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English only

**Bureau of the Global Framework on Chemicals –
For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste**
Thursday, 30 January 2025, 14:00 – 16:30 (CET, Geneva time)
Sixth meeting

DRAFT REPORT OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE BUREAU

1. Opening and welcome

1. The President of the Bureau of the Global Framework on Chemicals, Mr. Hammad Shamimi, (Pakistan) welcomed the Bureau members to the sixth meeting of the Bureau.
2. At the present meeting, Mr. Audun Heggelund (Norway) was accompanied by Ms. Jenny Skytte, Ms. Susan Wilburn (Health Sector) was replaced by Ms. Andrea Rother and Mr. Rory O'Neill (Labour Sector) was replaced by Mr. Liam O'Brien.
3. The Vice-President said the main purpose of the meeting was to inform Bureau members of the progress of the activities to implement the Framework and prepare for the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG), scheduled for June 2025.

2. Adoption of the agenda

1. The President introduced the provisional agenda for the meeting (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/1) that was circulated on 17 January 2025. The Bureau members were invited to raise any additional points under agenda item 7, Any other business.
2. Ms. Chrysanthi Sofokleous, the industry sector representative, requested an update on Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs). The GFC secretariat requested to address funding for and the possible venue change of the OEWG.
3. With no further items raised, the provisional agenda was adopted.

3. Adoption of the report of the fifth meeting of the Bureau of the Global Framework on Chemicals, held on 12 November 2025

4. The President invited comments on the draft report of the fifth meeting of the Bureau ([GFC/GFC1/Bureau.5/2](#)), which was held on 12 November 2024 and the report of which was circulated by the secretariat on 22 November 2024.

5. The secretariat informed the meeting that no comments were received following its circulation. With no additional comments, the report was adopted and will be posted on the Framework website.

4. Open-Ended Working Group preparations

a. Workflow of the meeting - proposed structure of the OEWG including pre-meetings and sectoral half-days (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/2)

6. The President introduced the sub-item requesting Bureau members to note whether the updated workflow reflected what was needed as an outcome to the OEWG. He invited the secretariat to introduce the workflow as contained in GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/2.

7. The secretariat noted that comments received were taken on board and that comments were not received from the African, Asia-Pacific and GRULAC regions. She invited representatives of those regions to raise any specific comments during the meeting.

8. The secretariat clarified that no contact groups were foreseen for discussions on the GFC Fund, and on measurability and indicators as they were already subsidiary bodies established by the International Conference on Chemicals Management at its fifth session. The progress under those items would be reported on at the plenary and technical briefings will be held on the day preceding the OEWG on both issues. Further, no contact groups were foreseen at this stage for health surveillance systems nor international cooperation and coordination. Members requested sufficient time be allotted to the technical briefing on measurability and indicators.

9. In the subsequent discussion, appreciation was expressed for the updated workflow. Further clarification was requested on the format and organization of parallel events and thematic sessions as well as on the number of lunchtime events. The secretariat said that depending on the venue size and timing, additional side events could be held. She confirmed that targeted discussions aligned with the strategic objections would be prioritized rather than an open collection of ideas. Proposed lunch time events included on chemical footprints with potential collaboration with life cycle experts; sharing best practices on national implementation plans featuring feedback from experience; focus on the role of focal points and their networks in implementing initiatives; ensuring that all events are multisectoral and multistakeholder.

10. Regarding who would organize the masterclasses and what they would be, the secretariat said that, to the extent possible, specific experts, including local experts, would be invited to run the masterclasses ensuring that the content remains relevant, structured and impactful. Themes suggested for possible inclusion in the masterclasses were on how to calculate the costs of inaction, on fraud and corruption, addressing illegal trade in chemicals and highly hazardous pesticides.

11. One member requested timely publicizing of the events in order to reach a broad audience and to hold the master classes in hybrid format given that the number of attendees at the OEWG would be limited. The secretariat took note, adding that holding hybrid/online sessions would depend on the facilities available at the venue. Members requested provision of sufficient time for discussions on all issues, to have the opportunity to ask questions and engage in deeper exchanges. Another member suggested covering some issues through the Geneva Environment Network.

