

Distr.: Limited
1 December 2025
English only

**Bureau of the Global Framework on Chemicals –
For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste**
Tuesday, 28 October 2025, 14:00 – 16:30 (CET, Geneva time) (ONLINE)
Eighth meeting

DRAFT REPORT OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE BUREAU

1. Opening and welcome

1. The President of the Bureau of the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC), Ms. Aisha Humera welcomed the Bureau members to the eighth meeting of the Bureau, including Sverre-Thomas Jahre who replaced Audun Heggeland for WEOG.

2. Adoption of the agenda

2. The President introduced the provisional agenda for the meeting (GFC/IC.1/Bureau.8/1/rev.1) that was circulated on 15 October 2025. The Bureau members were invited to raise any additional points under agenda item 10. Any other business (AOB).

3. The secretariat asked that dates for regional consultations on guidance for chemicals management organized by UNEP Law Division be shared with Bureau members under item 10. Any other business (AOB).

4. Sara Brosché indicated that she had sent an email on how Bureau members can be updated on an ongoing basis, so that they can keep informed their constituencies too and she proposed to include this in the AOB agenda point.

5. With no further items raised, the provisional agenda was adopted.

3. Adoption of the report of the 7th meeting of the Bureau of the Global Framework on Chemicals

6. The President invited comments on the draft report of the seventh meeting of the Bureau, which was held on 28 May 2025 and the report of which was circulated by the secretariat on 18 June 2025.

7. The secretariat informed the Bureau that no comments were received following the report's circulation. With no additional comments, the report was adopted and will be posted on the Global Framework on Chemicals' website.

4. Feedback of the First meeting of the GFC Open-ended Working Group, 24-27 June 2025, Punta del Este, Uruguay

8. The President invited the secretariat to take the floor. The secretariat indicated this was an opportunity to reflect on what went well during the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG), what could be improved and which aspects to consider moving forward. The President encouraged the Bureau to provide feedback and a deadline within two weeks was agreed. The secretariat would take note of feedback received for future meetings and in planning for the first International Conference (IC).

9. The President opened the floor for any comments from members of the Bureau. Napoleon Garcia emphasized the importance of having proactive and substantive stakeholder involvement and clearer expectations to be shared with the regions. Bob Diderich praised the focus on implementation and discussions on substantive issues, but noted limited time spent on negotiations, and suggested that future OEWGs focus on implementation whereas the IC on negotiations.

10. Sverre-Thomas Jahre thanked the President for welcoming him in his new role as Bureau member for WEOG as a replacement for Audun Heggelund. He also regretted the lack of negotiations and called for clearer OEWG mandates. Magdalena Frydrych agreed with Mr. Jahre and further supported returning to traditional negotiation formats and clearer planning. Referring to her constituency, Sara Brosché echoed these comments and proposed combining informal and formal formats and improving clarity on next steps and timelines.

11. Koki Takaki expressed that he had found the OEWG useful for regional understanding and cited webinars as helpful preparation tools. From his end, Ivo de Zwaan appreciated the organization considering the limited resources available but stressed the need for clearer goals and better communication. Chrysanthi Sofokleus added that her constituency valued the informal format and hybrid setup, although suggested considering the scheduling for future events.

12. Andrea Rother concurred with the points made by other Bureau members and praised the multisectoral approach, calling for deeper cross-sectoral engagement, especially with health and labour. Likewise, Magdalena Frydrych reiterated the need for clear messaging and sectoral discussions at IC. Additionally, Suzana Andonova found that the OEWG was well-organized, although tiring for participants due to

scheduling right after the Science Policy Panel meeting. She further supported considering lessons learned for the IC.

13. To conclude, the President invited Bureau members to send any further comments in writing to the secretariat and thanked them all for their constructive feedback.

5. GFC Focal Points update – strengthened policy on nominations

14. The President introduced agenda item 5, noting that the focal point network does not fully represent the diverse stakeholder and multisectoral communities. As most national focal points are from the environmental sector there is a lack of representation at the national level from health and labour officials. There is still weak participation from the economic, industry and private sectors, and the process to nominate, approve and engage focal points and to select and fund their attendance to international meetings requires improvement. She invited the secretariat to explain document GFC/IC.1/Bureau.8/2 which explains the nomination and invitation process.

