
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 update from the secretariat on work undertaken in the period between the first and second sessions, budget and expenditure and the provisional workplan

Note by the secretariat

The annex to the present note contains a draft update from the secretariat on work undertaken in the period between the first and second sessions, budget and expenditure and the provisional workplan for the second ad hoc open-ended working group (OEWG 2) for the science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution. The annex is an advance edited version.

Update from the secretariat on work undertaken in the period between the first and second sessions, budget and expenditure and the provisional workplan

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. In paragraph 12 of the resolution, the Assembly invited Governments and others in a position to do so to provide extrabudgetary resources for the implementation of the resolution, in particular to enable the full participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the ad hoc open-ended working group. Furthermore, in paragraph 13, it requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to provide a secretariat for the working group and to prepare the analytical and summary reports necessary for the group's work.
3. The ad hoc open-ended working group agreed at its resumed first session that as the working group process was extrabudgetary, the budget should not be negotiated in detail and that the secretariat would be entrusted with updating it on the basis of the future activities decided on by the working group and would present an updated budget, including expenditures to date, to the ad hoc open-ended working group at its next session.
4. Section II of the present document provides an update on the work undertaken by the secretariat since the resumed first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group, held in Bangkok from 30 January to 3 February 2023. Section III presents the current status of contributions and pledges pursuant to paragraph 12 of resolution 5/8, as well as the 2023–2024 budget and expenditures incurred since the start of the working group process, while section IV presents a provisional timetable and workplan for the working group.

II. Work undertaken by the secretariat during the intersessional period

5. In the lead-up to the second session of the ad hoc open-ended working group, the secretariat worked in close coordination with the Bureau, having held seven Bureau meetings dedicated to intersessional work since the working group's resumed first session. All Bureau meeting documents and summaries of the meetings are available at the Bureau meetings webpage.¹
6. The Bureau agreed to convene regional meetings to undertake strategic discussions to prepare for the second session of the working group, scheduled to be held in Amman from 11 to 15 December 2023. The following regional meetings were planned:
 - (a) Asia Pacific Regional Meeting, held in Bangkok on 7 September 2023 (hybrid format);²
 - (b) Africa Regional Meeting, held in Nairobi on 14 September 2023 (in person);³
 - (c) Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) Regional Meeting, held in Brasília on 7 October 2023 (in person);⁴

¹ <https://www.unep.org/oewg-spp-chemicals-waste-pollution/bureau/bureau-meetings>.

² Meeting information available at: <https://www.unep.org/events/working-group-meeting/asia-pacific-regional-meeting-2nd-oewg-science-policy-panel-chemicals>.

³ Meeting information available at: <https://www.unep.org/events/working-group-meeting/africa-regional-meeting-2nd-oewg-science-policy-panel-chemicals-waste>.

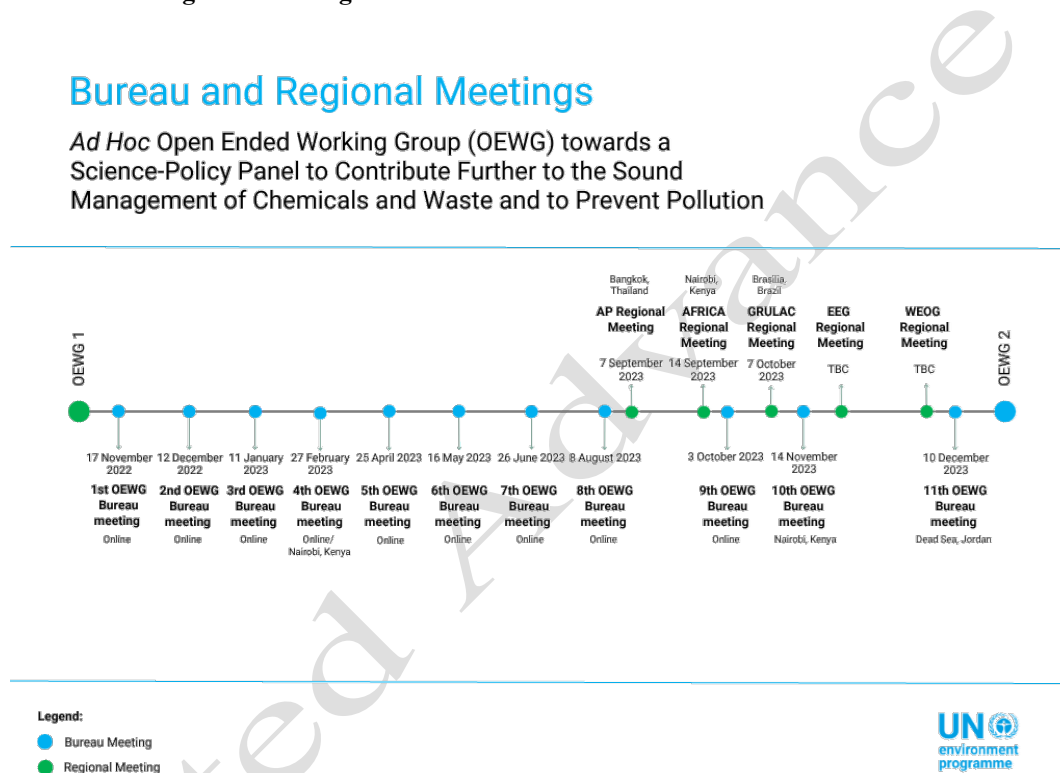
⁴ Meeting information available at: <https://www.unep.org/events/working-group-meeting/lac-regional-meeting-2nd-oewg-science-policy-panel-chemicals-waste-and>.

