

Global Framework on Chemicals – for a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste

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Open-ended Working Group of the
Global Framework on Chemicals – for a
Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste
First meeting

Punta del Este, Uruguay, 24–27 June 2025

Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

Programme of work and draft budget of the secretariat for
the period 2024–2026

Programme of work, staffing and budget**

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. At its fifth session, held in Bonn, Germany, in September 2023, the International Conference on Chemicals Management adopted resolution V/12 on the programme of work and budget.
2. In the resolution, the secretariat requested, among other things, to report to the International Conference at its first session on its activities, staffing and budget.
3. The present note provides an update on the contributions, activities, budget and staffing list approved by the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fifth session as an interim step towards the final report to the first session of the International Conference to be held in late 2026.

II. A transformative framework for a planet free of harm from chemicals and waste

4. The Global Framework on Chemicals, adopted at the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5), builds upon the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) by shifting to a target-driven model focused on achieving the vision of a planet free of harm from chemicals and waste. Its five strategic objectives and 28 internationally agreed targets promote systemic change through robust governance, cross-sector collaboration, and measurable outcomes.
5. To ensure the successful implementation of the Framework, emphasis has been on strengthening foundational capacities, the work across high impact sectors, promoting strategies to include innovative approaches and developing a strong sustained stakeholder engagement and finance discussions. Since ICCM5, the focus has been on developing measurable indicators, engaging key industrial sectors, kicking off the Framework Fund, integrating gender and social equity, and securing voluntary financial contributions.
6. Activities planned for 2025–2026 reflect lessons from the SAICM transition and prioritize areas such as governance, outreach, knowledge management, and monitoring. A multistakeholder,

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collaborative process is crucial to align strategies, ensure sectoral integration, and foster systemic regulatory reform for chemicals. To support implementation, the Framework secretariat is exploring funding opportunities beyond the regular donors, looking at co-financing strategies to align with global environmental and chemical safety priorities.

7. Safe and sustainable management of chemicals and waste across industry sectors is key to shift practices and some initial high-impact sectors (and value chains) —agrifood, buildings and construction, electronics, textiles, health care and the private finance sector. These sectors have been identified as priorities for intervention given their chemical footprint. Across these sectors, discussions on how to better support countries to advance efforts to promote circular economy business models, foster industry partnerships, and support national policy reforms are happening. This includes action on chemicals management, responsible production, reuse, and recycling of materials, including textile waste, e-waste and other waste streams, so that they can be reused into products, thus, the development of sustainable value chains in the above-mentioned sectors.

8. These interventions aim to drive meaningful shifts in the way chemicals and wastes are managed, on how markets can shift to cleaner and safer patterns of production and consumption, with a final aim of reducing pollution, alongside efforts in each sector to mitigate climate change, and advance sustainability. Investment flows, engagement of financial institutions, facilitation of technology transfer, and supporting changes in consumer behaviour cannot be neglected. The work undertaken is based on requests and resolutions from ICCM5. Looking at chemicals at a sector level allows a more comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges faced by countries economically and socially, alongside the environment and health concerns posed by exposure to harmful chemicals.

9. Accelerating green chemical markets is an area that needs further exploration as Member States and other stakeholders work to implementing the phase-out of targeted chemicals, avoid regrettable substitution and promote safer alternatives. Accelerating green chemicals markets has the potential to minimize adverse effects of chemicals while creating the incentives for industry to innovate where the market for doing so becomes more lucrative.

10. Furthermore, the Framework provides the opportunity for all stakeholders to work together and its implementation needs systemic approaches and basic chemicals management policies, laws and regulations.

11. To achieve the 28 targets adopted at ICCM5, the secretariat is supporting the development of strong, measurable indicators and the implementation of the right policies and laws to drive progress. This includes not only technical and regulatory frameworks but also cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and social inclusion.

12. To build momentum and raise awareness about the importance of chemical safety, robust communication and outreach efforts are vital. Effective communication strategies will help stakeholders understand the urgency of the issue, align their efforts, and engage the public in creating a safer, more sustainable environment.

13. Activities have been designed around key operational areas: (a) governance and secretariat services; (b) coordination and development of indicator and measurability initiatives; (c) knowledge management and capacity development; (d) outreach and stakeholder engagement; and (e) administration and oversight of the Framework Fund.

14. The activities proposed include both core secretariat functions and collaborative actions with relevant intergovernmental organizations, including the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC) and other entities of multilateral environmental agreements.

