

Overview of input received through Mentimeter at the first meeting of the task team, 19 September 2024

Background and introduction:

The task team on the development of the HLI on the “global environmental burden attributable to chemicals and waste” held its first meeting on 19 September 2024 in an online setting¹. Amongst others, the meeting considered the objectives, possible approach for the scope of HLI, as well as the elements constituting the HLI. Participants were invited to share their perspectives during the course of the discussion through the Mentimeter platform. A total of 64 stakeholders attended the Task Team meeting. Participants were invited to respond to questions related to the objectives, scope, and constituting elements of the HLI. All responses were provided anonymously. An overview of responses received is presented below.

Question 1. What do you believe should be the main objectives of a HLI on the environmental burden attributable to chemicals and waste? Six general objectives were identified to group the different responses provided (from the 33 answers, some answers have two responses). Some responses can be attributed to different objectives.

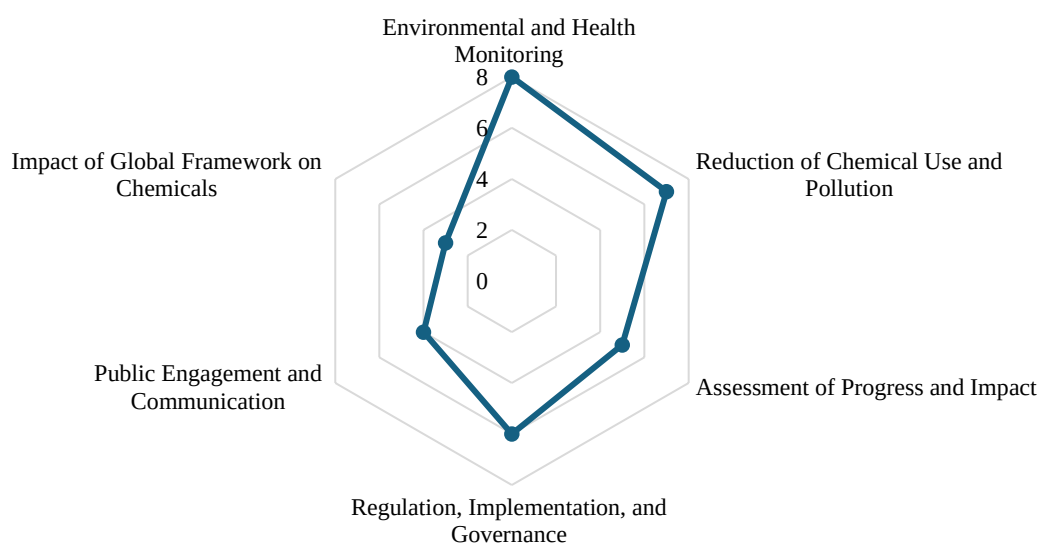


Figure 1. Radar chart overview of the 6 grouped objectives based on the results from question 1.

1. Environmental and Health Monitoring (8)

- “Capture trends in concentrations of hazardous chemicals in environmental matrices.”
- “Capture trends in medical statistics with confirmed or suspected links to contaminants.”
- “Capture trends in concentrations of hazardous chemicals in environmental matrices. This will help facilitate communication around the issue.”
- “Measure the concentrations of hazardous chemicals in environmental matrices and their impacts on the environment.”
- “Quantification of environmental and health impacts.”
- “Tracking of chemical production, use, and disposal.”
- “Bioaccumulation and persistence in the environment.”

¹ First task team meeting webpage: <https://www.unep.org/events/conference/oeahgmi-first-meeting-workstream-2-task-team-high-level-indicator-global>

