

Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Meeting in preparation for the resumed third session of the ad hoc open-ended working group (OEWG 3.2) on a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution.

30 April 2024

18:30 – 20:30 (GMT +2)

Geneva, Switzerland and Online

GRULAC Meeting Summary Report

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The GRULAC regional meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Linroy Christian (Antigua and Barbuda) and Ms. Judith Torres (Uruguay), Bureau members of the OEWG for the Latin American and the Caribbean region. Mr. Linroy Christian opened the meeting and welcomed all participants, both in person and online. The meeting was held in the margins of the 2025 conferences of the parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions.
2. Ms. Gudi Alkemade, Chair of the OEWG, commended the active engagement of the Latin America and the Caribbean region (GRULAC), highlighting in particular the constructive role of the region's co-facilitators. She summarized the outcomes of the first part of the third session (OEWG 3.1) and outlined the expectations for OEWG 3.2. She encouraged participants to identify key elements for establishing the panel and to bring concrete solutions to OEWG 3.2. She emphasized the value of regional coordination, including where appropriate, outreach beyond the region to prepare joint proposals. She expressed confidence in continued progress and looked forward to advancing the OEWG's work in Uruguay in June.
3. Ms. Torres said she was looking forward to welcoming participants to Uruguay in June, noted that while challenges remained, the work ahead is achievable. She reminded participants that it is a resumed session; UNEA Resolution 5/8 provides valuable guidance; the goal is to establish a science-policy panel, and not a multilateral environmental agreement (MEA); and there are many examples to draw from to resolve issues, notably from Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).
4. Mr. Christian introduced the agenda, which was adopted. He noted the meeting would primarily serve as a briefing.

Agenda item 2: Update on the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) process and the Intergovernmental Meeting

5. The Secretariat provided an overview of UNEA Resolution 5/8 and presented the roadmap for establishing the panel. OEWG 3.2 (15 to 18 June 2025) is expected to finalize the proposals so that the Intergovernmental Meeting (IM) (19 to 20 June 2025) can establish the panel. The outcome of OEWG 3.1, captured in the *Report of the meeting* (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/5), available in all 6 UN languages since October 2024, forms the basis for OEWG 3.2. The text to be negotiated is annexed to that meeting report and constitutes the working documents for OEWG 3.2.
6. The Secretariat reported on webinars and briefing sessions held since OEWG 3.1, and presented the working documents prepared for OEWG 3.2, noting their availability in all 6 UN languages in early May 2025. She recalled the briefing session on the *scenario note* (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/INF/8) held for National Focal Points on 25 March 2025. Regarding the *draft*

financial procedures (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/INF/9), she noted that since OEWG had not yet considered this document it was agreed to be forwarded to OEWG 3.2 as an information document and is not expected to be discussed at OEWG 3.2.

7. She highlighted the opportunity to submit written comments on the working documents for the meeting to spp-cwp@un.org by 16 May 2025. Governments are invited to submit through their national focal points, and non-government stakeholders are invited to submit on behalf of their organization or group. All submissions will be uploaded online and will form the basis of an information document by the Secretariat for consideration at OEWG 3.2 (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/INF/10).
8. Responding to a question on high-level registration for the Intergovernmental Meeting, the Secretariat noted that 11 high-level registrations had been received to date. OEWG Chair Ms. Alkemade added that outreach is ongoing, and more high-level participation is expected.

Agenda item 3: Organizational matters for the resumed third session of OEWG (OEWG 3.2)

9. The Secretariat presented the OEWG 3.2 *Provisional agenda* (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/1/Rev.1) and *Annotated provisional agenda* (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/1/Add.2).
10. She outlined the modality of work at OEWG 3.2:
 - contact groups are open to participation by all governments and stakeholders, unless otherwise decided by the Chair or the co-facilitators of contact groups;
 - contact group meetings may be held in parallel, while avoiding, to the extent possible, parallel meetings on closely related issues, and efforts will be made so that no more than two contact or informal group meetings are scheduled at the same time;
 - contact groups and informal groups will be provided with a clear and concise mandate;
 - contact groups and other informal groups will work in English, and, accordingly, documents and non-papers considered at their meetings will be in English only; and
 - contact groups will continue to build on previously agreed text, including UNEA resolution 5/8 and previous sessions of the OEWG.

Providing an overview of the tentative schedule for OEWG 3.2, she underscored that most of the first three days of the meeting will be dedicated to contact group work.

11. In closing, the Secretariat confirmed the expected outcomes of OEWG 3.2:
 - the draft decision on the establishment of the panel, including a proposal for the name of the panel and the foundational elements, as set out in the foundation document contained in the annex to the draft decision;
 - the draft decision recommending the consideration and adoption of the rules of procedure by the governing body of the panel at its first session, and the forwarding for further consideration and finalization at this session of the draft procedures and policies in their present form as set out in annexes 2–4 to the draft decision; and
 - the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period that are required for the operation of the panel, including the preparation of the first session of the governing body of the panel.

