UN environment programme | Global Framework on Chemicals

Guidelines for Focal points in support of national implementation

Global Framework on Chemicals

For a planet free of harm from chemicals and waste

2026

Introduction and purpose

The Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste (GFC) is a multisectoral and multi-stakeholder framework that supports strengthened collaboration, coordination and capacity for the safe and sustainable management of chemicals and waste[1]. The Framework brings together governments, the private sector, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, youth and academia to implement five strategic objectives and 28 targets.

These Guidelines were developed in response to Resolution V/7 of the framework which requested draft guidelines for National Focal Points (NFPs) for consideration by the Conference. They provide practical guidance on strengthening Focal Points' capacity; promoting and coordinating multisectoral and multistakeholder collaboration; and supporting risk communication, dissemination and awareness-raising. They are intended to support implementation in a practical, flexible and nationally adaptable manner, recognizing that countries have different institutional arrangements, capacities and resources.

Core functions of national focal points

Building on the Framework's provisions on national implementation, these Guidelines present possible focal point functions in six thematic areas to support prioritization and practical implementation (**Figure 1**). The functions may be undertaken progressively, according to national context, available resources and capacity.

FOUNDATIONAL

A. PARTICIPATING IN FRAMEWORK MEETINGS

- Facilitate preparation of national positions and priorities.
- Support participation in Framework meetings and negotiations.
- Represent national perspectives in regional and international processes.

B. COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION & AWARENESS-RAISING

- Communicate and promote the Framework's vision and objectives.
- Disseminate information across ministries and other stakeholders across sectors.
- Act as the central communication link nationally and regionally and with the secretariat.

C. MONITORING & REPORTING

- Facilitate monitoring of national implementation.
- Coordinate national reporting in line with the Framework's measurability structure.
- Encourage information-sharing and participatory approaches.

[1] United Nations Environment Programme, *Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste*, September 2023