15. All activities including national focal point support, targeted sectoral engagement, and regional outreach, are contingent on voluntary funding contributions and as such are subject to availability of resources. It is therefore recommended that all Governments and stakeholders in a position to do so consider contributing resources—financial or in-kind—early in the biennium to ensure uninterrupted implementation.

16. The integration of the various components outlined above comes together to shape a dynamic, multistakeholder process at the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) and beyond, ensuring that the future work of the Framework is effectively coordinated and impactful. At the OEWG, through collaborating with a diverse range of stakeholders, including governments, industries, non-governmental organizations, the scientific communities, indigenous people and local communities, other major groups, and international organizations, the meeting can serve as a critical forum to discuss and refine the strategies for achieving the 28 targets defined at ICCM5.

17. The work at the OEWG will benefit from the ongoing development of foundational capacities within the Framework, particularly in areas such as regulatory systems, sectoral engagement, and cross-sectoral collaboration. The engagement with key sectors such as textiles, electronics, and construction are essential, as they represent significant opportunities for improving chemical safety through value-chain approaches and enhanced regulatory frameworks. By fostering partnerships across sectors, the Framework can maximize the impact of its initiatives and create momentum for broader global engagement.

18. The Framework secretariat will explore several pathways to secure funding including from the next Global Environment Facility (GEF 9) replenishment as well as from other traditional and non-traditional donors and will start discussions with financial institutions to unlock financial paths.

19. Lastly, following the adoption of the Framework, UNEP conducted a comprehensive functional review of the secretariat, identifying critical capacity gaps—particularly in sectoral engagement, regulatory and legal integration, and communications. This review informed a new secretariat structure, aligning technical and governance roles to ensure effective oversight and sectoral support. The Framework's transformation narrative, capability gap analysis, and proposed organizational changes reflect the ambition to transition to a comprehensive, globally coordinated approach to chemical safety.

III. Financial overview and activities completed by the secretariat in the period from January 2024 to May 2025

20. In accordance with the adoption of resolution V/12 by ICCM5 on the indicative programme of work, budget and staffing structure for the secretariat for the period 2024–2026, UNEP has received, as of May 2025, a total of United States dollars 28.5 million for the Framework Fund and United States dollars 3.06 million for the Framework secretariat.

21. UNEP also contributed United States dollars 1.08 million in cash, from its thematic funds and other operating reserve, to support the secretariat and related activities while UNEP's infrastructure for the Framework was being established.

22. Table 1 below provides an overview of income, expenditures, budget and the balance from 2023 to 2026.

Table 1
Global Framework on Chemicals secretariat and Fund budget and contributions in United States dollars

<i>GFC secretariat and related activities</i>	2023	2024	2025	2026
Income carry-over	–	295 936	3 166 788	-1 145 005
Income secured during the year	295 936	3 513 503	326 445	–
Expenditures/budget	–	642 651	4 638 238	8 214 168
Balance	295 936	3 166 788	-1 145 005	-9 359 173

23. It is important to highlight the funding gap for the Framework secretariat and related activities for the years 2025 and 2026 which is United States dollars 1 million and United States dollars 9 million respectively.

<i>Fund</i>	2023	2024	2025	2026
Income carry-over	–	400 978	27 945 125	25 268 244
Income secured during the year	400 978	27 544 147	578 250	–
Expenditures/budget	–	–	3 255 131	6 892 616
Balance	400 978	27 945 125	25 268 244	18 375 628

24. However, with the generous contribution towards the Fund, the activities for the Fund for 2025 and 2026 are well funded with a positive balance.

25. The Framework secretariat has delivered the following functions:

A. Effective governance and secretariat services

26. Throughout the reporting period, the secretariat ensured the smooth operation of governance structures by preparing and organizing seven meetings of the Bureau of the Framework. These meetings took place on 25 October and 5 December 2023, 26 February, 15 June and 12 November 2024, and on 30 January and 19 May 2025. In addition, preparations are well underway for the first meeting of the OEWG, which will take place in June 2025 in Punta del Este, Uruguay.

27. To support technical dialogue and progress, the secretariat convened five intersessional meetings of the ad hoc group on measurability and indicators. These were held between April 2024 and April 2025 and were complemented by surveys and task team engagements. Financial oversight remained a priority, with ongoing monitoring of the secretariat's budget and donor contributions, alongside the coordination of regular reports to funding partners.