15. The secretariat introduced the paper and highlighted challenges in managing the focal point network in general including attendance at events. She cited outdated information, lack of documentation, last-minute cancellations causing financial losses, and overrepresentation of environmental delegates. Issues also arose from mass private sector registrations using unofficial email addresses and visa complications. Two proposals were introduced: (1) strengthen the nomination process to include diverse sectors (such as health, agriculture and labour) and private sector representatives, ensuring authenticity; (2) implement enhanced screening for funded participants to safeguard donor resources through official documentation. The secretariat sought feedback from the Bureau on improving proposals, their role in sustaining the focal point network and reviewing lists, and on how to enhance communication and effectiveness among focal points.

16. The President invited Bureau members to take the floor. Andrea Rother advocated for stronger engagement of health, labour, and agriculture sectors in focal point management. She proposed adding commitment clauses in the nomination forms, making alternates mandatory from other ministries, and linking funding screening to training for first-time participants. Ivo de Zwaan supported the secretariat's proposals and agreed with the overall process but suggested that it would be difficult to mandate appointing alternates and that softer language ("should" instead of "shall") would be more appropriate.

17. Chrysanthi Sofokleus agreed with the proposals but requested explicit mention of industry associations under the private sector. The secretariat explained that associations fell under non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Similarly, Magdalena Frydrych supported the document but raised questions on alternates, nomination requirements and funding criteria. She suggested learning from the global chemical and health network and indicated she would share written feedback.

18. Koki Takaki shared Japan's approach of using liaison committees for multisectoral engagement and asked for clarification on NGO registration

requirements. Bob Diderich also supported the paper and highlighted past issues with labour representatives' seating arrangements, urging for better interministerial coordination. In addition, Sara Brosché stressed that funded participation is key for multisectoral engagement. She raised concerns about NGO registration challenges and suggested offline discussions to refine language.

19. Sverre-Thomas Jahre noted difficulties in involving other ministries due to national structural constraints and advised realistic expectations for engagement, whereas Andrea Rother advised to reach more clarity about what an “alternate” means, suggesting representation from multiple ministries rather than strict alternates and proposed revising terminology. Moreover, Rory O'Neill called for balanced ministry representation across all processes, avoiding duplication while ensuring accountability and inclusiveness.

20. The President closed the agenda item by recommending that countries be allowed to develop their own coordination mechanisms. She cited Pakistan as an example, where multiple ministries are involved through government-led invitations. For NGOs and the private sector, she emphasized the need for government consultation to ensure inclusive engagement. She advocated for accountability from both governments and focal points, especially in notifying the secretariat when a focal point is no longer active. To support this, she suggested implementing the new procedure to all Member States to strengthen multisectoral participation and focal point nomination processes.

21. The secretariat thanked the President for the rich discussion. Bureau members were invited to engage with the secretariat after the meeting on specific points. The secretariat acknowledged that finding the right way of working on focal points can deliver huge benefits, with the aim to ensure that they can implement the Global Framework on Chemicals on the ground.

6. Preparations for the GFC International Conference in 2026

22. The President presented agenda item 6 by asking two following questions: (i) what success look likes for the first IC and (ii) what approach will allow the IC to assess progress and integrate multisectoral and multistakeholder interests into the agenda. The secretariat was invited to introduce these questions.

23. The secretariat emphasized the importance of clearly communicating expectations for the IC, noting that with only four years left until 2030, tracking progress against the Framework's 28 targets is crucial. While a measurability structure exists, indicators are still under negotiation making their adoption at the IC essential. Additionally, the secretariat highlighted the need for terms of reference and work plans for implementation programs and expressed interest in integrating traditional negotiation formats with engagement from new stakeholders like the private sector, brands, and retailers. They welcomed inputs from the Bureau on how to engage these communities throughout the IC agenda.

