

## PARALLEL THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS: CHEMICALS

### Australian Statement – 4 May 2010

Australia is actively engaged in a range of United Nations chemical multilateral agreements, including as a Party to the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Waigani Conventions, and the Montreal Protocol, and fully supports the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). A common objective of these agreements is to improve the management of chemicals, particularly in developing countries.

Australia has been working to assist in reaching this objective, particularly in the South Pacific region. Between 2001 and 2009 as a part of our efforts under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, Australia has worked in partnership with twelve countries in the region to collect a range of hazardous chemicals and ensure their environmentally sound disposal. We have also worked through SAICM with Pacific Island countries to improve their chemicals management and to assist their participation in the second International Conference on Chemicals Management in May 2009. Our experience from these initiatives is that regional partnerships are a key opportunity to enhance practical implementation. Key factors addressed through partnerships may include:

- Education;
- Information exchange;
- Capacity building; and
- Identification of relevant best practice approaches (including regulatory and governance activities)

Regional partnerships delivering practical cooperation based around these factors will assist implementation of chemical management regimes.

The Secretary-General's review of chemicals work is a valuable starting point. Australia suggests that, in developing a CSD chemicals program of work, care should be taken not to duplicate existing activities but rather seek the greatest synergy possible with other agreements and programs.