28. A communications strategy was developed to raise awareness and visibility of the Framework. This multi-stakeholder strategy was implemented through presentations and contributions at over 30 events, contributing significantly to outreach across diverse stakeholder groups.

B. Strengthening international collaboration

29. The secretariat actively contributed to the global chemicals and waste agenda by submitting key outcomes to major forums, including the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), and various chemicals and waste-related multilateral environmental agreements. These efforts were part of broader work to foster multisectoral and multi-stakeholder engagement, particularly in implementing the programmatic elements of the Framework.

30. Ongoing collaboration on the organization of the Framework OEWG in June 2025 back to back with the Open-ended Working Group on the emerging science-policy panel helps strengthen links between science and decision-making, particularly in support of the safe and sustainable management of chemicals and waste. The secretariat has participated in multiple activities of the IOMC, working to deepen connections with the finance, economic, and industry sectors and to advance programme implementation efforts.

31. Jointly with the secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions, an information document (UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/INF/9) has been developed highlighting the contributions of the international chemicals and waste framework to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. In addition, the secretariat has assessed the functionality of the existing SAICM Knowledge Management Platform, with a view to adapting it for the broader needs of stakeholders under the Framework.

C. Promoting a network of stakeholders

32. Efforts undertaken to build a strong stakeholder base included proactive outreach to encourage the nomination of national focal points. As a result, there was a noticeable increase in nominations, though further participation from a wider range of sectors remains essential. To guide engagement, the secretariat drafted initial guidelines for national focal points. These guidelines provide advice on how focal points can promote and coordinate multisectoral collaboration, as well as foster effective risk communication and public awareness.

D. Mainstreaming gender considerations

33. Gender equity was integrated into various activities of the secretariat. This included efforts to incorporate gender perspectives into relevant policies, plans, and actions concerning chemicals and waste management. An initial gender action plan has been drafted and shared for consultation, laying the groundwork for a more inclusive implementation approach.

E. Establishment of the Global Framework on Chemicals Fund

34. To ensure financial support for the Framework's goals, the secretariat has provided administrative services and other support to the Fund, including facilitating three meetings of the Executive Board Fund. These took place in April and June 2024, and again in March and May 2025. The Fund's first call for applications was launched on 1 October 2024 and remained open until 31 January 2025, marking a major milestone in operationalizing financial support for national and regional implementation efforts. The secretariat has screened applications for eligibility and completeness and conducting a high-level review of each application. Further information on these activities is provided in documents UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/3 and UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/INF/4.

IV. Proposed secretariat budget 2025–2026 and contributions overview

35. The budget report and revision are based on the proposed budget in the resolution adopted by ICCM5. The resolutions adopted, and the Bonn Declaration, helped to shape the expected activities required by the secretariat for the period 2024–2026.

36. Table 2 below shows the expenditure for 2024 and the 2025 to 2026 budget. The overall amount increases from United States dollars 643,000 in 2024 to United States dollars 4.56 million in 2025 and United States dollars 8.07million in 2026, primarily due to recruitment of vacant positions and hosting of major meetings.

Table 2
2024 expenditures and proposed budget 2025–2026 in United States dollars

Cost category	Code	Subcategory	2024 Expenditure	2025 Budget	2026 Budget
Secretariat staff and travel					
Personnel	1100	Project personnel component	233 284	1 459 135	2 414 775
		UNEP staff - Technical and strategic support	233 284		
		P-5 Senior programme management officer (Environment Fund)		–	–
		P-4 Programme management officer (health and labour)	–	273 000	281 190
		P-4 Programme management officer (policy and legal) ^a	–	136 500	281 190
		P-4 Programme management officer (operation and organization)	–	290 000	298 700
		P-3 Programme management officer (operation and organization) ^a	–	114 750	236 385
		P-3 Programme management officer (knowledge management and measurability) ^a	–	114 750	236 385
		P-3 Programme management officer (industry and capacity building) ^a	–	114 750	236 385
		P-3 Fund management officer ^a	–	114 750	236 385
		P-3 Programme management officer (communications) ^a	–	114 750	236 385
		P-2 Capacity building ^a	–	92 943	185 885
		P-2 Information technology support ^a	–	92 943	185 885
	1200	Consultants	181 078	200 000	10 000
	1300	Administrative support	–	351 000	523 400
		GS–6 Administrative assistant	–	190 000	195 700
		GS–6 Information management assistant (operations and organization) ^a	–	95 000	195 700
		GS–4 Information technology and communication ^a		66 000	132,000
Travel	1600	Travel	20 388	55 000	55 000
	1999	Subtotal	434 750	2 065 135	3 003 175
Transfer to implementing partners					
Transfer to partners	2100	Implementing partners	70 050	10 000	10 000
	2199	Subtotal	70 050	10 000	10 000