12. With no questions raised, Mr. Christian closed the agenda item.

Agenda item 4: Preparation of proposals for the establishment of a science-policy panel

13. The Secretariat said that the OEWG 3.2 will prioritize finalizing:
 - The draft decision on the establishment of the panel, including a proposal for the name of the panel and the foundational elements, as set out in the foundational document contained in the annex to the draft decision (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/6), and

- The draft decision recommending the consideration and adoption of the rules of procedure by the governing body of the panel at its first session, and the forwarding for further consideration and finalization at this session of the draft procedures and policies in their present form as set out in annexes 2–4 to the draft decision (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/7).

14. The secretariat then presented the proposed clustering of key topics for contact groups:

- Cluster 1: Membership and functions of the bodies of the panel, decision-making, and related rules of procedure
- Cluster 2: Other foundational elements and related rules of procedure, and the draft decision to establish the panel
- Cluster 3: Other rules of procedure, the draft decision to forward the draft rules, procedures and policies, and the draft decision for the interim period.

15. On the draft rules of procedure, the Secretariat provided an overview of the document which included, highlighted in yellow, those elements of the document that had not been considered at OEWG 3.1 due to their connection with the foundational document. She explained that the proposed clustering will allow for related elements of the foundational document and the draft rules of procedure to be considered together.

16. Mr. Christian emphasized that the draft rules of procedure will be adopted by the governing body of the panel once established and not by the Intergovernmental Meeting. Therefore OEWG 3.2 should focus on resolving the rules associated with substantive elements in the foundational document.

17. With no questions raised, Mr. Christian closed the agenda item.

Agenda item 5: Recommendations to the Executive Director of UNEP for the preparation of the intergovernmental meeting to establish the science-policy panel

18. The Secretariat recalled that the OEWG is invited to make recommendations to the Executive Director of UNEP on preparing the intergovernmental meeting (IM). The Secretariat referred to the draft decision on arrangements for the interim period (UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.3/8), which would enable the panel to begin its work, including the provision of interim secretariat services to facilitate the first session of the governing body of the panel. She added that items under agenda item 4 will also be forwarded to the IM.

19. Mr. Christian thanked the Secretariat for their clear [presentation](#) of the documents, noting that participants can now have a better understanding of what needs to be discussed at OEWG 3.2 and how topics will be clustered. With no questions or comments, he closed the agenda item.

Agenda item 6: Logistical preparations for the OEWG 3.2 and Intergovernmental Meeting

20. The Secretariat outlined the logistical arrangements for OEWG 3.2, which will take place in Punta del Este, Uruguay, Convention and Exhibition Centre, from 15 to 18 June 2025, with preceding regional, stakeholder and informal meetings on 14 June 2025. The Intergovernmental Meeting (IM) will be held back-to-back with OEWG 3.2 at the same venue from 19 to 20 June 2025.

21. In response to a question about credentials, the Secretariat noted that guidance was included in the invitation letters. Regarding visa requirements, the Government of Uruguay is offering visa exemption letters for eligible participants as a courtesy. Requests for visa exemption letters will be accepted until 30 May 2025.

22. An update was provided on the status of registrations: 502 registrations have been approved to date for OEWG 3.2, including 23 countries from GRULAC, and 373 registrations approved to date for

IM, including 17 countries from GRULAC.

23. Ms. Torres noted that the host country agreement is being finalized and assured participants that Uruguay is committed to facilitating their participation. In response to a question on seating arrangements for the IM, she said that the matter is under discussion and updates will follow.
24. Ms. Gabriela Medina, from the Basel and Stockholm conventions Regional Centre located in Uruguay (BCCC-SCRC Uruguay) advised participants to regularly check the OEWG 3.2 website for further logistical updates.
25. In response to a question on travel itineraries for funded participants, the Secretariat explained that arrangements are being coordinated with the Global Framework on Chemicals Secretariat. Itineraries are being issued in batches, and participants should expect communication during the first two weeks of May.
26. Mr. Christian closed the item, reminding participants of the importance of having credentials in hand for the Intergovernmental Meeting.

Agenda item 7: Other matters

27. On other matters, Mr. Christian asked whether another regional meeting should be held to discuss substantive issues ahead of OEWG 3.2. Citing the busy UN calendar in the lead-up to OEWG 3.2 and recent webinars, he proposed that information continue to be shared via chat or email and that the region meet in person on 14 June 2025 in Punta del Este.
28. OEWG Chair Ms. Alkemade encouraged participants to consult their Bureau members for any needed clarifications and noted the next Bureau meeting is scheduled for 13 May 2025.

Agenda item 8: Closure of the meeting

29. In closing, Mr. Christian urged participants to continue communicating on the key issues the region will need to discuss as a region ahead of the 4 June 2025 meeting and to come prepared. He thanked participants, the Secretariat, and OEWG Chair Ms. Alkemade for their engagement and closed the meeting on 30 April 2025 at 20:00 Geneva time (GMT +2).