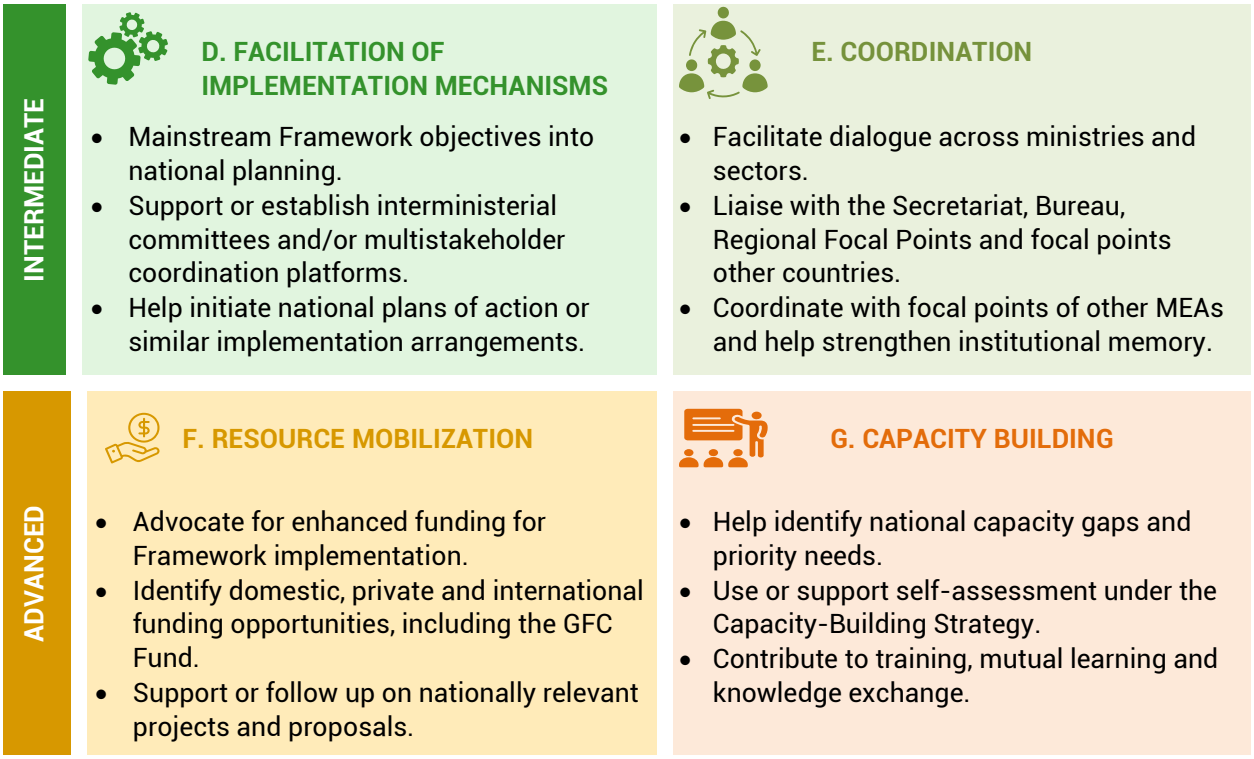


Figure 1: Core functions of national focal points

Note: The levels indicate possible starting points only; they do not rank functions or prescribe a sequence.

Alternate focal points

Where designated, Alternate Focal Points (AFPs)[2] support the National Focal Point by helping to ensure continuity, strengthen communication and coordination, and contribute technical input from relevant ministries, agencies or institutions. They may support the National Focal Point to:

- Coordinate sectoral input from ministries and agencies such as health, environment, labour, agriculture, industry and trade.
- Communicate sectoral priorities to the National Focal Point.
- Support integration of Framework objectives into sector policies, programmes and strategies.
- Participate in interministerial or multistakeholder platforms.
- Identify sectoral capacity gaps, funding needs, case studies and lessons learned.

[2] Alternate Focal Points are individuals or offices designated, where appropriate, from relevant ministries, agencies or institutions to support the National Focal Point and contribute technical input according to national arrangements.

Other focal points under the Framework

In addition to National and Alternate Focal Points, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and private sector organizations sector may designate focal points to strengthen communication, coordination and engagement with the Framework. **Figure 2** summarizes the indicative roles of these focal points.



Figure 2: Indicative roles of NGO, IGO and private sector focal points in supporting Framework implementation

Enabling Conditions and Secretariat Support

Effective implementation of the Framework depends not only on the actions of focal points, but also on the conditions that enable them to perform their functions. **Figure 3** summarizes key institutional and operational conditions that can support National Focal Points in coordinating, communicating and advancing implementation in a sustained and practical manner.



Figure 3: Key enabling conditions for effective implementation of the Framework

The Framework Secretariat may support focal points by:

- Sharing Framework updates, guidance, deadlines, information materials and tools.
- Facilitating communication, peer exchange, training and communities of practice.
- Supporting reporting and measurability processes, including templates and guidance.
- Providing information on funding opportunities and maintaining focal point databases.
- Supporting multilingual dissemination of key Framework information, subject to available resources.

Annex 1: Priority Action Roadmap

This roadmap provides practical approaches for applying the functions outlined in these Guidelines. It shows how National Focal Points may strengthen capacity, promote and coordinate multisectoral collaboration, support risk communication and awareness-raising, and move from planning to implementation in a nationally adaptable way. Activities should be selected and adapted according to national context, capacity and available resources.

How to use this roadmap

- Use the priority areas to prepare an annual workplan.
- Select only the actions relevant to national circumstances and available resources.
- Review progress periodically and update priorities with partners.

Key messages:

- Focal Points do not need to do everything at once. Countries may start with priority actions and build progressively based on needs.
- The roadmap is not a compliance checklist. It is a planning tool to help focal points move from orientation to implementation in a manageable way.

Activity	Key actors	Practical approach
A. Participation in regional and international Framework meetings		
Outcome: Strengthened national representation in international decision-making, with improved alignment of global and regional outcomes and national implementation of the Framework.		
Prepare national positions, needs and priorities ahead of Framework meetings.	NFP, relevant ministries, AFPs, stakeholders, MEA focal points	Consult relevant ministries and stakeholders. Where possible, use existing coordination mechanisms to agree priorities and messages.
Coordinate with Regional Focal Points, other National Focal Points and relevant MEA focal points on regional or shared priorities.	NFP, RFPs, other NFPs, MEA focal points	Exchange information by email, regional calls or coordination meetings. Identify common priorities and opportunities to align messages.