24. Sverre-Thomas Jahre emphasized the need to allocate sufficient time for negotiations at the IC, especially to address unresolved issues from Bonn. He supported stakeholder engagement beyond negotiations but stressed maintaining

balance. He added that his constituency favours open dialogue and inclusion through implementation programs and issues of concern. From her side, Sara Brosché highlighted the importance of tangible outcomes and managing interim and new issues of concern. She suggested using side event spaces for informal discussions and requested clear timelines for document submissions, proposing they be posted online for transparency. To this, the secretariat responded that the nomination process for new issues of concern would be posted online, with a submission deadline of 31 May 2026. It also confirmed that working document deadlines would be in June to allow time for translation before the IC.

25. Ivo de Zwaan echoed the need for indicators and work plans to assess progress. He stressed the need for thorough preparation and sufficient time for discussions. In particular, he noted the absence of recycling sector stakeholders and suggested integrating multistakeholder engagement through dedicated days and negotiation settings. In reply to the secretariat's question, Bob Diderich stated that success at the IC would involve adopting implementation programs and procedures for issues of concern. He emphasized industry buy-in, especially for chemicals in value chains, and proposed requesting progress reports based on proposed indicators since September 2023.

26. Andrea Rother suggested that each Bureau member defines 3 to 5 concrete indicators of success and gathers feedback from regions and stakeholder groups. She recommended using metrics like health ministry participation to assess effectiveness and encouraged the Bureau to reflect on measurable contributions. On this topic, Koki Takaki supported simple, manageable indicators and stressed the urgency of agreeing on a reporting format. With only two ICs before 2030, he viewed the upcoming one as a key opportunity to accelerate progress and build on OEWG work.

27. Napoleon García highlighted the secretariat's limited resources and the importance of showcasing achievements. He stressed the need for political commitment to financial resource mobilization, warning that lack of implementation capacity could lead to criticism from constituencies. Lastly, Chrysanthi Sofokleus agreed with the idea of defining 3 to 5 success indicators to manage expectations and promote accountability. She emphasized showcasing partnerships and progress, including non-traditional stakeholders, and making events relevant to all. She also noted the importance of early IC date announcements to secure CEO participation.

28. The secretariat confirmed that it is looking at the second week of November 2026.

7. Financing – mobilizing resources

29. The President then invited the secretariat to present the financial and resource mobilization component.

30. The secretariat presented updated financial charts and staffing details for comparison with previous OEWG data. It noted new contributions (some pending), current staff levels, and two positions under consideration. The expenditure budget was adjusted to reflect actual conditions, projecting the 2025 year-end balance. For the IC, budgeting assumed two delegates per country, but reducing this to one or

adjusting staff costs could significantly lower expenses. Overall, the projected balance for 2026 would be less than initially estimated.

31. No questions were raised by the Bureau on this agenda item.

8. IOMC and GFC implementation

32. The President further invited IOMC representatives to introduce agenda item 8 about the inter-organization program for chemical management and GFC implementation. The aim was to inform the Bureau on the active role that IOMC participating organizations are taking in implementing the Framework.

33. Bob Diderich updated the Bureau on IOMC's progress with implementation programs, including webinars, surveys, and global workshops aimed at refining mandates, terms of reference, and work plans. He noted plans for a global webinar in November and efforts to strengthen linkages among the three implementation programs and issues of concern. Stakeholders have requested that these programs be designed with GFC ownership, build on existing initiatives, identify good practices, and prepare discussions for the IC.

34. To enhance multistakeholder engagement, IOMC proposed creating an informal reflection group of champions from different regions and stakeholder groups to co-create implementation programs. This group would mirror the Bureau's structure, include representatives from all regions and sectors, and hold two to three virtual meetings in early 2026 to identify bottlenecks and build momentum for IC adoption. Mr. Diderich invited Bureau members to suggest participants and experts and provide feedback on the proposal.

35. The President thanked the IOMC and opened the floor for comments. Andrea Rother supported the idea of a reflection group, comparing it to SAICM communities of practice. She stressed the need for a clear structure and participation guidelines to ensure effective stakeholder engagement and successful proposal development for the IC.

