Western Europe and Others Group Regional Briefing of the second 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
8 and 9 November 2023
13:00 – 16:00 (CET)
Online meeting

Draft overview of work-related processes and procedures

Note by the secretariat

The annex to the present note contains a draft overview of work-related processes and procedures for the second session of the ad hoc open-ended working group for the science policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution may wish to consider the information provided. The annex is an advance edited version.

Draft overview of work-related processes and procedures

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

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 of 2 March 2022, to establish a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, with details to be further specified according to the resolution.

2. The present document presents an overview of work-related processes and procedures that will be necessary to launch the work of the panel. Examples of relevant processes and procedures from existing science-policy interfaces have informed this document and are further detailed in information documents UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/6, UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/7 and UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/8.

3. Section II covers the processes for determining the work programme of the panel. Section III discusses arrangements for identifying and engaging with experts to contribute to the work of the panel. Section IV relates to procedures for the review and adoption of reports and assessments produced by the panel. Section V focuses on procedures for addressing potential conflicts of interest, and Section VI proposes a way forward.

II. Processes for determining the work programme of the panel

4. In its resolution 5/8, the Environment Assembly requested the ad hoc open-ended working group to prepare proposals to consider processes for determining and executing the work programme of the panel (para. 5(e)). Examples were drawn from other science-policy interfaces, including from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the International Resource Panel (IRP), the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) process, and the assessment panels of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

5. **A work programme should set out a panel's work priorities and outputs over an established time frame and at a relevant scale.** Work programmes are generally developed within the agreed scope and in response to the interface's principal function(s). Some science-policy interfaces have instituted strict periodicity for their work programmes. The Montreal Protocol's Scientific Assessment Panel, for example, produces quadrennial assessments. Others develop work programmes on a rolling basis, as is the case of the current IPBES current work programme (2019–2030).

6. **The process for determining a work programme includes receiving submissions (i.e. requests), prioritizing these requests, allocating the prioritized requests to the appropriate functions, and adopting or approving the work programme.** The work programme is typically based on priority topics or areas, incorporated through a clear process that allows the plenary (or other decision-making body) to periodically review the programme. The decision-making body is also responsible for the finalization and adoption of the work programme, balancing needs and priorities against the time and budgetary resources available. Some elements of this process may be included in the institutional arrangements, rules of procedure or other guidance documents.

7. **The approaches to receiving the submission of inputs and requests for possible inclusion in the work programme vary across the existing science-policy interfaces.** IPBES receives requests from Governments and the multilateral environmental agreements, while United Nations bodies can provide inputs and suggestions as determined by their respective governing bodies. Relevant stakeholders, such as other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional scientific organizations, environment trust funds, non-governmental organizations, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and the private sector, are also encouraged to submit inputs so that their perspectives can be taken into account, as appropriate.

8. IPCC focuses on tasks mandated by relevant resolutions and decisions of the World Meteorological Organization's Executive Council and the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) Governing Council and Environment Assembly, as well as on actions in support of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process.

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9. IRP conducts a strategic planning exercise every four years to define its strategy and priority areas. Based on inputs from the Panel itself and from the Steering Committee as well as public consultations, the secretariat develops the work programme with strategic direction, priority areas and a description of potential scientific studies and assessments for the corresponding cycle; the programme is submitted to the Panel for input and recommendations prior to approval by the Steering Committee.

10. The GEO and Montreal Protocol assessment processes consider inputs as part of the scoping exercise prior to undertaking an assessment. In the case of GEO, the secretariat facilitates consultations overseen by the Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) and provides the UNEP Executive Director with advice for the prioritization of assessment topics. A scoping document is then presented to the ad hoc open-ended meeting of Member States, stakeholders and experts for review and adoption, and this subsequently determines the work programme.