Meetings and training events					
Meetings and conferences	3100				
		First meeting of the Open-ended Working Group	–	1 800 000	–
		Bureau meeting	–	33 500	34 500
		Meeting of the Conference	–	–	3 500 000
		Regional meetings	–	–	560 000
3999	Subtotal		–	1 833 500	4 094 500
Premises and other					
Fixed operating costs	4100	Operational costs for secretariat personnel	59 918	156 000	111 500
4999	Subtotal		59 918	156 000	111 500
Miscellaneous component					
Reporting costs	6200	Printing - Web maintenance - translations and publication	4 000	10 000	10 000
	6300	Sundry	–	30 000	40 000
6999	Subtotal		4 000	40 000	50 000
Subtotal			568 718	4 104 635	7 269 175
Programme indirect support cost			73 933	533 603	944 993
Total			642 651	4 638 238	8 214 168

^a Vacant positions to be filled subject to available resources. 2025 figures are prorated for 6 months and full staff costs for 2026 include a 3% increase in line best practice.

Table 3.1
Contributions received to date to support the Framework secretariat and its activities from 2023 to May 2025 in United States dollars

<i>Contributor</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>Total</i>
Canada		49 236	–	49 236
France	108 563	429 078	–	537 641
Denmark		28 706	29 000	57 706
Germany		159 314	152 559	311 873
Sweden		291 403	–	291 403
Switzerland		465 071	–	465 071
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	187 373	315 939	–	503 312
Belgium		–	31 250	31 250
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)		55 066	113 636	168 702
UNEP		1 080 000	–	1 080 000
Finland		14 690	–	14 690
USA		625 000	–	625 000
Total income	295 936	3 513 503	326 445	4 135 884

37. In addition to the above cash contribution, UNEP has provided in-kind support valued at United States dollars 872,000 which included the position of Coordinator of the secretariat together with other technical and strategic expertise, particularly expertise in high impact sectors, to assist the implementation of the Framework.

38. For 2025, UNEP is continuing to provide increased in-kind support in response to the UNEA resolutions 6/9 on Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste and 6/11 on Highly Hazardous Pesticides.

Table 3.2

Contributions received to date to support the GFC Fund and its activities from 2023 to May 2025 in USD

<i>Contributor</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>Total</i>
Germany		21 762 090	–	21 762 090
Quick Start Programme		4 272 400	–	4 272 400
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	213 605		–	213 605
Switzerland		465 071	–	465 071
Spain		345 720	–	345 720
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	187 373		–	187 373
ICCA		534 611	547 000	1 081 611
Belgium		–	31 250	31 250
Finland		15 740	–	15 740
USA		148 515	–	148 515
Total income	400 978	27 544 147	578 250	28 523 375

39. In addition to the above, the Framework Fund benefited from an in-kind contribution of United States dollars 298,826 from Germany provided in the form of a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) to support the work on the Framework Fund.

V. Comparative staff structure: outcome at the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management versus actual situation for 2024–2026

40. UNEP has recruited the following staff to support the implementation of the Framework and the Framework Fund. This includes: a Coordinator of the secretariat (P5), a Health and labour liaison officer (P4), an Operations and organization officer (P4) and an Administrative assistant (G6). In addition, a Coordinator (P4) and a Junior Professional Officer funded by Germany were recruited for the Framework Fund.