Activity	Key actors	Practical approach
Represent national perspectives in Framework meetings or identify and brief an alternate where participation is not feasible.	NFP, alternates, AFPs, relevant ministries	Prepare speaking points or a short briefing note. Where an alternate participates, brief them in advance and agree how outcomes will be shared.
 **B. Communication, dissemination and awareness-raising**		
Outcome: Enhanced awareness and involvement of all relevant stakeholders and sectors in implementation across the life cycle of chemicals at the local, national, regional, and global levels.		
Communicate the aims and strategic objectives of the Framework across government.	NFP, ministries, AFPs, Secretariat	Use existing government channels, interministerial mechanisms, websites, newsletters, emails and meetings. Adapt messages for different audiences.
Brief relevant ministries and stakeholders on Framework meeting outcomes, guidance and opportunities.	NFP, ministries, stakeholders, AFPs	Share short summaries of key outcomes, decisions, deadlines and follow-up actions. Highlight what is relevant for each audience.
Disseminate information on the Global Framework on Chemicals Fund, especially new funding rounds.	NFP, Secretariat, Executive Board, ministries, stakeholders	Circulate calls, eligibility information, guidance and deadlines early. Encourage relevant actors to coordinate on proposals.
Promote risk communication and awareness-raising on chemicals and waste management.	NFP, health and environment authorities, stakeholders, civil society, industry, academia	Develop clear messages on chemicals and waste risks, prevention measures, national priorities and actions underway. Adapt messages for policymakers, technical officers, industry, civil society and communities.
 **C. Monitoring and reporting**		
Outcome: The monitoring and reporting of progress and impact in national implementation contributes to the monitoring of progress and achievement towards the Framework's vision.		
Keep track of the Framework's measurability structure and reporting requirements.	NFP, Secretariat, ministries, data institutions	Follow Secretariat updates, reporting guidance and templates. Share requirements early with relevant ministries and institutions.
Identify existing national data, indicators and responsible institutions related to chemicals and waste management.	NFP, ministries, AFPs, data institutions, stakeholders	Map available data sources, responsible institutions and reporting processes. Identify gaps, duplication and links with existing systems.

Activity	Key actors	Practical approach
Facilitate monitoring and reporting on national implementation.	NFP, ministries, AFPs, stakeholders, Secretariat	Request inputs early, set internal deadlines, consolidate responses, check consistency and submit reports using Secretariat templates.
D. Facilitation of national implementation mechanisms		
Outcome: National implementation mechanisms are in place to support and achieve the safe and sustainable management of chemicals throughout their life cycle.		
Review existing national policies, legislation and institutional arrangements relevant to the Framework.	NFP, ministries, AFPs, MEA focal points, experts	Map existing policies, laws, plans and coordination mechanisms. Identify alignment, gaps, overlaps and opportunities for mainstreaming.
Support the establishment or strengthening of an interministerial committee, equivalent mechanism or multistakeholder platform.	NFP, ministries, AFPs, stakeholders, rightsholders	Build on existing structures where possible. Define purpose, participants, roles and a simple follow-up process.
Help develop national strategies, work plans or plans of action for Framework implementation.	NFP, ministries, AFPs, stakeholders, experts	Facilitate consultations, circulate drafts for input and identify priority actions, responsibilities and resource needs.
E. Coordination		
Outcome: Implementation is enhanced and follows a multisectoral and multi-stakeholder approach, through strengthened collaboration and coordination among stakeholders		
Maintain contact with officials whose mandates relate to chemicals and waste management.	NFP, relevant ministries, AFPs	Identify relevant institutions and working-level contacts. Keep a simple contact list and update it when officials change.
Coordinate with the Secretariat, Bureau, Regional Focal Points and other National Focal Points.	NFP, Secretariat, Bureau, RFPs, other NFPs	Introduce yourself after designation, join regional exchanges, share relevant national updates and request support when needed.
Coordinate with focal points of relevant MEAs and related processes to promote synergies.	NFP, MEA focal points, ministries, AFPs	Identify relevant MEA focal points. Exchange updates, avoid duplication, align messages and explore joint activities.
F. Resource mobilization		