12. Members noted that the organization of discussions at the OEWG required sufficient time to address all key issues without compromising on the quality of the exchanges, including such issues as highly hazardous pesticides, issues of concern and measurability. That would allow for comprehensive discussions and full participation on all relevant matters, adjustments being made to accommodate breakout and contact groups. Members also noted the importance of effective mobilization of economic and industrial sectors, and discussions on the secretariat work programme and budget. Additionally, members requested a means to inform stakeholders on the differences between the GFC Fund, the Special Programme and the GEF in order to identify to which source of funding to address applications of projects. Emphasis was placed on preparing recommendations to facilitate discussions at the International Conference in 2026 and to ensure a good outcome to forward to the Conference.

13. The secretariat noted that there had been some communication and contact challenges in particular to reach colleagues in the Asia-Pacific region, where emails have bounced and contacts have been missing. To improve communication, there is a clear need for updated contact lists, as well as efforts to address the problems related to updating mailing lists and focal points.

14. The secretariat informed the Bureau of the IOMC Workshop to be held at the end of February organized jointly with the OECD focusing on the development of an implementation programme to engage economic and industry sectors. The workshop will address three main topics: the terms of reference for the implementation plan, which will provide a clear framework for moving forward with the programme; the identification of modules needed for an effective chemicals management system, crucial for ensuring that the system is both functional and sustainable; innovative solutions to accelerate the management of industrial and consumer chemicals, aiming to explore new approaches to tackle the challenges in this area. These discussions will be key to shaping the next steps in the implementation of the programme.

b. Provisional draft agenda for the OEWG (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/3)

15. The secretariat introduced the provisional draft agenda for the OEWG (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/3).

16. Members requested clarification on how the agenda items on capacity building and strategic engagement would be addressed. Further, it was agreed that the agenda item on the mobilization of economic and industrial sectors be integrated into agenda item 3a of the agenda on implementation programmes. No other comments were made on the provisional draft agenda for the OEWG.

c. Proposed list of documents (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/4)

17. The secretariat introduced the provisional list of documents for the OEWG (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/4) informing the Bureau of the schedule for their preparation. It was confirmed that working documents would be translated into the six languages of the United Nations and information documents would be in English only. Given the high cost of translation it was expected that the working documents would be 3 to 5 pages in length. The secretariat confirmed that additional information documents could be submitted for consideration by the OEWG.

18. It was expected to upload the documents onto the dedicated website by mid-May. Members requested that, if possible, draft documents be sent out prior to the seventh meeting of the Bureau.

d. Funding and budgetary status (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/5)

19. The secretariat introduced the funding and budgetary status (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/4), noting that the document was prepared following a request by the Western European and Others regional group. The aim of the document was to provide an explanation of estimated costs as well as raise the issue of sustainable financing for the secretariat. Members requested clarification on what was being done to cover the shortfall to organize the OEWG, funds allocated to funded participants and how much translation of documents cost. The secretariat noted that calculations were still underway and as more details became available an updated document will be shared with Bureau members.

5. Implementation of the Framework and ICCM5 Resolutions.

a. Resolution V/3: Financial considerations. Updates on the Global Framework of Chemicals Fund. Report and feedback on the launch of the first round of applications to the Fund. (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/6)

20. The secretariat introduced document GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/6 and noted a correction in the document, regarding the agreement on a proposed way forward by the Bureau (para. 5) which can be deleted as the document does not present any items on which to take action.

21. She said the fund was launched on 1 October 2024, with the deadline for the first round of applications set for 31 January 2025. As of 29 January, a total of 15 final applications were received, along with 8 drafts. The recurring themes across the applications included chemical management, highly hazardous pesticides, waste management, plastics, and textiles. A first screening of the applications will take place before they are submitted to the Executive Board, with decisions expected

between 19-21 March 2025. She said the process is crucial for ensuring that the most relevant and impactful proposals are selected for further consideration and funding.