41. An indicative staffing structure as adopted by the conference at ICCM 5, including additional staff to administer the Fund as decided by the Executive Board of the Fund alongside the current staff members that have been recruited are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Proposed staff members adopted by the Conference at its fifth session compared to the actual staffing (2024–2026)

<i>Indicative staffing structure adopted by the Conference at its fifth session</i>	<i>Current staffing situation in the Global Framework on Chemicals</i>
Secretariat Staff	
P-5 Coordinator	Recruited in May 2024
P-4 Health and labour sectoral engagement	Recruited in April 2025
P-4 Policy implementation (policy and legal)	On hold ^a
P-4 Operation and organisation	Recruited in March 2025
P-4 Program management officer ^b	Recruited in March 2025
P-3 Operation and organisation	On hold ^a
P-3 Knowledge management and measurability	On hold ^a
P-3 Intersectoral and multistakeholder engagement	Reclassified to P-3 Industry and capacity building - on hold ^a
P-3 Program management officer ^b	On hold ^a
P-3 Fund management officer	20% of a P4

<i>Indicative staffing structure adopted by the Conference at its fifth session</i>	<i>Current staffing situation in the Global Framework on Chemicals</i>
P-2 Capacity building	On hold ^a
P-2 Communications	Reclassified to P-3 Communications - on hold ^a
P-2 Information Technology support/registration/web/document support control	On hold ^a
P-2 (JPO) Associate expert ^b	Recruited in May 2024
G-6 Secretariat administrative assistant	Recruited in February 2025
G-6 Secretariat administrative assistant	Reclassified to G-6 Information management assistant - on hold ^a
G-6 Finance assistant ^b	On hold ^a
G-4 Information technology and communication	On hold ^a

^a On hold due to availability of resources.

^b Staffing structure agreed by the Executive Board.

VI. Future activities of the Framework secretariat based on the recommendations from the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management from June 2025 to the International Conference in 2026

42. To ensure effective governance and delivery of secretariat services under the Framework, the secretariat will coordinate and support a comprehensive set of meetings and strategic activities. This includes the preparation and organization of seven meetings of the Bureau of the Framework, one of which will be held in person, pending finalization of dates. In addition, five regional meetings will be convened, contingent on resource availability, to ensure regional alignment and inclusivity in implementation efforts.

43. Looking ahead, the secretariat will also plan and deliver the session of the International Conference scheduled for late 2026. Interspersed throughout this period, intersessional meetings of the open-ended ad hoc group on measurability and indicators will be conducted. The secretariat will take the lead on Task Team 3, focusing on the identification and assessment of thematic and sector-specific indicators.

44. A resource mobilization plan is being implemented to diversify the donor base and secure funding necessary to support these meetings and related initiatives. Budgetary oversight will be maintained, including the monitoring of donor contributions and the preparation of financial reports. Concurrently, the multi-stakeholder Communication Strategy will continue to be implemented, including awareness-raising campaigns targeted at engaging new stakeholder groups. A progress report on all new programmes and activities related to the Framework's implementation will be presented at the next Conference session.

45. To strengthen relationships with international organizations, the secretariat will work closely with the IOMC and its participating bodies to develop and scale implementation programmes. This includes increasing engagement with economic, industrial, health, labour, and financial sectors, as well as exploring innovative approaches to enhance national chemicals management systems.

46. The Secretariat will also ensure the Framework is represented in global forums such as the United Nations Environment Assembly, World Health Assembly, and the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm conventions. In parallel, cooperation will be promoted with other international initiatives, notably the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, to align targets on pollution and chemicals management. Active engagement will be maintained with developments surrounding the science policy panel on chemicals, waste, and pollution prevention, and collaboration will begin with the forthcoming global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides once it is established.

47. Efforts will continue to promote a broad and inclusive network of stakeholders. A key focus will be on encouraging early implementation of the forthcoming national focal point guidelines, with a specific aim to diversify representation to include ministries of health, labour, and business.

48. In terms of gender mainstreaming, the gender action plan will be finalized and presented for adoption at the next Conference session, with encouragement for its early implementation.

49. Financial considerations remain a critical area of work. The secretariat will continue to collaborate with IOMC partners to evaluate existing financial and investment flows in accordance with resolution V/3 on Financial Considerations.

50. Finally, to support the Framework Fund, the secretariat will organize at least one meeting of the Fund's Executive Board. A second call for applications will be launched, and the secretariat will assist applicants in preparing proposals aligned with the strategic objectives established by the Executive Board.

VII. Proposed action

51. The Open-ended Working Group may wish to:

(a) Recognize the progress achieved since the Global Framework on Chemicals was adopted,

(b) Note that a transition process is taking place to deliver a fully functioning secretariat for the Global Framework on Chemicals.

(c) Note that sustainable funding is required to enable the secretariat to perform its mandated functions as set out in the resolutions of the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management;

(d) Thank all donors for their contributions and pledges received to-date

(e) Encourage all Governments and other stakeholders in a position to do so, to contribute financially and with other resources.