Activity	Key actors	Practical approach
Outcome: Enhanced implementation occurs through increased and effective resource mobilization		
Identify existing financial flows, funding gaps and resource needs for Framework implementation.	NFP, ministries, finance actors, stakeholders	Review existing budgets, projects and planned activities related to chemicals and waste. Share key gaps with relevant ministries.
Explore domestic and external financing options for Framework implementation.	NFP, ministries, finance/planning authorities, implementing partners, Secretariat, development partners	Consider domestic financing options, including national budget processes, cost-recovery approaches and integration into development plans, as well as external sources such as the GFC Fund, GEF, Special Programme, bilateral and multilateral support.
Support or facilitate project proposals for national implementation, including to the Framework Fund.	NFP, ministries, stakeholders, implementing partners, Secretariat	Check that proposals reflect national priorities, involve relevant actors and define roles clearly. Support consultation and endorsement where required.
Follow up on approved Framework Fund projects in the country.	NFP, implementing partners, Secretariat, Executive Board, stakeholders	Stay informed during preparation and implementation. Engage with implementing partners and help share project outcomes nationally.
 **G. Capacity building**		
Outcome: Enhanced implementation occurs through increased and effective capacity-building		
Familiarize yourself with the Capacity-Building and Technology Transfer Strategy and share it with relevant actors.	NFP, Secretariat, ministries, AFPs, stakeholders	Share the Strategy through coordination mechanisms, emails, meetings and workshops. Highlight sections relevant to national priorities.
Assess national capacity strengths, gaps and priority needs.	NFP, ministries, AFPs, stakeholders, experts	Use the voluntary self-assessment tool. Consult relevant actors, identify urgent gaps and use results to guide planning and requests for support.
Support training, expert engagement and capacity-building initiatives.	NFP, Secretariat, RFPs, ministries, experts, stakeholders	Share training opportunities, identify experts or institutions, and coordinate support with the Secretariat, RFPs and partners.

Annex 2: Illustrative Country Practice Examples:

Japan: Developing a National Plan of Action through Interministerial Coordination and Multistakeholder Dialogue

To implement the Global Framework on Chemicals, governments are encouraged to establish arrangements such as national plans of action for implementation on an interministerial basis, in consultation with stakeholders, so that all relevant interests are represented and substantive areas addressed (Framework, VI).

To respond to this guidance, the Ministry of the Environment was designated as the agency to host the NFP for the Framework in Japan. The functions and responsibilities of the NFP are effectively fulfilled through the collaborative efforts of a team of colleagues within the Ministry of the Environment. In this role, the Ministry has facilitated communication and coordination at the national level, developed mechanisms for interministerial collaboration, and ensured that a range of stakeholders are engaged throughout the process.

In April 2024, the Ministry established an inter-ministerial GFC Liaison Committee to prepare a National Plan of Action for Framework implementation. Such inter-ministerial coordination is commonly organized in various cases in Japanese government to strengthen cooperative relationships among different ministries. The Committee brought together more than 30 officials from nine ministries responsible for chemicals and waste management, with the Ministry of the Environment serving as the chair. Meetings were held quarterly to organize the actions of each ministry and agency in relation to the Framework.

At the first meeting, the Ministry provided a briefing on the Framework and presented a concept note for the national plan. Over the following three months, it conducted interviews with Committee members to elaborate their policies and activities. A total of 63 items were identified and categorized under each Framework target. This list was approved at the second meeting in September 2024, and drafting of the plan began immediately. The Ministry, with support from the Secretariat, prepared the draft over the next three months, presenting the first version in December 2024 and requesting cooperation in proofreading. The finalized draft was published for public comment in February 2025 and received 645 comments.

In parallel, the Ministry organized a Policy Dialogue on Chemicals and the Environment, a forum for citizens, workers, businesses, finance, governments, and academia. At two sessions in 2024, participants discussed the Framework and consolidated their efforts in line with its strategic objectives. The outcomes of these dialogues were incorporated into the National Plan of Action.

Through this inclusive and coordinated process, Japan successfully finalized its National Plan of Action for Framework implementation, demonstrating how a NFP can lead interministerial and multi-stakeholder collaboration to translate the Framework's strategic objectives into concrete national action.