(d) Western Europe and Other Group Regional Briefing, held over two sessions on 8 and 9 November 2023 (online)⁵; and

(e) Eastern European Regional Briefing, held on 21 November 2023 (online)⁶.

7. Figure I provides a graphical representation of the Bureau meetings and regional meetings held during the intersessional process leading up to the second session.

Figure I
Bureau and Regional Meetings



8. In the period since the resumed first session, the secretariat and the Geneva Environment Network have co-organized a series of webinars and side events to inform the open-ended working group process and engage with a wide range of stakeholders. The following events are expected to have taken place in advance of the working group's second session:

(a) A webinar entitled "Road to OEWG 2 Series: Developing Operating Principles of the Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution Prevention,"⁷ was held on 26 April 2023. The secretariat presented a background document on operating principles of other science-policy panels. Member States and accredited non-government stakeholders were invited to submit inputs on the draft operating principles to be considered at the second session. The written submissions are accessible online;⁸

(b) A side event entitled "Road to OEWG 2 Series: Building the Linkages from Science to Action,"⁹ was held during the 2023 Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm

⁵ Meeting information available at: <https://www.unep.org/events/working-group-meeting/weog-regional-meeting-2nd-oewg-science-policy-panel-chemicals-waste>

⁶ Meeting information available at : <https://www.unep.org/events/working-group-meeting/eeg-regional-meeting-2nd-oewg-science-policy-panel-chemicals-waste-and>

⁷ <https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/resources/updates/road-to-oewg-2-science-policy-panel-to-contribute-further-to-the-sound-management-of-chemicals-and-waste-and-to-prevent-pollution-spp-cwp-webinar-series/>.

⁸ <https://www.unep.org/operating-principles>.

⁹ <https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/science-policy-panel-on-chemicals-waste-and-pollution-prevention-building-the-linkages-from-science-to-action-brs-cops-2023-side-event/>.

Conventions on 2 May 2023. Reference is made to the Conferences' decision¹⁰ to strengthen their mandate for international cooperation with other organizations in support of the resolution recently adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly to establish a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and prevent pollution;

(c) A World Health Assembly side event entitled "The Impact of Chemicals, Waste and Pollution on Human Health"¹¹ was held in Geneva on 25 May 2023. Reference is made to the meeting of the seventy-sixth World Health Assembly, which called upon the Member States to engage in Environment Assembly decision 5/8 to prepare proposals for the science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and prevent pollution;

(d) A World Resources Forum side event entitled "Road to OEWG 2 Series: Linking Science and Action Using a Life-Cycle Approach,"¹² was held in Geneva on 6 September 2023;

(e) A webinar on options of engagement and participation modalities for major groups and stakeholders to the open-ended working group was held on 13 September 2023;

(f) A side event entitled "From Science to Action: Connecting the Science-Policy Panel and the Beyond 2020 Framework" was held during the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management in Bonn on 27 September 2023 in conjunction with; it was co-organized by the secretariat of the open-ended working group and the secretariat of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM);

(g) A side event entitled "Road to OEWG 2 Webinar Series: Building the Linkages from Science to Action"¹³ was held in Geneva on 9 October 2023 in conjunction with the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury;

(h) Two additional webinars were being organized on the themes of "conflicts of interest" and "institutional arrangements and rules of procedures," and were tentatively scheduled to be held on 18 October 2023 and 8 November 2023 respectively; and

(i) Finally, a webinar to close the Road to OEWG-2 Series will be held on 22 November 2023 just prior to the working group's second session.

9. At the resumed first session of the open-ended working group,¹⁴ Member States requested the secretariat to solicit input from Member States and relevant stakeholders regarding the **needs and questions** the panel may handle in order to inform negotiations through the open-ended working group process at the second and third sessions. Member States and non-governmental stakeholders were invited to submit inputs on the needs and questions that the panel might handle for consideration at the second session.

