Indigenous organizations, and youth constituencies, to ensure responsiveness to on-the-ground realities.

3) Be subject to transparent reporting and review mechanisms, including gender-disaggregated data on participation and leadership, and qualitative assessments of how marginalized voices influence decision-making.

- The recommendations ensure that the Panel's scientific and technical work is just, legitimate, and responsive to the meaningful inclusion of women, Indigenous Peoples, and marginalized communities, which must be institutionalized and not left to discretion.

V.Financial Arrangements

24. alt [[Voluntary] Contributions to the Trust Fund are [welcomed][invited] from Governments,[using the UN voluntary indicative scale of assessments as a guideline, and are welcomed][as well as] from United Nations bodies, [the Global Environment Facility], other intergovernmental organizations [, international financial institutions and development banks] and stakeholders such as the private sector and foundations, on the understanding that such funding [the amount of contributions from private sources must not exceed the amount of contributions from public sources in any biennium]:

Our comments: If the "polluters pay" principle is included, could it lead to private funding sources surpassing taxpayer contributions? A declaration of funding sources is needed to ensure transparency without compromising the integrity of the process.

General Comments on the document:

- Strengthen Gender-Responsive Framing in Scope and Functions

The section on the panel's objective (Annex I, Section A) already acknowledges gender balance in capacity-building. I recommend integrating a broader gender-responsive approach by explicitly including gender-disaggregated data collection and analysis within participatory assessments and horizon scanning. This will help surface gender-differentiated impacts of chemical exposure and pollution.

- Visibility and Inclusion of Women in Science Communication

Under Section A, function: "Providing up-to-date and relevant information... and raising public awareness," I recommend adding a reference to ensuring gender-sensitive communication strategies and the engagement of women communicators and journalists. Women remain

underrepresented in science communication roles, yet are critical in shaping accessible and inclusive narratives.

- Commitment to Media Partnerships and Public Engagement

In Section IV (Secretariat), include media partnerships as part of the panel's communication strategy. A dedicated effort to collaborate with journalists and media organizations, particularly those focusing on environmental justice and gender equality, can increase public access to the panel's outputs and build broader societal support for sound chemicals and waste management.

UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7: 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

Comments on the text:

Annex 1 to draft decision [--]

Rules of procedure for [sessions of] the governing body of the [insert full name of panel]

9.Subsidiary bodies (membership, operation, election of members)

1. In addition to subsidiary bodies established in paragraphs [[--] to [--]] of the foundational document, including the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee, the governing body of the Panel may establish other subsidiary bodies to realize such objectives as may be agreed on during a session of the governing body.

Suggested text:

1. In addition to subsidiary bodies established in paragraphs [[--] to [--]] of the foundational document, including the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee, the governing body of the Panel may establish other subsidiary bodies to realize such objectives as may be agreed on during a session of the governing body. **In doing so, the Panel should strive to ensure balanced geographical, disciplinary, and gender representation and actively promote the inclusion of women experts in leadership and technical roles within these subsidiary bodies.**

General comments:

- While Rule 13 acknowledges the importance of gender balance in the Bureau, we recommend reinforcing this principle throughout the document by requiring gender-disaggregated reporting on participation (experts, leadership, speakers) and setting measurable targets for gender equity in panel and subsidiary body compositions.
- Under Annex 3, in the procedures for the preparation of panel deliverables, we suggest including an explicit reference to integrating a gender analysis in all assessments and reports. The sound management of chemicals and waste often has differentiated impacts on women and men, particularly in occupational and domestic settings, and these should be addressed systematically.
- To strengthen public communication and transparency, we recommend including a clause encouraging the development of tailored media materials (Annex 3, "Information and communication materials") with a focus on gender-sensitive language. The panel should engage media professionals and communicators, including women-led media, as key actors in disseminating results to diverse audiences.

UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8: Proposal on interim arrangements to be considered by the intergovernmental meeting.

General Comments:

- Ensure Gender and Regional Balance in Interim Preparations

In the paragraph requesting UNEP to prepare for the first governing body session, include a recommendation that interim preparations ensure gender-balanced and regionally diverse consultations, including with civil society, Indigenous Peoples, and women's groups. Early inclusivity strengthens trust and legitimacy in the panel's formation.

- Include Media Stakeholders in the Preparatory Phase

Suggest adding that the interim secretariat, while preparing for the first session, engages with public-interest media and environmental journalists to ensure transparent communication from the outset. The media plays a key role in raising public awareness and broadening support for the panel's goals on chemicals, waste, and pollution.

CONTRIBUTION TO OEWG

Name: Peter Owiti

Organization: Wote Youth Development Projects Community Based Organization.

Status: Observer.

We recommend:

1.The Scientific Policy Panel should be inclusive especially the most affected communities and population. The panel should stived to ringfence some panel seats to constituencies that include Waste pickers or their representatives as they directly affected by chemical waste and therefore need involved in policy making and even implementation on sustainable waste management.

2. Members states that have registered Producer Responsibility Organizations should have a policy that incorporate waste pickers in those organizations as they are the ones that understand what is recyclable. This will reduce chocking the environment with wastes that are moved from one land surface to the other.

3. Recognitions of waster pickers in the policy so that their rights and health are protected as they are the bottom line of the chemical and plastic waster value chain.

3. They demanded they make their own Producer Responsibility Organizations since they are the local people dealing with waste at the community level.

4. Standardization of dump site that protects, human beings, animals' plant and air. The dumpsites constructions should be in segregated areas fed similarly segregated aggregation sites.

5. Capacity building. Building capacity of all by the panel members and all the stakeholders on new innovations and new threats in the chemical waste and pollutants.

6.Intergarting programs. Climate, health and chemical waste and environment under one heath agenda so as to hand associate human diseases like TB and other airborne disease.

7.Extended producer responsibility to be enforced so producers could completely do away with plastics that are not recyclable.

NB: Inspite of the accreditation and ticket pass, my application for travels support was rejected. Still looking for support as air ticket alone is my 3 months pay