11. **Considering who can suggest items for inclusion in the work programme is an important means of enhancing policy relevance, especially if those whom the panel is intended to inform and impact can effectively communicate their needs.** Although none of the science-policy interfaces reviewed fully embraced co-production, the review of the first work programme of IPBES recommended including principles on co-production with end users and those who may be impacted by the outputs, with appropriate procedures in place to maintain scientific credibility and independence.[1]

12. **The panel may require that requests, inputs and needs are accompanied by further information to support their consideration.** IPBES, for example, requires that requests are accompanied by information on: relevance to the objective, functions and work programme; urgency of action and imminence of risk; relevance for specific policies and processes; geographic scope; anticipated level of complexity; reasons why the Platform is the forum best suited to take action; availability of scientific literature and expertise; scope of potential impacts and potential beneficiaries of the requested action; resource requirements (financial and human); and potential duration.[2]

13. Care should be taken, however, so that the opportunity to provide information in support of requests does not introduce inequities or barriers for bringing forward those issues of interest to any specific constituency. As requested by the ad hoc open-ended working group at its first session, the secretariat has solicited submissions on needs and questions that the science-policy panel may handle. The findings are presented in information document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/9.

14. **A broad array of requests and issues received may require a prioritization procedure to inform the development of the work programme.** A prioritization framework would allow for coherent, transparent and structured consideration of the topics or areas for the work programme. It would help to ensure that the topics/areas proposed to be included in the work programme are within the scope and functions of the panel. The annex to the present document sets out a draft prioritization framework that builds on existing examples. A longer discussion of the framework is included in information document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/6.

III. Arrangements for identifying and engaging with experts to contribute to the work of the panel

15. **Once the work programme is established, the panel should work closely with experts to deliver on its functions.** This section provides an overview of possible arrangements for identifying and engaging with experts to contribute to the work of the panel in accordance with paragraph 5(f) of resolution 5/8. In that resolution, the Environment Assembly also asked the open-ended working group to take into account the need to ensure that the panel is interdisciplinary, 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 (paragraph 6(b)). It may be helpful to distinguish experts from stakeholders (as discussed in document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/5), such that experts are those who contribute to the work directly (e.g. writing the assessments), whereas stakeholders may provide knowledge, data, perspectives and feedback to the panel's work.

16. **Experts are typically nominated to support intergovernmental processes by Governments, observer organizations, institutions and relevant stakeholders.** The science-policy interfaces reviewed have similar sets of procedures and criteria in place. The nomination and selection

[1] Report on the review of the Platform at the end of its first work programme (IPBES/7/INF/18).

[2] Decision IPBES-1/3, paragraph 7.

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of experts are usually reviewed by the respective panel, bureau or working group to ensure transparency, fairness and adherence to established criteria. In the case of IPBES, 80 per cent of selected experts must have been nominated by Governments and up to 20 per cent drawn from stakeholder sources. Reviews show that allowing for a wide range of sources for nominations, building regional networks to coordinate Government nominations and building relationships with potential sources of expertise (i.e., universities, research institutions, think tanks) are some of the processes that may help to address potential issues related to balance.[3,4,5]

17. **The selection of experts takes into account their scientific, technical and socioeconomic expertise relevant to the respective fields or assessments.** In addition to expertise, there is a common emphasis on regional and gender balance in the selection of experts in the science-policy interfaces reviewed. Consideration also needs to be given to the balance between representation from developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition. Inclusion of Indigenous and non-traditional knowledge holders is also considered critical in the selection of experts, recognizing the importance of multiplicity of perspectives.

18. **The process of identifying and engaging with experts, and notably its transparency and inclusiveness, has implications for the panel's overall credibility, relevance and legitimacy.**[6] These key attributes of effective science-policy interfaces are explicitly used in the design of science-policy interfaces.[7] As more experience has been gained with science-policy interaction, three more key features of effective institutional design have been pursued: transparency, inclusiveness and iterativity.[8] These attributes are tightly coupled, such that efforts to enhance any one may incur a cost to the others.[9,10] IPCC and IPBES offer examples of how to engage with and include Indigenous knowledge experts, experts on Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous knowledge holders in their work; studies on the topic, however, indicate that further efforts may be required.[11, 12]

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[3] Report on the review of the Platform at the end of its first work programme (IPBES/7/INF/18).

[4] Montana, J. and Borie, M., 2016. IPBES and biodiversity expertise: Regional, gender, and disciplinary balance in the composition of the interim and 2015 multidisciplinary expert panel. *Conservation Letters*, 9(2), pp.138-142.

[5] Timpte, M., Montana, J., Reuter, K., Borie, M. and Apkes, J., 2018. Engaging diverse experts in a global environmental assessment: participation in the first work programme of IPBES and opportunities for improvement. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, 31(sup1), pp.S15-S37.