10. At the resumed first session, Member States also requested the secretariat to prepare a mapping of capacity-building in the chemicals, waste and pollution space. Accordingly, the secretariat solicited submissions from multilateral environmental agreements and United Nations organizations on their capacity-building activities in the sound management of chemicals and waste and pollution prevention in order to inform the working group's second session. A webinar on the preliminary findings of the call for submissions on capacity-building was being considered.

III. Contributions and pledges, and 2023–2024 budget and expenditures

11. **Contributions to date.** As at 30 September 2023, UNEP had received financial contributions and pledges in the amount of \$4,905,845, as shown in table 1.

¹⁰

<https://www.brsmeas.org/Decisionmaking/COPsandExCOPs/20212022COPs/Overview/tabid/8395/language/en-US/>.

¹¹ <https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/the-impact-of-chemicals-waste-and-pollution-on-human-health/>.

¹² <https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/science-policy-panel-on-chemicals-waste-and-pollution-prevention-linking-science-and-action-using-a-life-cycle-approach-wrf2023-lab-road-to-oewg-2-series/>.

¹³ <https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/science-policy-panel-on-chemicals-waste-and-pollution-prevention-building-the-linkages-from-science-to-action-minamata-cop-5-side-event-road-to-oewg-2-series/>.

¹⁴ Meeting information available at: <https://www.unep.org/oewg1.2-ssp-chemicals-waste-pollution>.

Table 1
Contributions and pledges received as at 30 September 2023
 (United States dollars)

<i>Contributor</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>Total</i>
Switzerland	809,234	445,545	445,545	1,700,324
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland		327,360	-	327,360
France		158,395	285,330	443,725
Germany		196,514		196,514
Norway		140,890	649,879	790,769
European Commission			620,040	620,040
The Netherlands			212,025	212,025
Japan			136,986	136,986
USA			128,713	128,713
Belgium			63,762	63,762
Finland			10,627	10,627
				-
				-
				-
UNEP Environment Fund		275,000		275,000
Total Income ^a	809,234	1,543,704	2,552,907	4,905,845

a These figures are net of the 1 per cent coordination levy (where applicable) but include the programme support costs (13 per cent where applicable) applied to all extrabudgetary contributions to the Organization.

12. **Budget.** Table 2 shows a breakdown of the incurred costs as well as budgeted costs, which cover the hosting of three sessions of the working group, as well as expenditures incurred since the start of the working group process.

13. **Sponsored travel.** The proposed budget also includes financial support for the participation of eligible countries in regional meetings and in the working group's second and third sessions and, subject to the availability of funding, for the participation of major groups and stakeholders, in accordance with the established practice at the United Nations Environment Assembly. It is noted that the current budget for regional meetings and for the working group's third session in 2024 is higher than the indicative budget provided at the first session (see UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/6) due to higher air travel costs of in-person meetings and to confirmations of meeting venues.

14. **Venue and conference services.** The figures presented for the meeting venue and associated conference services costs are based on the assumption that all sessions must be funded from secured funding. Those figures may be lower if Member States offer to host one or more of the meetings.

15. **Hosting of the third session.** A formal offer to host the third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group from 17 to 21 June 2024 has been received from Switzerland.

Table 2
Proposed budget and expenditure for the ad hoc open-ended working group process

			<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>
<i>Cost category</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Subcategory</i>	<i>expenditure</i>	<i>budget</i>	<i>expenditure*</i>	<i>budget</i>
Secretariat staff and travel						
Personnel	1100	Secretariat staff	230,247	636,881	232,178	668,745
	1200	Consultants	249,935	280,841	280,776	286,958
	1300	Secretariat support staff	-	-	-	-
Travel	1600	Travel	88,507	167,000	104,809	158,000

			2022	2023	2023	2024
Cost category	Code	Subcategory	expenditure	budget	expenditure*	budget
	1999	Subtotal	568,689	1,084,722	617,763	1,113,703
Meetings and Trainings						
Meetings and conferences	3100	Virtual platforms		100,000		100,000
		Regional meetings (Conference services and travel)***		242,351	20,153	242,351
		Bureau meetings		25,000		25,000
		Webinars		50,000		50,000
		OEWG 1-1 NBO	87,705	-	-	-
		OEWG 1-2 BKK	97,961	1,123,000	907,185	-
		OEWG 2 Jordan	-	1,129,317	1,129,317	-
		OEWG 3 GVA**	-	-	-	1,620,000
	3999	Subtotal	185,666	2,669,668	2,056,655	2,037,351
Premises and other						
Fixed operating costs	4100	Operational Costs for Secretariat Staff ****	-	-	8,381	38,000
	4999	Subtotal	-	-	8,381	38,000
		Total	754,355	3,754,390	2,682,799	3,189,054
	5999	Programme Indirect Support Cost	61,517	453,302	313,995	414,577
		Total General	815,872	4,207,692	2,996,794	3,603,631

Abbreviations: ENB – Earth Negotiations Bulletin; ESCAP – Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; PSC – programme support costs; UNON – United Nations Office at Nairobi.

a Placeholder in case stand-alone regional meetings are requested in 2024.

b Subject to change, depending on the conference services requirements for the third session.

c Subject to change, based on the meeting venue requirements for the third session.

