

Meeting of the Bureau 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
Tuesday, 14 November 2023
13:00 – 15:00 (EAT; GMT + 3)
GAO Boardroom and online

Draft Bureau Meeting Summary

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

1. Ms. Gudi Alkemade, Chair of the OEWG, opened the meeting, and welcomed all participants.
2. The meeting agenda was adopted without any changes.

Agenda item 2: Summary of the Bureau meeting on 3 October 2023.

3. The Chair invited Bureau Members to endorse the summary of the Bureau meeting held on 3 October 2023 as prepared by the Secretariat.
4. Following a request from one member of the Bureau, it was agreed to discuss the need to encourage Member States registration to OEWG 2 under Agenda item 3.
5. The Bureau endorsed the summary without any changes.

Agenda item 3: Organization of intersessional work leading up to OEWG 2.

6. Following an introduction by the Chair, the Secretariat was invited to update the Bureau on a) the preparation of documents, including an overview of their (expected) publication, as well as on submissions, webinars, consultations and side events in the run up to OEWG2, provide an overview of the latest state of play, including relevant lessons learnt from the regional consultations, and b) the arrangements made for the meeting venue.

Update on the state of play of the preparations of the documents, submissions, consultations and side events:

7. The secretariat provided an update on the organization of work, including a confirmation of the ongoing logistical arrangements for the new venue, and the new registration deadline of 20 November 2023. The secretariat reported that there are 450 approved registrants, including 219 from Member States and observer States.
8. With regards to documents the Secretariat reported that they are expected to be made available online by Thursday, 16 November 2023 as per the latest information from UNON Conference Services. The Secretariat further clarified that the delay is due to technical adjustments that need to be made following the change of the venue. Working document OEWG.2/7 is undergoing a full revision, and the scenario note is to be revised following the Bureau meeting. Information documents 2-8 are ready or in editing status. The presentation will be uploaded on the meeting portal shortly after the Bureau meeting at the [meeting webpage](#).
9. The Secretariat confirmed that the briefings for the WEOG region were held on 8 and 9 November online. The Eastern European Group regional briefing is scheduled for 21 November.
10. The Road to OEWG 2 webinar has held two webinars since the previous bureau meeting, including one on the procedures for addressing conflicts of interest, and one on building linkages from science to action held at the Minamata COP-5. The final briefing/webinar in the series is planned for 22 November and will feature logistics information, and information on the approach of the meeting regarding the proposals.
11. The Bureau thanked the secretariat for their update and offered a variety of observations and questions.

12. In response to a request from a Bureau member, the secretariat proposed that the regional meeting / briefing summaries would be available on the regional meetings webpage, and further to connect all of the regional meetings to one website, accompanied by a summary of the lessons learned and shared outcomes of the various regional meetings and briefings, including preferences for clustering in contact groups. Furthermore, the secretariat confirmed that the EEG regional briefing will be held on 21 November, facilitated by Ms. Ana Berejiani, who currently serves as the liaison for the EEG region with the Bureau.

13. Following discussion and requests from several regions, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to develop, based on the working and information documents (where relevant), draft texts for the elements in the Skeleton Outline, to be included in a separate Information Document to be shared in advance of the meeting, noting that it will be up to the contact groups to decide if they wish to undertake their work towards developing proposals for the establishment of the Panel on the basis of the proposed text, or chose another working method. It was also requested that the draft texts for the elements include a description on how the text fits into a draft decision so that stakeholders can see how the text fits into the overall process.

14. In response to a request from a Bureau member, the secretariat proposed that further information regarding registration to OEWG 2 per region be shared via email to the respective Bureau members by 15 November with a view that Bureau Members can engage with colleagues present in the INC 3 meeting to encourage additional registrations before the deadline of 20 November, and allow for identification of potential barriers for registration, if any. The Secretariat will also do targeted communication to all focal points and remind them of the deadline of 20 November for registration.

Agenda item 4: Organization of work during OEWG2.

15. The secretariat presented a document on the possible clustering of contact groups, as well as a potential sequence for their scheduling, considering the guiding principles from the Bureau meeting of 3 October 2023. The proposed schedule accommodates an iterative process, allowing for the discussions on the different elements to inform each other, as well as to prevent as much as possible overlap of different topics, while at the same time prioritizing those topics not previously discussed, as well as those elements that are required to establish the panel. The following clustering of the contact groups was proposed:

- a) Cluster 1: Scope, functions, operating principles and conflict of interest
- b) Cluster 2: Institutional arrangements and relationship with key stakeholders
- c) Cluster 3: Work-related processes and procedures of the panel: experts, work programme
- d) Cluster 4: Intersessional work and budget in advance of OEWG 3 and beyond

16. The Chair thanked the Secretariat for the update provided and in the ensuing discussion various members provided the following feedback:

- a) Those procedures that are linked with scope, functions or institutional arrangements of the panel could be discussed earlier in the meeting, whereas those related to operationalizing the panel occur later in the meeting. Different views were expressed on whether capacity building should be discussed earlier or later in the week.
- b) The Bureau could have a role to monitor the outcomes being developed by the contact groups, and that it may be useful to secure timeslots to discuss these outcomes prior to discussion at the plenary.
- c) The contact group on the relationship with key stakeholders could be added to cluster 1, and conflict of interest would move to cluster 2, which may better accommodate smaller delegations.
- d) With regard to the approach, the bureau proposed that there is need to prioritize such that those topics that have not been previously discussed are discussed early, and to ensure that the schedule allows for flexibility during the OEWG meeting.
- e) Requested clarification on the mandates which are expected to be given to the contact groups.
- f) Requested that the schedule not specify the topic of discussion, but rather only the contact group number (1-4) so the groups can be more easily remembered.