[6] First put forward in 2003 by a team of scientists reviewing global environmental assessments. This project yielded many outputs, but most notably : Cash, D., Clark, W., Alcock, F., Dickson, N., Eckley, N., Guston, D., Jäger, J. and Mitchell, R. (2003). *Knowledge systems for sustainable development. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 100(4), 8086-8091. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1231332100.

[7] UNEP (2021). Reflecting on the Past and Imagining the Future: A contribution to the dialogue on the Science-Policy Interface. Nairobi.

[8] An iterative process counters the enduring conceptualization of a linear, unidirectional model of the relationship between science and policy. See: : Assessment of options for strengthening the science-policy interface at the international level for the sound management of chemicals and waste. The following studies provide insights on how transparency, inclusiveness and iterativity have been deployed for science-policy interface effectiveness: *Science on Stage: Expert Advice as Public Drama*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. https://www.sup.org/books/title/?id=634.; Kohler, P.M. (2020). *Science Advice and Global Environmental Governance: Expert Institutions and the Implementation of International Environmental Treaties*. London: Anthem Press; Díaz-Reviriego, I., Turnhout, E. and Beck, S. (2019). Participation and inclusiveness in the Intergovernmental Science–Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Nature Sustainability*, 2(6), 457-464. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-019-0290-6, Sarkki, S., Tinch, R., Niemelä, J., Heink, U., Waylen, K., Timaeus, J., Young, J., Watt, A., Neßhöver, C. and van den Hove, S., (2015). Adding 'iterativity' to the credibility, relevance, legitimacy: a novel scheme to highlight dynamic aspects of science–policy interfaces. *Environmental Science & Policy*, 54, 505-512. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2015.02.016.

[9] Cash, D., Clark, W., Alcock, F., Dickson, N., Eckley, N., Guston, D., Jäger, J. and Mitchell, R. (2003). *Knowledge systems for sustainable development. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 100(4), 8086-8091. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1231332100.

[10] See, for just one example, Gopinathan, U., Hoffman, S.J. and Ottersen, T., 2018. Scientific advisory committees at the World Health Organization: A qualitative study of how their design affects quality, relevance, and legitimacy. *Global Challenges*, 2(9), p.1700074; note the authors' (and WHO) use of "quality" rather than "credibility" in applying Cash et al.'s framework.

[11] Ford, J.D., Cameron, L., Rubis, J., Maillet, M., Nakashima, D., Willox, A.C. and Pearce, T., 2016. Including indigenous knowledge and experience in IPCC assessment reports. *Nature Climate Change*, 6(4), pp.349-353.

[12] Ford, J.D., Vanderbilt, W. and Berrang-Ford, L., 2012. Authorship in IPCC AR5 and its implications for content: climate change and Indigenous populations in WGII. Climatic change, 113, pp.201-213.

19. Existing gaps in specific fields of expertise, such as Indigenous and local knowledge, may also result in difficulty engaging scientists in these fields due to high demand and existing commitments.[13] IPBES offers a plenary-approved approach to recognizing and working with Indigenous and local knowledge,[14] which recognizes that participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities is crucial for developing IPBES assessments and other activities. The participatory mechanism[15] helps to facilitate the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in assessments and other areas of work. The participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities may be additionally enhanced through stakeholder engagement strategies and activities.

20. **There are differences across science-policy interfaces in the approach taken to identifying and engaging experts, including their specific roles (e.g. co-chair, vice-chair, author, reviewer), level of responsibility/involvement, the selection criteria used, degree of flexibility and the scope of work.** Each interface may have additional criteria relevant to its specific mandate and objectives. Some interfaces, such as IPCC and IPBES, provide more detailed guidelines on the composition of expert teams, considering factors such as previous experience in the organization and diversity of knowledge systems.

21. **Experts who contribute to the work of science-policy interfaces generally do so on a volunteer basis.** It is important to consider the time expectations of experts in the work of the future panel. In the case of the sixth IPCC assessment report (AR6), the Working Group Co-Chairs' Perspectives on Lessons Learned from AR6[16] noted that the number of planned outputs and the increasing number and complexity of IPCC processes has had a negative impact on the scientists who participated, resulting in a reduced interest in future participation in IPCC. This could have negative consequences for the diversity of perspectives that would ideally underpin the reports.[17] Similar issues have been identified in the review of IPBES at the end of its first work programme;[18] the pace at which assessments have been produced has raised question about the longer-term sustainability of work.