- *"Bioaccumulation and persistence in the environment (repeated)."*
- 2. Reduction of Chemical Use and Pollution (7)**
- *"Exposure reduction."*
 - *"Exposure decrease."*
 - *"Measuring the reduction of chemicals that are released to the environment."*
 - *"Less use and production of harmful chemicals."*
 - *"Measure the reduction of pollutants in environmental media."*
 - *"Track the reduction in hazardous waste generation and the effectiveness of waste management systems."*
 - *"HLI should track the prevention and reduction of environmental pollution by chemicals and waste."*
- 3. Assessment of Progress and Impact (5)**
- *"Assess progress (or lack thereof) in the longer term."*
 - *"To demonstrate if the environmental burden on chemicals (or a proxy for environmental burden) is improving over time."*
 - *"It should be able to track the stakeholders' progress for better chemicals and waste management."*
 - *"To show if the environmental burden is decreased over time."*
 - *"Show the environmental benefits of the GFC."*
- 4. Regulation, Implementation, and Governance (6)**
- *"Implementation and enforcement of regulations."*
 - *"Regulation enforcement."*
 - *"A HLI should focus on mitigating impacts, strengthening global governance, promoting safe and sustainable alternatives, and supporting innovations in the circular economy."*
 - *"Precautionary assessment of the impact of chemicals on health and environment to allow measuring progress on substitution of hazardous chemicals."*
 - *"Precautionary assessment of the burden of chemicals on health and environment to measure substitution."*
 - *"Keeping under the planetary boundary by pollution."*
- 5. Public Engagement and Communication (4)**
- *"Engagement with the broad public."*
 - *"Consumer engagement through behavior change."*
 - *"Capture trends in concentrations of hazardous chemicals in environmental matrices. This will help facilitate communication around the issue."*
 - *"Aggregate data/evidence on the environmental footprint of chemical production/use and communicate easily to the wider public."*
- 6. Impact of Global Framework on Chemicals (3)**
- *"Demonstrate the impact of the GFC."*
 - *"Show benefits of action with the GFC."*
 - *"Show environmental benefits of the GFC."*

Question 2. What should be the scope of the HLI? Six general targets were identified to group the different responses provided (from the 26 answers, some answers have two responses). Some responses can be attributed to different objectives.

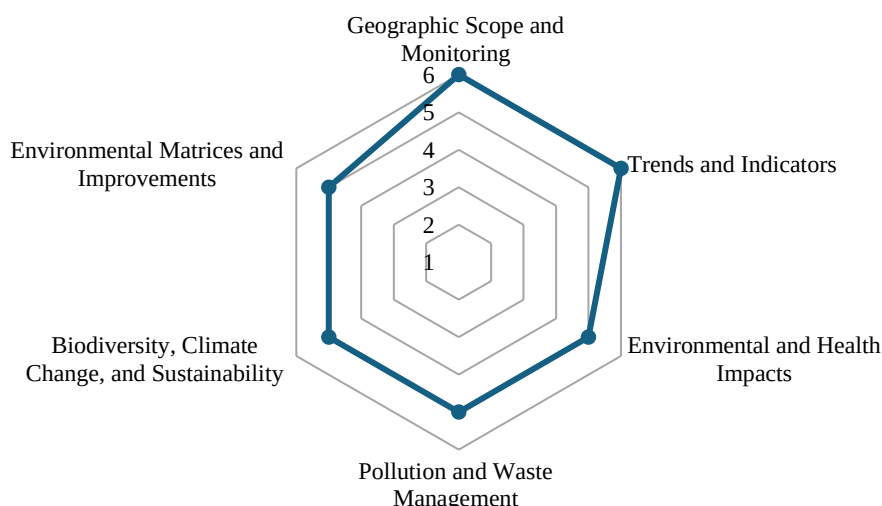


Figure 2. Radar chart overview of the 7 grouped targets based on the results from question 1.

1. Geographic Scope and Monitoring (6)

- “Sectoral, provincial, national, and transboundary.”
- “Geographic scope - Global Monitoring.”
- “Scope easily communicated.”
- “Scope needs to be pragmatic as well - what can be measured that is informative and can also be done within potential resource constraints.”
- “Comprehensive assessments of impacts on air, water, and soil.”
- “Track the chemical and waste burden on the environment and show improvements regarding chemical contamination of air, water, soils, and negative effects on biodiversity.”

2. Trends and Indicators (6)

- “Capture trends of chemicals in: environmental matrices, biota, manufactured materials, and products.”
- “It should also cover trends like: production volumes of chemicals, chemicals of concern, exports and imports.”
- “Production volumes of waste, and exports and imports.”
- “Trend in use of chemicals.”
- “The indicators should combine quantitative measures with qualitative assessments like the effectiveness of regulatory frameworks.”
- “Track the chemical and waste burden on the environment and show improvements regarding chemical contamination of air, water, soils, and negative effects on biodiversity.”

3. Environmental and Health Impacts (5)

- “The scope should be comprehensive, addressing both environmental and health impacts across the lifecycle of chemicals.”
- “Improvement of health.”
- “Environmental impacts (Global Burden of Disease work by WHO will focus on health).”
- “There should be a section on the cross-sectoral impact between environment and health (not dealt with exclusively in silos).”
- “Environmental impacts from chemical, waste, and pollution, including contamination of environmental compartments.”

4. Pollution and Waste Management (5)

- “Chemicals pollution (similar to air pollution), not measuring individual chemicals or groups.”
- “Reduction of exposure and production.”

