Meeting of the Bureau 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)
13 May 2025
15:00 - 17:00 (EAT; GMT + 3) virtual

Meeting Summary

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The Chair, Ms. Gudi Alkemade, opened the meeting and introduced the provisional agenda, indicating that co-facilitators were invited to participate in the discussions on agenda item 3. One member clarified that on agenda item 3c: consideration of the name of the panel, the view had been expressed in the region, that the name of the panel should be decided by OEWG 3.2. This was confirmed by the Chair, who clarified that the intent of the agenda item would be to seek feedback from the regions with a view to accommodate an efficient process to agree to a name of the panel at OEWG 3.2.

2. The agenda was adopted without further changes.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the meeting summary

3. The summary of the Bureau meeting held on 3 April 2025 was adopted.

Agenda item 3: OEWG 3.2 preparations

(a) Preparations for OEWG 3.2

4. The secretariat presented an update on the preparations for OEWG 3.2, including on registration, logistics and documentation:

5. The Chair encouraged Bureau members to reach out to their regions and encourage governments that have not yet done so to register for the meetings. She requested the secretariat to make the relevant information available through the Bureau.

6. Bureau members thanked the secretariat, especially for the information on registration, including the briefings in the margins of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm (BRS) Conventions meetings in Geneva. Members also emphasised the need to assist with the necessary logistical arrangements, taking into account that many delegations would travel from far away. The secretariat clarified that, in collaboration with the secretariat of the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC), travel itineraries were expected to be issued soon.

7. One member asked for clarification on the possibility of travel support for delegates that may stay to support their high-level representative at the Intergovernmental Meeting. The secretariat indicated that governments may reach out to the secretariat directly and that it will be decided on a case-by-case basis, subject to the availability of resources.

8. One member indicated that it may be required to provide further clarity to all participants on the expected outcomes of OEWG 3.2. In particular, attention must be drawn to the outcome of OEWG 3.1, that at OEWG 3.2, delegations will focus on finalizing the Foundational Document, the draft Rules of Procedure, and the related draft Decisions of the Intergovernmental Meeting.

9. One member suggested to make available to all participants a table including the related texts in the Foundational Document and the draft Rules of Procedure to the specific cluster of topics addressed in the contact groups.

10. Following an exchange of views, the Chair reconfirmed that it is the expectation that OEWG 3.2 will finalize the Foundational Document, the draft Rules of Procedure and the related draft decisions for the Intergovernmental Meeting to (1) establish the panel, (2) transmit the draft rules, procedures and policies, and (3) agree on interim arrangements.

11. The Bureau requested the secretariat to make available on the meeting webpage the document on the table with the texts organized by topic and by cluster. Following a suggestion by the secretariat, the document will be presented as a non-paper and parts of the texts that have not been discussed at OEWG 3.1 will be highlighted. The document will also be provided with a clear introduction to clarify the background and nature of the document, indicating it will not replace the working documents, but that it serves to illustrate which parts of the texts address related topics. This information could then be used by governments in their preparations for OEWG 3.2.

(b) Organization of work at OEWG 3.2

12. The Chair briefed the Bureau on the key takeaways on outreach with governments, including in the margins of the BRS meetings in Geneva, indicating that the discussions held so far, confirmed the key areas of discussion identified at theBbureau retreat following OEWG 3.1.

13. The floor was opened for further feedback from the regional meetings. One Bureau member noted that the regional consultations so far had focused mainly on logistics and questions for clarification.

14. The secretariat presented the latest proposal for the organization of OEWG 3.2, including a tentative schedule on the proposed initial sequencing of the work in contact groups

15. Following discussion and input by the co-facilitators, the Bureau thanked the secretariat for the preparations and agreed that the tentative schedule could be used to prepare for the meeting. The Bureau noted the need to maintain flexibility to accommodate potential changes following further preparations by the co-facilitators, and the need to maintain flexibility for the Bureau to make changes as required during OEWG 3.2.

(c) Consideration of the name of the panel

16. The secretariat presented a background document on the name of the panel , including an analysis by the UNEP Communication Division.

17. Following the remark at the beginning of the meeting, the Bureau agreed that the name of the panel should be decided by the OEWG 3.2, that it should reflect the work of the panel and ideally that it should be as short as possible, keeping in mind existing examples and acronyms, as well as how the name and acronyms would translate in other languages.

18. The Bureau agreed that it would be useful to actively seek the views of the regions, with a view to discussing at the in-person Bureau meeting in Uruguay the best possible way to accommodate that discussion.

