



**Statement on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States**

**By**

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of the 19<sup>th</sup> Commission on Sustainable Development  
Chemicals**

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**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**



Mr Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

**Chemicals** provide us with great benefits but also raise important challenges. As noted by the bureau in the resource paper, if chemicals are not managed soundly over their whole life-cycle, they can negatively influence human health and the environment.

At CSD-18, the EU shared its experiences on the implementation of regional and global frameworks for chemicals management, including the EU chemicals regime (REACH), the Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling (GHS) and SAICM. The last CSD 18 meeting, the Secretary General's report and the resource paper have been important in identifying key challenges, emerging issues and possible ways forward in the field of chemicals management.

Taking these views into account the EU considers **that three priorities** are particularly crucial to advance the implementation of sustainable development in chemicals management, and to achieve the 2020 goal that 'chemicals are manufactured and used in a way so as to minimise the impact on the environment and human health'.

The first is to recognise that **sustainable consumption and production** lies at the heart of sound chemicals management. Adoption of a life-cycle approach and the involvement of the whole supply chain is necessary. Rules for registration, evaluation, authorization and restriction of chemicals are important elements which need to be included in legislation together with a transfer of responsibility to manufacturers, importers and downstream users, to make sure that the substances they develop, place on the market or use, do not harm human health or the environment;

The EU considers that SCP principles should be embedded in the activities of the chemicals industry and the institutions involved in sound chemicals management (including members of the Inter-Organisation Programme for the sound Management of Chemicals). These bodies should consider submitting sustainable chemicals management programmes to the **10 year framework of programmes** to be established at CSD-19.

The second, is that the full and effective **implementation of SAICM** be accelerated worldwide. CSD-18 recognised that there has been progress towards the 2020 goal, but that it is insufficient and uneven across countries and regions. An important recommendation from CSD-19 should therefore strengthen the work of SAICM nationally, regionally and internationally. Particular efforts are needed to address the following:

1. Further promotion of inter-sectoral involvement in the implementation of SAICM, particularly from the health sector, noted in the resource paper. CSD-19 should send a strong message to the World Health Organisation regarding the importance of public health issues, as well as to the International Labour Organisation and to the Food and Agriculture Organisation with regard to health and safety of workers, in the implementation of the Strategic Approach. Since health impacts from poor management of chemicals is an integrated part of SAICM, links to programmes primarily addressing health issues needs to be strengthened so that the objectives of SAICM are reflected within these programmes;

2. As also noted in the resource paper, strengthen the link between sound chemicals management and the UN Millennium Development Goals and in doing so encourage developing countries to integrate relevant areas of SAICM into their overarching national development strategies;

3. Highlight the importance of placing the responsibility on manufacturers, importers and downstream users for making sure that the substances and products they develop, place on the market or use, do not harm human health or the environment. For example by providing information on chemicals in products, and sharing information on risk assessments, risk management and safe use, as an important element of chemicals management. This information should be made available to the public;

4. Stress the responsibility and role of the private sector in support of the implementation of SAICM, not only through voluntary involvement of industry but by regulatory frameworks that internalise external costs;

5. Continue efforts to combat the illegal trafficking and dumping of hazardous chemicals and waste, including obsolete pesticides.

The third priority, is to seek **further support for improvements in the long-term co-operation among existing and new chemicals management instruments.** Building upon the 'synergies' work undertaken to strengthen co-operation and co-ordination between the chemicals and waste conventions. We are convinced that the ExCOPs and their outcome are good examples of applied International Environmental Governance, and encourage Members to consider a similar process for other related conventions.

We need to remain vigilant that future efforts do not undo what has been achieved by adding complexity to the system, duplicating efforts, and competing for resources. In this regard, we support paragraph 81 of the Secretary General's report for this meeting on chemicals which states:

*"the international policy and legal framework for chemicals should be further strengthened, including through full and effective implementation of SAICM, successful negotiation of the globally legally binding instrument on mercury, examination of the usefulness of broader chemical legal instruments, and development of international structures for sound management of chemicals post-2020"*

The EU and its Member States welcomes last week's UNEP Governing Council decisions on chemicals and waste management, and considers that the section on enhancing cooperation and coordination within that cluster, takes us another step closer.

Mr Chair,

2011 is the international year of chemistry. It also has a busy international chemicals agenda. We therefore request that you transmit the outcomes of this CSD cycle to all policy forums discussing chemicals management, in particular the third international conference on chemicals management under SAICM in order to pursue the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation objective of sound chemicals management, and to contribute to achievement to a Green Economy.

Thank you for your attention.