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Global Framework on Chemicals – for a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste

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Open-ended Working Group of the Global Framework on Chemicals – for a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste
First meeting
Punta del Este, Uruguay, 24–27 June 2025
Item 2 (c) of the provisional agenda*
Organizational matters:
Organization of work *

Scenario note for the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the International Conference on the Global Framework on Chemicals

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management was held in September 2023 in Bonn, Germany. The Conference adopted the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste; the Bonn Declaration for a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste; and a set of resolutions required for the implementation of the Framework.

2. The Framework, with its vision of a planet free of harm from chemicals and waste for a safe, healthy and sustainable future, has five strategic objectives and 28 action-oriented targets. It is hailed as a key international framework instrument to mobilize all those required to implement the safe and sustainable management of chemicals and waste.

3. The Framework is unique in that representatives from government, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, youth and academia all participate on an equal footing thereby ensuring its true multi-stakeholder nature. Encompassing broad stakeholder involvement across the life cycle of chemicals, the Framework emphasizes collaboration across health, labor,

* UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/1

environment, trade and agriculture in addition to high impact economic and industry sectors and financial sectors.

4. This scenario note, which has been prepared in consultation with members of the Bureau of the International Conference, sets out a proposal for the conduct and expected outcomes of the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Global Framework on Chemicals. It is intended to be read together with the tentative schedule of work for the meeting agreed on by the Bureau[1] and attached to the present note as annex 1. Annex 2 contains a list of working and information documents for the Open-ended Working Group.

II. Purpose of first Open-ended Working Group

5. The Open-ended Working Group is being convened pursuant to resolution II/6[2], by which the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, held in Geneva in May 2009, decided to establish an Open-ended Working Group as a subsidiary body that would meet prior to sessions of the Conference. That decision was confirmed by resolution III/5 of the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management held in Nairobi in September 2012.

6. The Open-ended Working Group will ensure the comprehensive and effective preparation of the sessions of the International Conference based on the mandate provided in operative paragraph 2 of resolution II/6. The Global Framework on Chemicals is the successor framework instrument to the Strategic Approach on International Chemicals Management.

7. This first meeting will allow all participants to consider the progress achieved since the adoption of the Global Framework on Chemicals to date. This will include: (i) providing guidance on future activities to be started, continued and/or concluded ahead of the International Conference tentatively scheduled for late 2026; (ii) highlighting concerns and gaps with a view to proposing solutions; and (iii) encouraging engagement and action by all stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of the Framework. In addition, there will be opportunities for learning, knowledge sharing and exchanging views on the implementation challenges to allow for collaborative resolution.

[1] Tentative Schedule of Work
https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/47394/UNEP_GFC_OEWG_1_INF_1.pdf?sequence=3
[2] Resolution II/6 of the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management
As found in the report of the meeting at https://www.chemicalsframework.org/events/second-session-international-conference-chemicals-management-iccm2/documents

III. Organizational matters

A. Rules of procedure

8. The first Open-ended Working Group will apply the Rules of Procedure[3] adopted at the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM 2) in Geneva in May 2009 mutatis mutandis.

B. Meeting Agenda

9. The provisional agenda for the meeting is set out in document UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/1 and proposes a list of the items for consideration by participants of the Open-ended Working Group.

C. Organization of work

10. An overview of the organization of work for the session is set out in Annex 1 of the present note as well as here.

11. The first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group will open at 10:00 am on Tuesday, 24 June 2025 and close by 6:00 pm on Friday, 27 June 2025. There will be provision for informal regional and stakeholder consultations on the afternoon of Monday 23 June 2025 in addition to two technical briefings on: (i) the Global Framework on Chemicals Fund from 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm and (ii) Measurability and indicators from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm on Monday 23 June.

12. Each morning from 8:00 am to 9:00 am the Bureau will meet to agree on the order of business for the day and any other matters. Regional and sectoral groups will have the opportunity to meet from 9:00 am to 10:00 am from Tuesday 24 June 2025 except for Thursday 26 June 2025. The respective Bureau members are encouraged to facilitate the dissemination of information on the order of business for each day to their regional and sectoral groups. Interpretation will not be provided for such meetings.

13. Where possible, the work of the Open-ended Working Group has been organized under the themes of the strategic objectives of the Framework with agenda items and activities relating to strategic objective A being addressed on Tuesday 24 June 2025, strategic objective B and C on Wednesday 25 June 2025 and strategic objective E on Friday 27 June 2025. On Thursday 26 June 2025 there will be an interactive multistakeholder day targeted at addressing strategic objective D.