16. As can be seen from the information presented in tables 1 and 2, the current level of financial support to the secretariat of the ad hoc open-ended working group received to date, is not sufficient to ensure conclusion of the ad hoc open-ended working group. Based on a review of the costs for the ad hoc open-ended working group process, approximately \$3.74 million will need to be mobilised (Table 3).

Table 3
Summary of income and expenditures/budget

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Income carry over	-	809,234	1,537,066	(117,719)
Income secured during the year	809,234	1,543,704	2,552,907	?
Expenditures/budget	-	815,872	4,207,692	3,603,631
Income/Expenditures	809,234	1,537,066	(117,719)	(3,721,350)

Secretariat costs. The cost of secretariat operations, consultations and future sessions will therefore require additional resources if the open-ended working group is to succeed in establishing proposals for the panel and fulfilling its mandate by the end of 2024.

17. **Request for contributions.** Member States are invited to provide suggestions for how the process can continue and to work with the secretariat to secure the additional funding needed to conclude the open-ended working group process within the ambitious time frame set out in Environment Assembly resolution 5/8.

IV. Provisional timetable and programme of work of the ad hoc open-ended working group

Workplan. In its resolution 5/8, the Environment Assembly set out the ambition for the open-ended working group to complete its work by the end of 2024 (para. 4) and also requested the Executive Director, upon completion of proposals prepared by the working group, to convene an intergovernmental meeting for the purpose of considering the establishment of a science-policy panel (para. 10). The provisional timetable and programme of work for the establishment of the science policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste to prevent pollution is presented in Annex 1.

18. Proposal for a way forward. The open-ended working group may wish to:

- (a) Review the budget and expenditures of the open-ended working group process since its inception and welcome any pledges to support the remainder of the process;
- (b) Discuss and agree on the preparation of proposals for the establishment of the panel, including the development of relevant resolutions.

Annex

Provisional timetable and programme of work for the establishment of the science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution¹

<i>Draft elements of a proposal to establish a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution</i>	<i>Proposal development process</i>	
	<i>OEWG 2</i>	<i>OEWG 3</i>
Objectives, principal functions and operating principles		
	Documents to be prepared for the meeting	Documents to be prepared for the meeting
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(b) Name and scope of the panel;</i>	Continue scope discussion	Propose name
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(c) Principal functions of the panel;</i>	Prepare mapping of capacity building in chemicals waste and pollution space	
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(j) Rules of procedure</i>	working document on examples Building on INF7 including options of an outline of the ROPs	
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(j) operating principles governing the work of the Panel</i>	Working document on examples of operating principals Working document consolidated by the Secretariat containing information from the relevant section of the meeting report Written submission from member states and relevant stakeholders	Draft text → Final text
Member States and stakeholder input on needs and questions the Panel may handle		
Institutional design and governance		
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(a) Institutional design and governance of the panel</i>	Working document on examples Building on INF5 including proposals prepared by the secretariat of the institutional design and governance Webinars followed by informal consultations / brainstorming	Draft text → Final text
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(h) Arrangements for secretariat support for the panel</i>	Working document on examples Including proposals prepared by the secretariat	Draft text → Final text
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(k) An indicative budget for the panel</i>	Working document including examples on 5(i)	Working document on 5(k)
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(i) Options for voluntary financing of the work of the panel</i>		
Possible Annexes		
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(d) Relationships of the panel with relevant key stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental organizations, and civil society,</i>	Working document on examples Webinars followed by informal consultations /brainstorming	Draft text → Final text

¹ Reproduced from [UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/7](#) (appendix to annex III).

<i>Draft elements of a proposal to establish a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution</i>	<i>Proposal development process</i>	
	<i>OEWG 2</i>	<i>OEWG 3</i>
Objectives, principal functions and operating principles		
	Documents to be prepared for the meeting	Documents to be prepared for the meeting
	This could include consideration of those organizations and entities listed in INF/4	
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(e) Processes for determining and executing the work programme of the panel;</i>	Working document on examples	Draft text → Final text
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(f) Arrangements for identifying and engaging with experts to contribute to the work of the panel;</i>	Working document on examples	Draft text → Final text
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(g) Procedures for the review and adoption of reports and assessments produced by the panel;</i>	Working document on examples	Draft text → Final text
<i>Resolution 5/8 para 5(l) Any other matters that the ad hoc open-ended working group believes should be addressed;</i>		
Non exhaustive list of items for future work		
Horizon scanning procedures		
Policy for safeguarding commercially sensitive information		
Communications strategy		
Indicative budget for the pane		
Gender policy and implementation plan		