United Republic of Tanzania: Using Existing Legal and Institutional Mechanisms for Multisectoral Coordination

In the United Republic of Tanzania, the National Focal Point for the Global Framework on Chemicals sits within the Ministry of Health, at the Government Chemist Laboratory Authority. National responsibilities for chemicals management are guided by the Industrial and Consumer Chemicals (Management and Control) Act, 2003, which establishes the national system for chemicals oversight and includes provisions that enable multisectoral engagement.

The Act provides for a Technical Committee with representatives from health authorities, environment, industry, the Occupational Safety and Health Authority under the Ministry of Labour, academia, legal services, customs, the pesticide registrar, and the food and drug authority. This structure ensures that chemical issues are examined from multisectoral and multistakeholder perspectives and that decisions draw on the combined expertise of all relevant bodies.

Given the Authority's mandate for registration, risk management, compliance, and emergency response, engagement with different ministries and agencies is part of routine national practice. These interactions help ensure that chemical risks are managed in line with the responsibilities of the various authorities involved.

This coordinated national structure strengthens the country's engagement with the Global Framework on Chemicals. The National Focal Point uses existing coordination mechanisms to share updates from global processes, raise awareness of emerging issues, and identify national priorities across sectors. Tanzania's

Canada: Building on an Established Chemicals Management Programme to Support Framework Implementation

Canada's GFC NFP is the Director General of Health Canada's Safe Environments Directorate, and also a co-lead for Canada's Chemicals Management Plan (CMP). Launched in 2006 following the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), the CMP is Canada's primary response to delivering on the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) "2020 goal"[1] to achieve the global sound management of chemicals and waste. The CMP is the joint responsibility of Canada's health and environment ministries. It helps protect human health and the environment through a risk-based approach to assessing and managing risks from chemicals in everyday items, including food, consumer products, cosmetics, drugs, drinking water and industrial releases. It does so by using the most appropriate tools from a broad suite of federal laws, primarily the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA), as well as pesticide, consumer product, and food and drug laws, among others. This "Best Placed Act" approach promotes coordination between ministries and ensures that risks are managed using the best tools under one comprehensive program.

International and domestic developments (such as on human rights, Indigenous engagement, gender equity) have continued to inform the evolution of the CMP. In 2023, CEPA was modernized to engage more effectively with, and protect, populations disproportionately impacted by toxic substances, and to advance reconciliation by affirming the role of Indigenous knowledge in decision-making, consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. For the first time in federal law, CEPA also now recognizes that every individual in Canada has the right to a healthy environment. To implement these amendments, Canada recently released the Implementation Framework for the Right to a Healthy Environment under CEPA and the Plan of Priorities.

In line with best practice, the work of the CMP is founded on broad engagement and coordination among federal departments and a wide range of stakeholders and partners. Public outreach networks are essential to delivering on the CMP's core functions and for ensuring meaningful participation in decision-making. Additionally, Canada plans to strengthen engagement, communication and collaboration further under the modernized CEPA. The GFC NFP role reflects these practices by disseminating key updates, meeting outcomes and action items, flagging opportunities, and soliciting input within a multisectoral Interdepartmental Working Group.

Health Canada, which hosts the NFP, has found success by leveraging and building on its strong, multisectoral CMP foundation, collaborating with environment, labour and other partners to champion international cooperation in chemicals management. This includes long-standing partnerships with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on innovative risk assessment and risk management approaches, with the World Health Organization (WHO) on strengthening health sector engagement[2], and active participation in key multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and initiatives. In support of GFC implementation and in line with our modernized legislation, Canada will continue to promote the linkages between the GFC and other international frameworks such as the MEAs[3], the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the chemicals dimensions of the International Health Regulations, and more, to ensure the sound management of chemicals and waste to protect human health and environmental sustainability.

[1] Subsequently adopted as SAICM's ultimate goal and as target 12.4 of the SDGs, respectively.
[2] By championing WHO chemicals resolutions such as 69.4 and 76.17, the WHO Chemicals Road Map, the WHO Global Chemicals and Health Network, and as a WHO Collaborating Centre on Environmental Health.
[3] E.g., Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm; Minamata; Convention on Biological Diversity; etc.


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