14. The Open-ended Working Group will be conducted in plenary sessions. There will be up to two plenary sessions, with simultaneous interpretation, per day which should allow sufficient time for discussions. There is no provision for evening meetings of the plenary.

[3] Resolution II/1 of the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management
As found in the report of the meeting at https://www.chemicalsframework.org/events/second-session-international-conference-chemicals-management-iccm2/documents

15. Contact groups and informal groups will be established as needed and will be provided with clear and concise mandates. At present, it is foreseen that three contact groups may be established: one on Implementation Arrangements; one on Emerging Policy Issues and Issues of Concern; and one on the Programme of work, staffing and budget.

16. The meetings will be paperless and pre-session documents will be available on the website for the meetings.[4] Participants are expected to bring their own laptop computers or other devices to access the documents. Technical support will be available on site.

D. Opening Plenary

17. On Tuesday 24 June 2025 at 10:00 am, the President of the Bureau of the International Conference, or their alternate, will open the meeting. At the first session of the plenary, under agenda item 2 Organizational Matters: Adoption of the agenda, the Open-ended Working Group is expected to adopt the agenda for the meeting as set out in document UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/1. An annotated provisional agenda UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/1/Add.1 is available on the meeting website.

18. Also under agenda item 2 Organizational matters: Election of officers, the Open-ended Working Group is expected to elect two co-chairs.

19. At the first plenary meeting, under agenda item 1 (opening of the meeting) participants of the Open-ended Working Group will hear opening statements by the President of the Global Framework on Chemicals, or their alternate, and a representative of the United Nations Environment Programme.

20.

21. After the opening session, participants will consider the proposed organization of the work (item 2 (c)) as outlined in the tentative schedule of work and present scenario. The secretariat will introduce item 3 of the provisional agenda, the Global Framework on Chemicals and its sub-items. Participants will be asked to consider the items in the following order: 3(a), 3(c), 4, 3 (d), and 5 to allow for the ability to establish contact or break-out groups.

22. Participants will first consider item 3 (a) Implementation arrangements and the progress made to develop proposals for Implementation Programmes, including Terms of Reference, work plans and other mechanisms, in addition to other activities. The Open-ended Working Group may wish to establish a contact group to consider this item further to progress proposals.

23. Following this discussion, there will be an opportunity to hear the advances made under item 3 (c) the Global Framework on Chemicals Fund. The co-chairs of the Executive Board of the Fund will be invited to provide an update on the operation of the Fund. The Open-ended Working Group may wish to consider providing input to the co-chairs of the Executive Board, through an informal break out group, on any future

[4] https://www.unep.org/events/conference/open-ended-working-group-oewg-global-framework-chemicals

proposals the Executive Board will put forward to the International Conference on the operation of the Fund.

24. Participants will then be invited to consider and note progress on item (4) Financial considerations. Similarly, the secretariat will introduce item 3 (d) on the development of a Gender Action Plan, on which participants will be also asked to note progress.

25. Finally, the secretariat will introduce item 5 on the Programme of work, staffing and budget 2024-2026. For this item, the Open-ended Working Group may wish to establish a contact group to discuss the activities undertaken and consider the future financial sustainability of the secretariat of the Global Framework on Chemicals in addition to some consideration on the lack of resources to implement the Framework.

26. On Wednesday, 25 June 2025, the Open-ended Working Group will consider, in plenary, the outcomes of the work of any contact groups introduced on Tuesday 24 June 2025. Participants will be asked to resume consideration of agenda item 3 including sub-items in the following order 3 (b), 3 (e), 3 (f), 3 (g), 3 (h) and 3 (i).

27. In considering, the item 3 (b) progress made towards establishing a global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides, the task force convened to drive forward the process of establishing the alliance, comprised of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, UNEP and the World Health Organization, will be invited to present the work to establish the alliance. It is expected that they will encourage all interested stakeholders to contribute to the further development of the operational framework.

28. Under item 3 (e) the Open-ended Working Group will be asked to consider existing Emerging Policy Issues and Issues of Concern. The meeting may wish to establish a contact group to consider this item to progress recommendations on those issues that should be addressed as part of the Global Framework on Chemicals at the International Conference.