19. The Bureau requested the secretariat to revise the document in line with the discussion, for it to be shared by the Bureau with their regions for possible feedback through the Bureau members to the secretariat by close of business on 20 May 2025. The secretariat was also requested to provide information following analysis of the proposed name and acronyms in UN languages.

(d) Preparations for the Bureau meeting in Montevideo, 12 – 13 June 2025

20. The Secretariat provided an update on the preparations for the upcoming Bureau meeting in Montevideo, that will be held in the Radisson Hotel.

21. The purpose of that meeting will be to further confirm and detail the organization of work of OEWG 3.2, taking into account further suggestions following the preparations of the co-facilitators with support of the secretariat.

22. One co-facilitator inquired on the logistical arrangement for the meeting, upon which the secretariat confirmed that an information note had been shared and that transport from Montevideo to Punta del Este would be provided by the Government of Uruguay.

23. Further documents for the meeting will be shared in advance of the in-person Bureau meeting.

Agenda item 4: Update on IM preparations

24. The Secretariat provided an update on the preparations for the Intergovernmental Meeting to be held on 19-20 June, including an overview of the status of registration and logistics.

25. The rules of procedure of UNEA will apply *mutatis mutandis* to the work of the meeting. The meeting is expected to elect its own co-chairs.

26. As currently scheduled, the meeting will open at 3 p.m. on 19 June. The first day, 19 June (afternoon) will focus on procedural and administrative matters, while the substantive discussions and consideration and adoption of the decisions are planned for 20 June. The secretariat is also discussing with the Government of Uruguay the possibility to co-organize a Ministerial Roundtable in the evening of 19 June.

27. The secretariat confirmed that an informal briefing session on the scenario note for the Intergovernmental Meeting for national focal points and government participants will be held on 23 May 2025. Governments, through their focal points, will be informed accordingly.

28. The secretariat clarified that the establishment of the panel is expected to take place through the consideration and adoption of a decision by the Intergovernmental Meeting. The process of adoption of the decision would not require signature or deposit, as is the case with multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), since the panel would not constitute a body with legally binding force.

29. One member expressed appreciation to the secretariat and support to the proposed election of co-chairs for the Intergovernmental Meeting.

30. The Chair echoed appreciation and welcomed the opportunity for the Bureau to provide input, as well as for the informal briefing session on the scenario note that is planned on 23 May.

Agenda item 5: Other matters

31. No other matters were discussed.

Agenda item 6: Closing of the meeting

32. The meeting was closed at 17:28 EAT.

Participants

Bureau members
Ms. Gudi Alkemade, Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Policy Coordinator, International Affairs Directorate Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, The Netherlands
Ms. Linda Kosgei, Rapporteur of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Director of MEAs, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry of Kenya, Kenya
Mr. Oumar Diaouré Cisse, Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Point Focal SAICM, Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Assainissement et du Développement Durable, Mali
Prof. Jinhui Li, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Distinguished Professor, School of Environment, Tsinghua University, China
Mr. Michel Tschirren, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Senior Policy Advisor at the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), Switzerland
Mr. Alexandru Roznov, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Assistant Counsellor of the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, Romania
Mr. Roman Filonenko, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Senior Specialist of the Environmental Safety Division of the Government of Ukraine, Ukraine
Ms. Judith Torres, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and International Relations and Cooperation Office of the Ministry of the Environment, Uruguay
Mr. Linroy Christian, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Director of Department of Analytical Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda

OEWG 3 facilitators:
Ms. Itsuki Kuroda, Japan
Ms. Kateřina Šebková, Czechia
Ms. Keima Gardiner, Trinidad and Tobago
Mr. Miguel Ruiz Botero, Colombia
Mr. Sam Adu-Kumi, Ghana
Ms. Sofia Tingstorp, Sweden
Ms. Toks Akinseye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

UNEP SPP Secretariat:
Ms. Tessa Goverse
Ms. Nalini Sharma
Mr. Alvin Gachie
Mr. Didier Salzmann
Ms. Kaai Tung Chan
Ms. Leonie Geene
Ms. Pia Kohler
Mr. Richard Miesen
Mr. Zhanyun Wang

Observer:
Ms. Lesley Onyon, World Health Organization

Regrets

Bureau members:
H.E. Saqlain Syedah, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the SPP OEWG and Ambassador of Pakistan to Germany, Pakistan