36. Chrysanthi Sofokleus also agreed with the proposal and requested slides for further review. She asked if one group would handle all three implementation programs and whether alternates could switch between programs. She favoured a flexible structure and, along with Magdalena Frydrych, requested a written summary for regional consultations and clarification on decision timelines.

37. Sara Brosché emphasized the importance of transparency in managing the reflection group and noted the need to consult the diverse NGO community. She questioned how the group would relate to existing stakeholder-driven implementation programs listed on the GFC website and called for broader discussions on development, representation, and transparency.

38. The secretariat noted time constraints, and the Bureau agreed to extend the meeting briefly. Mr. Diderich thanked the Bureau for their feedback, confirmed the inclusion of alternates, and committed to providing a written summary for regional consultation. He stated the group should be established by early 2026 and

acknowledged the importance of addressing transparency and representation in sectoral programs.

9. Next meeting of the Bureau

39. The secretariat explained that, although there is no date yet, it should be in the first quarter of 2026. The Bureau would soon be approached with one or two proposed dates.

40. In terms of whether it will be hybrid or in-person, the President indicated that it would be good to know the costs. Mr. Sverre was of the view that virtual works well, doubting that we have the finances to do a hybrid meeting, whereas Mr. O'Neill expressed his opinion in favour of face to face.

10. Any other business

41. The President invited Bureau members and the secretariat to introduce any other requests under this item.

42. The secretariat informed the Bureau about upcoming subregional consultations on innovative legal and institutional frameworks. Details would be posted online and shared with Bureau members. The consultations were scheduled for 4 November (Asia-Pacific), 5 November (Africa), and 6 November (Latin America and the Caribbean).

43. Responding to a request from Ms. Brosché and Mr. Takaki, the secretariat committed to exploring effective ways to keep the Bureau updated, such as briefing papers, newsletters, or a dedicated Bureau paper, and would share ideas soon.

44. Lastly, the secretariat announced a high-level event entitled “Investing for Impact: Advancing the Global Framework on Chemicals for a Planet Free of Harm”, to be held on 5 November at the Palais des Nations, Geneva. The event’s aim was to raise the Framework’s profile among donors and partners, foster relationships, and build trust for future funding. It would include government representatives, philanthropic foundations, and private sector actors, with Switzerland speaking as host country. Bureau members were invited to support advocacy and engagement efforts.

45. The floor was open for questions. Ms. Andonova noted her region was missing from the consultation slide. The secretariat promised to verify this with the Law Division and provide clarification. Mr. de Zwaan asked if he could attend the 5 November event and requested an invitation. The secretariat confirmed invitations would be circulated, noting the event was invite-only but Bureau members were welcome.

11. Closure of the meeting

46. The President thanked all Bureau members for their engaged participation at the eighth Bureau meeting and closed the meeting at 16:08 CEST.

Annex

Participants

Bureau Members: Ms. Aisha Humera (Pakistan, Asia-Pacific, President), Ms. Magdalena Frydrych (Poland, Central and Eastern Europe), and Mr. Sverre-Thomas Jahre (Norway, Western Europe and Others).

Regional Focal Points: Mr. Koki Takaki (Japan for Asia-Pacific), Mr. Napoleon Garcia (El Salvador for Latin America and the Caribbean), Mr. Ivo de Zwaan (The Netherlands for Western Europe and Other Groups), and Ms. Suzana Andonova (North Macedonia for Central and Eastern Europe).

Representatives of non-governmental participants and the IOMC: Ms. Chrysanthi Sofokleous (International Council of Chemical Associations, industry), Ms. Sara Brosché (International Pollutants Elimination Network, public interest group), Mr. Bob Diderich (OECD, IOMC), Ms. Andrea Rother (School of Public Health, University of Cape Town, health), Mr. Rory O'Neill (Australian Council of Trade Unions, labour), Jonathan Krueger (WHO, IOMC), Oliver Wotton (UNITAR, IOMC), and Johannes Heister (WHO, IOMC).

Regrets: Mr. Santos Virgilio (Angola, Africa), Ms. Vanessa Aliaga (Peru, Latin America and the Caribbean), and Mr. Lamin Jaiteh (the Gambia, Africa).