IV. Procedures for the review and adoption of reports and assessments produced by the panel

22. **The review process in science-policy interfaces has been an essential determinant of credibility and legitimacy, and one that has benefited from regular adjustment based on lessons learned over time, notably leading to increases in transparency and inclusiveness.** In its resolution 5/8, the Environment Assembly requested the open-ended working group to develop a proposal on procedures for the review and adoption of reports and assessments produced by the panel (para. 5(g)). A well-defined, transparent and approved review process will help the panel to ensure the credibility of its work.

23. In the science-policy interfaces studied, the review of assessment processes commonly includes two steps: a first review conducted by experts, with a revised draft being produced; then a second review conducted by experts and Governments. These steps are often coordinated by the secretariat and supported by review editors or co-chairs of the assessments. To ensure the scientific quality of assessments by the panel, the review process should have a means for dealing with divergent viewpoints. More detail is provided in information document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/7.

24. **A participatory review process helps to ensure the adoption of reports and assessments and a minimum level of ownership/trust in those products on the part of the members of the relevant decision-making body.** Co-production with potential users of outputs, with appropriate procedures in place to maintain scientific credibility and independence, can enhance the utility of deliverables for their intended users.[19] Such an approach may also assist in the ready adoption of deliverables and address sometimes significant time lags between the production of reports and assessments and the uptake and implementation of follow-up work by Governments and stakeholders. A participatory review process could be designed in such a way that stakeholders have a chance to

[13] Working Group Co-Chairs' Perspectives on Lessons Learned from AR6 (IPCC-LVII/INF.12).

[14] Decision IPBES-5/1 (annex II).

[15] Available at: https://www.ipbes.net/indigenous-local-knowledge/how-to-participate.

[16] Working Group Co-Chairs' Perspectives on Lessons Learned from AR6 (IPCC-LVII/INF.12).

[17] Ibid.

[18] Report on the review of the Platform at the end of its first work programme (IPBES/7/INF/18).

[19] Ibid.

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directly engage with experts and Governments about the practicality of proposed options and solutions.

25. **The adoption of deliverables can range from line-by-line acceptance to section by section adoption to working group approval** (see information document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/7). The chapters of IPBES and IPCC assessments are approved by the plenary, whereas summaries for policymakers are approved, line by line, by their respective decision-making bodies. The GEO summary for policymakers is approved, line by line, by the ad hoc open-ended meeting of Member States, stakeholders and experts, whereas the Montreal Protocol assessments are approved by its own assessment panels of selected experts, without Member State review. The IRP reports are approved by the scientific panel itself, with input and recommendations from the steering committee.

26. **Science-policy interfaces can deliver on a range of functions bridging disciplinary perspectives and ways of knowing.** Iterativity could also apply to the approval process. If in the initial rounds of review, areas of strong disagreement or contention emerge, a process may be designed that can accommodate such issues being taken back for further analysis and consideration to resolve an issue. Such a solution-oriented approach may imply a longer process for approval, but it is more likely to arrive at policy-relevant, practical solutions that work and address multiple, often competing concerns. While most of the examples of science-policy interfaces reviewed focus on assessments, the panel may also need to consider comparable procedures that would guide the adoption of other types of deliverables, such as watching briefs, and outputs related to the panel's other functions.

27. **It is important to track the use of deliverables produced by the panel.** This is especially important as there might be a significant time lag between the production of global reports and their translation and appropriation by national actors. There are a number of influencing factors known from other science-policy interfaces that could be considered in order to enhance the potential for impact of the panel's deliverables on policymaking and decision-making.

28. **An error protocol helps to ensure credibility and legitimacy after reports and assessments are published.** The IPCC, IPBES and GEO processes all have protocols for addressing errors that are identified in reports or technical papers that have already been approved, accepted or finalized. These protocols are used to address errors of fact or accuracy, and they generally only apply when the inaccuracy could have been avoided in the context of the information available at the time the report was written.

V. Procedures for addressing potential conflicts of interest

29. Environment Assembly resolution 5/8 provides that the ad hoc open-ended working group should take into account the need to ensure that the panel has the ability to address potential conflicts of interest and safeguard commercially sensitive information (para. 6(f)). The issue of safeguarding commercially sensitive information is not covered in the present document; it has been deferred to be part of future work in accordance with the outcome of the second part of the working group's first session.