22. The secretariat clarified that government endorsement for the applications should come through the national focal points. In response to a point raised on how to get more acceptance for labour focused applications it was suggested that national focal points should be encouraged to look beyond environment focused applications in the lessons learned following the first round of applications. This ties into a larger work package on increasing the representation of different sectors and ministries within the focal points.

b. Resolution V/9: Measurability structure (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/7)

23. The secretariat introduced document GFC/IC.1/Bureau.6/7 on the measurability structure noting that the Ad Hoc Group was making progress across several key areas. Workstream 1 focuses on reducing the number of indicators from over 300 to approximately 21, streamlining the process to ensure it was more focused and manageable. Workstream 2 has seen slow progress in assigning high-level indicators to UNEP and WHO, which remains a critical component of the initiative. Workstream 3 is dedicated to the preparation of a secretariat report, where comments are to be integrated, and during this process, gaps have been identified in the existing indicators. Efforts are now being directed toward developing new indicators, particularly in high-interest areas such as PFAS and highly hazardous pesticides.

24. Discussions are continuing on the evolution of these indicators, with attention being given to the role of the OEWG and the possible preparation of recommendations that will be submitted at the International Conference. The next meeting of the Ad Hoc Groups will be held on 12 February 2025, and it was suggested that a subsequent meeting could be convened in early June. If such was the case, the outcome of that meeting would be available in an information document in English only with an oral presentation during plenary at the OEWG.

25. In the ensuing discussion, the high number of indicators was noted suggesting a need to prioritize. It was further suggested that the OEWG should provide a clear direction on the work of the Ad Hoc Group and that there should be indicators to fill any existing gaps as well as for the targets.

6. Next meetings of the Bureau

26. The secretariat proposed to hold the seventh meeting of the Bureau, online, on 3 or 10 April 2025. Subsequently a preference was expressed for 3 April 2025.

7. Any other business

27. Mr. Bob Diderich (OECD) informed the meeting that there was no further update on the Highly Hazardous Pesticides Alliance.

28. The secretariat informed the Bureau on the change in venue for the OEWG from Nairobi to Punta del Este in Uruguay, back-to-back with the open-ended

working group to discuss the establishment of a science policy panel. The financing and budget for the OEWG in Punta del Este have been outlined, with cost estimates totalling \$1.3 million. The back-to-back organization is expected to have a saving of approximately \$300,000 mainly in travel costs and will also engender an overall reduced carbon footprint. Currently there is an estimated deficit of \$740,000. Key costs are the high costs for translation and interpretation services.

8. Closure of the meeting

29. The President thanked all Bureau members for their participation at the sixth Bureau meeting and closed the meeting at 16:00 CEST.

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Annex

Participants

Bureau Members: Mr. Santos Virgilio (Angola, Africa), Mr. Hammad Shamimi (Pakistan, Asia-Pacific, President), Ms. Magdalena Frydrych (Poland, Central and Eastern Europe), Ms. Vanessa Aliaga (Peru, Latin American and the Caribbean) and Mr. Audun Heggelund (Norway, Western Europe and Others). Mr. Heggelund was assisted by Ms. Jenny Skytte (Norway).

Regional Focal Points: Mr. Lamin Jaiteh (the Gambia for Africa), Ms. Itsuki Kuroda (Japan for Asia - Pacific), Mr. Napoleon Garcia (El Salvador for Latin America and the Caribbean), and Mr. Ivo de Zwaan (The Netherlands for Western Europe and Other Groups).

Representatives of non-governmental participants and the IOMC: Ms. Chrysanthi Sofokleous (International Council of Chemical Associations, industry), Ms. Sara Brosché (International Pollutants Elimination Network, public interest group), Mr. Bob Diderich (OECD, IOMC), Ms. Andrea Rother (School of Public Health, University of Cape Town, health) replaced Ms. Susan Wilburn and Mr. Liam O'Brien (Australian Council of Trade Unions, labour) replaced Mr. Rory O'Neill.

Regrets: Ms. Suzana Andonova (North Macedonia for Central and Eastern Europe), Ms. Susan Wilburn (Health Care Without Harm), Mr. Rory O'Neill (International Trade Union Confederation, labour).