29. Thereafter, participants will be invited to reflect on activities supporting item 3 (f) international cooperation and coordination, including any outcome from the Open-ended Working Group 3.2 and Intergovernmental Meeting on the negotiations for a science-policy panel on chemicals, waste and pollution prevention held from 14 to 20 June 2025.

30. The Open-ended Working Group will be asked to consider item 3 (g) the development of draft guidelines including the effectiveness of focal points to implement the Framework. The meeting may wish to recognize the value of this work and encourage the contribution by all stakeholders to the guidelines and roadmap as they develop.

31. Subsequently, the participants will hear about the progress under item 3 (h) specifically the progress being made under the open-ended ad hoc group on measurability and indicators. The co-chairs of this subsidiary body will be invited to present an update on finalizing the measurability structure and proposing a set of

indicators for annex III to the Global Framework on Chemicals. The Open-ended Working Group may wish to provide input, through an informal break out group, which the co-chairs will report back to the next meeting of the open-ended ad hoc group on measurability and indicators.

32. Finally, the World Health Organization will provide an oral update on item 3 (i) strengthening Health Surveillance Systems.

33. On Thursday 26 June 2025, there will be no formal plenary, and the day will be devoted to multistakeholder events designed to broaden sector engagement, enhance knowledge and increase engagement of stakeholders. All events will be hybrid and accessible through links on the Global Framework on Chemicals website.[5] The morning will focus on cross cutting thematic workstreams associated with Implementation Programmes (see schedule[6]) . In the afternoon, there will be a focus on specific sectors: textiles, electronics and healthcare with the aim to progress activities and workplans to establish sector programmes for consideration by the International Conference in 2026. Participants can expect expert-led discussions, interactive briefings, and opportunities to exchange knowledge and build connections.

34. On Friday 27 June 2025, the Open-ended Working Group will consider the outcomes of the work of contact groups. The meeting will also consider any remaining issues under Agenda item 3 including sub item 3(j) capacity building. There will then follow an update on agenda item (6) the preparations for the first session of the International Conference of the Global Framework on Chemicals.

E. Closing Plenary

35. The closing plenary will be on the afternoon of Friday 27 June 2025. The floor will be opened for item (7) other matters. It is foreseen that the outcomes of the Open-ended Working Group will be detailed in the meeting report and any discussions held in contact and informal groups will be attached as annexes to that meeting report. Should there be any draft resolutions to recommend to the International Conference, the meeting will be asked to adopt them. The meeting report, up to close of business on Wednesday 25 June, will also be adopted. The reflection in the meeting report of the last day of considerations, Friday 27 June, will be entrusted to the secretariat to finalize in consultation with the Bureau.

36. The meeting will be closed by 6 pm on Friday 27 June 2025.

[5] Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) of the Global Framework on Chemicals
[6] OEWG_Multi-stakeholder_Day_V2.pdf

Annex I TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF WORK FOR THE GFC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP

	OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP			
TIME	**TUESDAY 24** Strategic Objective A: Legal frameworks, institutional mechanisms and capacities are in place to support and achieve the safe and sustainable management of chemicals throughout their life cycle.	**WEDNESDAY 25** Strategic Objectives B&C: B. Comprehensive and sufficient knowledge, data and information are generated, available and accessible to all to enable informed decisions and actions. C. Issues of concern are identified, prioritized and addressed.	**THURSDAY 26** Strategic Objective D: Safer alternatives and innovative and sustainable solutions in product value chains are in place so that benefits to human health and the environment are maximized and risks are prevented or, where prevention is not feasible, minimized.	**FRIDAY 27** Strategic Objective E: Enhanced implementation occurs through increased and effective resource mobilization, partnerships, cooperation, capacity-building, and integration into all relevant decision-making processes.
8:00-9:00	Bureau	Bureau	Bureau	Bureau
9:00-10:00	Regional and sectoral meetings	Regional and sectoral meetings		Regional and sectoral meetings
10:00-13:00	**PLENARY** Agenda item 1 – Opening of the meeting Agenda item 2 – Organizational matters Agenda item 3 – Global Framework on Chemicals: 3(a) - Implementation arrangements (Resolution V/8) 3(c) - GFC Fund (V/3)	**PLENARY** Agenda item 3 – Global Framework on Chemicals (cont.) 3(b) - Global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides (V/11) 3(e) - EPIs and IOCs (V/5) 3(f) - International cooperation and coordination (V/6) 3(g) - National Focal Points (V/7) 3(h) - Measurability structure and indicators (V/9)	**INTRODUCTION TO THE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DAY** **Multi-stakeholder Activities** Please click here for a quick view of the schedule for the day	**PLENARY** Agenda item 3 – Global Framework on Chemical (cont.) 3(j) Capacity building Agenda item 6: Preparations for the first session of the International Conference of the Global Framework on Chemicals Agenda item 7: Other matters