30. **Conflict of interest procedures are required for the panel to commence work.** The ability to address potential conflicts of interest is a key component of legitimacy, independence and credibility. Such procedures could address bias, perceptions of bias, actual conflict and perceived conflict, and fairness.[20,21] Financial or professional conflicts of interest, as well as past or potential future conflicts of interest may also be addressed in conflict of interest procedures.

31. **There are several commonalities in the conflict of interest policies of existing science-policy interfaces, including in relation to purpose, scope and definition** (see information document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/8). According to the policies of IPCC and IPBES, a "conflict of interest" refers to any current professional, financial or other interest which could: (i) significantly impair the individual's objectivity in carrying out his or her duties and responsibilities for the interface, or (ii) create an unfair advantage for any person or organization. For the purposes of the policy, circumstances that could lead a reasonable person to question an individual's objectivity, or

[20] Báldi, A. and Palotás, B., 2021. How to diminish the geographical bias in IPBES and related science?. *Conservation Letters*, 14(1), p.e12786.

[21] Liverman, D., vonHedemann, N., Nying'uro, P., Rummukainen, M., Stendahl, K., Gay-Antaki, M., Craig, M., Aguilar, L., Bynoe, P., Call, F. and Connors, S., 2022. Survey of gender bias in the IPCC. *Nature*, 602(7895), pp.30-32.

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whether an unfair advantage has been created, constitute a potential conflict of interest. These potential conflicts are subject to disclosure.[22]

32. **The science-policy interfaces reviewed have developed conflict of interest policies that focus on nominated individuals providing conflict of interest disclosure related to their personal and/or professional interests.** The conflict of interest policies of both IPCC and IPBES include two annexes: one detailing implementation procedures and another constituting the conflict of interest declaration form. Whether or not to pursue addressing potential institutional conflicts of interest as well would be a component of how the panel choses to establish relationships with relevant key stakeholders.

33. **The World Health Organization (WHO) provides extensive precedent and experience with scientific advisory committees and conflicts of interest.** As is stated on the WHO Declarations of Interest website: "WHO has a robust process to protect the integrity of WHO in its normative work as well as to protect the integrity of individual experts the Organization collaborates with. WHO requires that experts serving in an advisory role disclose any circumstances that could give rise to actual or ostensible conflict of interest."[23] The form also specifies that "the term 'you' refers to yourself and your immediate family members (i.e., spouse (or partner with whom you have a similar close personal relationship) and your children)".[24]

34. **Identifying a potential conflict of interest does not automatically mean that a conflict of interest exists.** The purpose of the policy is to enable individuals to provide the relevant information necessary for each particular situation to be evaluated by a conflict of interest committee which may report to the plenary (or another decision-making body).

35. Questions to be considered in developing a conflict of interest procedure may include:

(a) To whom will the conflict of interest procedure apply, and, if using a disclosure model, what will need to be disclosed?

(b) Whether the disclosures are to be kept confidential, and if they are to be disclosed, the modality for doing so;

(c) How disclosures will be reviewed, by whom, and with what consequences.

36. **A potential conflict of interest needs to be managed carefully to safeguard the objectivity and transparency of work-related processes.** Once there is disclosure of a potential conflict of interest on an issue, this does not necessarily mean excluding stakeholders from the process. Whereas those actors would not be able to, for example, draft text on the issue, valuable inputs could still be provided. Such inputs, however, need to be triangulated with additional views and perspectives from other experts and stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the issue. The ensuing engagement and dialogues may help to unlock the status quo, consider potential solutions from different perspectives and foster innovation. Knowing diverse perspectives will help bring knowledge together in a transparent manner, while preventing a potential conflict of interest from unduly influencing and negatively affecting the work of the panel.

VI. Proposals for development and delivery of the work programme

37. **With regard to the various aspects of developing and delivering on the work programme of the panel, the open-ended working group may wish to consider the following:**

(a) Whether a fixed time frame or a rolling work programme would be suitable for the panel and include this information in the institutional arrangements text;

(b) A process for receiving and prioritizing requests/submissions on topics/areas for possible inclusion in the panel's work programme, specifically:

(i) Who can submit requests, inputs or suggestions?

(ii) What information will be required to support submissions?

[22] Ibid., para. 11.

[23] https://www.who.int/about/ethics/declarations-of-interest.