- *“Not only measure the environmental damage, but look upstream at production and exposure reduction.”*
 - *“Environmental impacts from chemical, waste, and pollution, including contamination of environmental compartments.”*
 - *“Track the chemical and waste burden on the environment and show improvements regarding chemical contamination of air, water, soils, and negative effects on biodiversity.”*
- 5. Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Sustainability (5)**
- *“The scope could also include quantification of impacts on biodiversity and climate change from the life cycles of chemicals and waste.”*
 - *“Planet triple crisis (climate change, loss of biodiversity, and pollution).”*
 - *“Scope should include chemical impact on soil, water, air, and biodiversity.”*
 - *“Bioaccumulation and persistence in the environment.”*
 - *“Track the chemical and waste burden on the environment and show improvements regarding chemical contamination of air, water, soils, and negative effects on biodiversity.”*
- 6. Environmental Matrices and Improvements (5)**
- *“Improvements in the environment.”*
 - *“All environmental matrices.”*
 - *“Impacts on the environment.”*
 - *“Comprehensive assessments of impacts on air, water, and soil.”*
 - *“Environmental impacts from chemicals, waste, and pollution, including contamination of environmental compartments.”*

Question 3. Are there other criteria/aspects that the HLI should meet?

- 1. Data Availability and Methodology**
 - *“Precaution: Use proxies when actual burden cannot be measured.”*
 - *“The non-availability of data should not be an exclusion criterion.”*
 - *“There is a strong linkage between chemical pollution and the lack of data collection and awareness.”*
 - *“For some targets of the GFC, there are no preexisting modalities to collect and share data and no preexisting stakeholders that can be focal points, e.g., for targets B2 and B3. We need to develop this.”*
 - *“The criteria on the availability of data to create a baseline and to assess progress is problematic as this will be an obstacle for developing new indicators which may not have the required data yet.”*
- 2. Comparability and Scalability (4)**
 - *“To allow global assessments, indicators should be comparable across countries and regions over time.”*
 - *“Consider the limited statistical capacities of countries.”*
 - *“Applicability with geographical balance as well as balance in stakeholders' input in mind.”*
 - *“Should align with the existing criteria or any evolution of those in the context of the work on the measurability structure”*
- 3. Communication and Clarity (4)**
 - *“The communication aspect could be a criterion for HLI.”*
 - *“Indicators should promote transparency and accountability in terms of data sources, methodologies, and the entities responsible for reporting.”*
 - *“Broad and easily understood for all.”*
 - *“High-level means broadly understood, even if an aggregated indicator. Preferably only one indicator or max three.”*
- 4. Scientific Credibility of Existing Criteria Validity VS Innovation (7)**

- *“Scientific validity and credibility.”*
- *“There is a link between production, use, and pollution. If information on burden is lacking, at least as an interim solution, using the amount of production, use, and disposal could be used.”*

[Focus on existing criteria]

- *“It would be sufficient with the existing criteria.”*
- *“Not a suggestion for additional criteria but since the criteria are already agreed, should focus on the agreed criteria first while identifying others should be distinctly separated from the agreed ones.”*

[Innovation]

- *“Measurable, does not require major methodological work (if proposing a new indicator), timely (monthly, quarterly, etc.).”*
- *“To allow for the development of new indicators if existing ones do not fit.”*
- *“The non-availability of data should not be an exclusion criterion.”*

5. Alignment with Broader Frameworks (5)

- *“Connection to the SDGs.”*
- *“Protect human health.”*
- *“Show benefits gained from SMCW (Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste).”*
- *“Inclusivity and equity.”*
- *“Indicators should also address root causes.”*

Question 4. Please list existing sources of information, data sets, and assessments/monitoring systems that may be useful to consider in developing the HLI?

- *“The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024 by UN”*
- *“Regional monitoring programs, e.g., the Arctic Monitoring & Assessment Programme Production volumes and production sites”*
- *“The EU Chemicals Indicator Framework (some could be useful also on a global scale) National monitoring systems”*
- *“Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS)-Water Programme”*
- *“National and Regional Chemical Management Systems”*
- *“Work around the planetary boundaries”*
- *“Red lists of threatened species of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)”*
- *“Data from water logs that show how many substances are discharged into wastewater”*
- *“Health Care Without Harm Chemicals of Concern to Health and Environment”*
- *“To ensure that the data is up to speed with developments, academic studies are likely to be a very important source of information”*
- *“Combining PRTR systems that UNECE mentioned in addition to those already in OECD Global database, perhaps with a subset of sentinel chemicals as a stream of info for the HLI across geographies.”*