17. It was acknowledged that the proposed schedule is tentative and subject to be updated on a daily basis during OEWG 2. The Chair further clarified that the mandates for the contact groups would focus on the development of proposals for the body of the text or the text that will be recommended to be forwarded to the panel on specific topics.

18. The Bureau agreed to provide feedback to the secretariat regarding the contact groups and their sequencing, taking the sequencing proposed in the presentation, no later than noon on Friday, 17 November, and to mandate the Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat to make changes, if required, to be incorporated in the OEWG 2 Scenario Note. The Chair also requested Bureau members to suggest

names for facilitators of contact groups to the secretariat.

19. A bureau member requested clarification on whether the proceedings of the meeting can be broadcast online for scientists that are not able to participate in the meeting in -person. The Chair clarified that the plenary sessions will be streamed, but that contact groups will not be streamed, however efforts have been made to enhance outreach to scientists.

Agenda item 5: Outcomes of the OEWG process.

20. The secretariat presented a proposal on options for the process and timing for the preparation of draft text for the decisions/resolutions necessary to be adopted at the intergovernmental meeting for the establishment of the panel. The presentation including their recommendations to:

- a) Mandate the chair to – as part of the webinar on 22 November – present the Skeleton outline, including the further outcome of the OEWG, with a view to ensure that all participants have a clear understanding of what the process needs to deliver.
- b) To request the Secretariat to develop – for presentation under item 5 – a roadmap for the establishment of the Panel.
- c) To propose to the OEWG 2 to request the secretariat to develop a draft recommendation for a draft decision to be adopted by the Intergovernmental Meeting.

21. The Bureau agreed with the proposed recommendations.

22. Following a question by WHO on the legal nature of the Intergovernmental Meeting mandated to be organized by the ED of UNEP, the legal advisor from the secretariat confirmed that the intergovernmental meeting is considered outside of the scope of United Nations Environment Assembly. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to prepare a note to clarify the nature of the Intergovernmental Meeting, including its relation to UNEP/UNEA and WHO, to be available when needed during OEWG 2.

Agenda item 6: Potential briefings and consultations on 9 and 10 December 2023.

23. The secretariat presented a proposal for potential briefings and consultations on 9 and 10 December. The secretariat proposed to use the 9 December to have further informal consultations and to provide a platform for Member States and stakeholders to identify areas of convergence and divergence on topics not previously discussed, with a view to inform the discussions and negotiations at OEWG 2. Bureau members were then invited to present their views to further guide the secretariat in their preparations for the meetings. The secretariat further proposed that the 10 December will be dedicated mainly to regional groups and stakeholder meetings.

24. While preliminary views of the Bureau members were positive, it was agreed that the Secretariat would upload on the meeting portal the background document of the proposed Informal Consultations on 9 December and that Bureau Members would be provided with some time to consult with the region, with a view to provide possible feedback by noon on Friday, 17 November.

25. The Chair thanked the secretariat for the preparations, and those to come. Noting the time restriction, the Chair requested the secretariat to upload the presentation which provides the latest information on the remaining agenda items. It was also requested that the secretariat share the relevant information with scientists and other stakeholders. The Chair requested that any additional comments on the remaining agenda items should be provided to the secretariat by noon on Friday, 17 November.

Agenda item 7: Budget and Resource Mobilization.

26. The Bureau agreed that any additional comments or questions following the presentation of the revised budget, to be incorporated into working document OEWG.2/7, which will be made available after the meeting, should be provided to the secretariat by 12:00 p.m. on Friday 17 November.

Agenda item 8: Engagement of stakeholders in the OEWG meetings and process.

27. The Bureau agreed that any comments or questions following the overview of activities outlined in the presentation that will be made available after the Bureau meeting, including the presentation by WHO outlining the activities by WHO, will be provided to the secretariat by noon on Friday, 17 November.

Agenda item 9: Organization of work.

28. The Bureau will meet on a daily basis in person, starting from 10 December during OEWG 2.

Agenda item 10: Other Matters

29. No other matters were discussed.

Agenda item 11: Closing of the meeting.

30. The Chair closed the meeting at 15:15 (EAT).

Participants

Ms. Gudi Alkemade, Chair of the Bureau of the OEWG SPP and the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations Environment Programme
Mr. Oumar Diaouré Cisse, Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the OEWG SPP and Point Focal SAICM, Ministère de l'Environnement, de l'Assainissement et du Développement Durable, Mali
Mr. Cyrus Mageria, Ag. Director MEAs, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Kenya
Prof. Jinhui Li, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the OEWG SPP and Distinguished Professor, School of Environment, Tsinghua University, China
Mr. Michel Tschirren, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the OEWG SPP and Senior Policy Advisor at the Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), Switzerland
Mr. Linroy Christian, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the OEWG SPP and Director of Department of Analytical Services, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Barbuda Affairs

Observers

Ms. Lesley Onyon, World Health Organization
Ms. Judith Torres, International Relations and Cooperation Office of the Ministry of the Environment, Uruguay

UNEP

Ms. Tessa Goverse
Mr. Ulf Bjornholm
Ms. Nalini Sharma
Ms. Irene Galan
Mr. Nasrudin Abdi Rashid
Mr. Alvin Gachie
Mr. Richard Miesen
Ms. Pia Kohler
Ms. Kaai Tung Chan
Mr. Zhanyun Wang

Regrets

Ms. Valentina Sierra, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the OEWG SPP and Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Uruguay to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva
H.E. Saqlain Syedah, Vice Chair of the Bureau of the OEWG SPP and High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Pakistan to UNEP