	Agenda item 4 - Financial considerations (V/3) Agenda item 3(d) - Gender action plan (V/4) Agenda item 5 – Programme of work and Budget (V/12)	3(i) - Health Surveillance Systems (V/10)		
13:00-14:00	**LUNCH** **Side event** Occupational Safety and Health Legal Frameworks Strengthening Implementation of GHS: Challenges, Successes, and the Way Forward	**LUNCH** **Side event** Issues of Concern: Advances and updates on PFAS and Highly Hazardous Pesticides	**LUNCH** **Side event** Masterclass on Chemical Footprinting methodologies	**LUNCH** **Side event** Establishing a Global Alliance on Highly Hazardous Pesticides
14:00-15:00	Masterclass on Regulatory Compliance and Trade: India's Chemical Regulatory Landscape: Industry-Government Synergy and Regional Perspectives	Masterclass on Data Transparency and Traceability Youth Education and Innovation for Sustainable Chemistry and Zero Waste	Masterclass on understanding finance and sustainable chemicals management	Masterclass on setting up networks for GFC implementation
15:00-18:00	**PLENARY** (overflow from the morning TBC) ___ Contact group 1 on resolution V/8: Implementation arrangements Contact group 3 on resolution V/12: Programme of work and budget	**PLENARY** (overflow from the morning TBC) ___ Contact group 2 on resolution V/5: Emerging policy issues and issues of concern Contact group 3 on resolution V/12: Programme of work and budget	**Multi-stakeholder Activities** (cont.)	**PLENARY** Agenda item 8: Adoption of the report Agenda item 9: Closure
18:30 onwards	Contact Groups (TBC)	Contact Groups (TBC)		

N.B. Breakout groups may be convened as and when necessary.

RESOLUTIONS:

V/3: Financial Considerations
V/4: Mainstreaming a gender perspective and promoting gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls in chemicals and waste management
V/5: Emerging Policy Issues and Issues of Concern
V/6: International Cooperation and Coordination
V/7: Development of Guidelines for National Focal Points
V/8: Implementation Arrangements
V/9: Measurability structure
V/10: Health surveillance systems for the Global Framework on Chemicals – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste to prevent and protect human health from chemical exposure Resolution
V/11: Highly Hazardous Pesticides
V/12: Programme of Work and Budget

Annex II

WORKING AND INFORMATION DOCUMENTS FOR THE FIRST MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP

Doc no.	Issue	Related information document
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/1	Provisional agenda	NOT APPLICABLE
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/1.Add/1	Annotated agenda	NOT APPLICABLE
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/2	Financial considerations	INF/3/Rev.1 - Financial arrangements: Chemical use in textile value chains: Cotton clothing INF/4 - Update on progress towards developing a “costs of inaction” study
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/3	Global Framework on Chemicals Fund and status of contributions	INF/5 - Global Framework on Chemicals Fund
UNEP/GFC/	Gender action plan	INF/6 - Development of a Gender Action Plan: Integration and review of existing information
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/5	Emerging policy issues and Issues of Concern	INF/7 – Partnership for a lead-free future
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/6	International cooperation and coordination: interlinkages and activities to implement the Global Framework on Chemicals	INF/8 - Activities of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals in support of implementation of the Global Framework on Chemicals INF/9 - Contributions of the chemicals and waste international agreements and frameworks to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/7	National focal points	INF/10 - National focal points
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/8	Implementation of the Global Framework on Chemicals	INF/11 - Development of Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) Implementation Programmes to Advance Integrated Chemicals and Waste Management INF/13 - Strengthening Industry Sector Engagement and Action Along Value Chains: A Multi-stakeholder Day to Advance Development of a GFC Implementation Programme
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/9	Measurability	INF/12 Measurability structure
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/10	Global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides	INF/14 – Global alliance on highly hazardous pesticides
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/11	Programme of work, staffing and budget	
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/12	Capacity building	INF/16 – Capacity Building
UNEP/GFC/OEWG.1/13	Preparations for the first session of the International Conference of the Global Framework on Chemicals	