[24] Form linked on page cited above, or directly at: https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/ethics/doifrmen_wlogo_blank.pdf?sfvrsn=799d694_6&download=true.

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(iii) Who will screen and review submissions and prioritize them, if needed, and according to what timeline?

(c) Provide guidance to the secretariat for preparing a draft procedure for receiving and prioritizing requests and inputs to the work programme as well as for identifying and engaging with experts to contribute to the work of the panel for discussion and finalization at the working group's third session;

(d) Provide guidance to the secretariat for preparing a draft procedure for the preparation, approval and tracking of use of the panel's deliverables for discussion at the third session;

(e) The definition of "conflict of interest" and the objective of a conflict of interest policy for the panel; and

(f) Provide a mandate to the secretariat to prepare a draft conflict of interest policy for discussion and finalization at the third session.

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Annex

Draft prioritization framework to assist in establishing the issues of the work programme of the panel

1. A prioritization framework would allow for the coherent, transparent and structured consideration of topics or areas for the work programme. It would help to ensure that the topics/areas proposed to be included in the work programme are within the scope and functions of the panel.

2. This annex provides some initial suggestions for a possible prioritization framework for the work of the science-policy panel on chemicals, waste and the prevention of pollution. A more detailed discussion of a possible prioritization framework can be found in information document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/6.

3. The approach takes into account the need for a two-way approach, from science to policy – but also for policy to express issues and needs to science. The proposed framework would aim at informing workplan development and its delivery against the agreed functions.

4. The prioritization framework can be used to inform the development of the (rolling) workplan of the panel. It can be triggered by the plenary when a new workplan is being developed – be it fixed or on a rolling basis.

5. As discussed at the working group's first session, "[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]".

6. The key factors that need to be considered in a priority-setting framework should be guided by the scope and objectives of the chemicals, waste and prevention of pollution science-policy interface. Given the range of potential issues that may be considered, a multi-criteria analysis approach is likely the most appropriate to provide for holistic consideration and the flexibility required for prioritization of the scope of work, but other approaches are discussed as well in information document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/6. Criteria must be transparent and rely on an evidence base.

7. To be credible and useful, the prioritization framework should be inclusive, open, transparent, comprehensive and based on the best available scientific evidence and data, acknowledging the complex interactions of chemicals, waste and pollution with human health, the environment, and social and economic systems. At the same time, it must also be easy to use and facilitate decision-making by the plenary on the work programme.

8. The proposed framework for identifying priorities for the work programme of the science-policy panel consists of five different stages (see figure):

(a) Issue identification

(b) Clustering of issues

(c) Initial screening

(d) Classification of issues

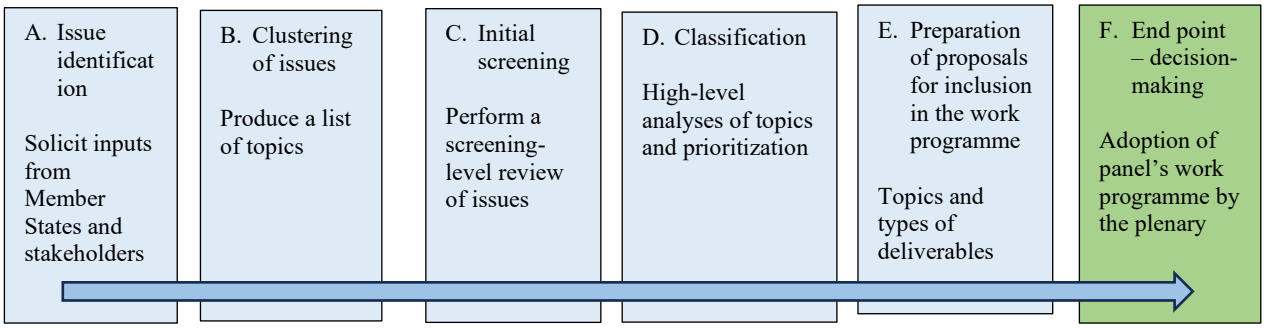
(e) Preparation of proposals for inclusion in the work programme

9. The final decision is taken by the decision-making body of the panel.

10. Information document UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.2/INF/6 contains further detailed proposals on who can submit requests, what information would be required to support submissions, and who will screen and review submissions and prioritize them, if needed, and according to what timeline.

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Stages for identifying priorities for the work programme of the science-policy panel



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