

Agenda item 5c, 12 June 2007

Plan for taking forward a review of the Global Plan of Action (including possible conclusion of table C)

Issue: Should the former table C be included into the Global Plan of Action at ICCM 2?

WECF/DR:

Can SAICM be a success without also targeting the areas specified in table C?

Example: Children's health and chemical safety

The original table specified action to protect children's health from exposure to toxic chemicals, especially chemicals in children's products and toys. Primary actors in this field are governments and industry. Given the known negative health effects of hazardous chemicals on children and the uncertainties pertaining to chemicals in products action on this issue is urgently required. Can government truly realize the 2020 reduction target without ensuring chemical safety for the most vulnerable group of our societies, children from toys, children's pyjamas or baby care products?

We believe it is not possible to make SAICM a success and achieve the 2020 phase-out minimization goal without re-including Table C into the existing SAICM framework.

Agenda item 5a) Modalities for reporting on SAICM implementation

Issue: Government of Canada proposed a draft approach to monitoring progress with SAICM implementation

WECF/DR: We appreciate the work of the Canadian government on moving this important aspect of SAICM implementation forward. Concerning the draft guidance document we have the following concerns:

- Important indicators such as progress made on risk reduction and the substitution of hazardous chemicals through safer or non-chemical alternatives are missing
- We are very concerned about the absence of any reporting on GPA activities from the draft guidance document and wonder if this will enable a proper monitoring and implementation of SAICM
- The guidance document should request a consolidated document from the NGO community

Agenda item 7b) Proposal for a SAICM Scientific Conference

Issue: The SAICM secretariat prepared a draft paper on a possible SAICM scientific conference

WECF/DR: We appreciate the proposal from the secretariat and have the following concerns with it:

There is no doubt about chemicals and their negative effects on health and environment otherwise there would be no chemicals legislation. Science for chemicals management is only useful when governments can draw conclusions from it as regards taking the SAICM framework forward and enhancing it. Moreover, the proposed scientific conference would be duplicating the task that has been given to the International Forum on Chemical Safety in this regard. If needed, one could also attach a one-day workshop to the regional meetings if governments feel the need to be updated. A review of science on current and emerging scientific issues would be too broad and challenging for a single conference; toxicology, public health scientists, epidemiologists and other experts of the medical community, sociology, economics, agricultural issues, etc...

In addition, other activities should have a higher priority for use of scarce resource. Given the lack of resources, it might be advisable to make use of other means to facilitate exchange of latest research and related resources, such as for example Internet information exchange platforms. We support the secretariat exploring informal partnerships with IUPAC and other bodies as appropriate as part of its role in promoting exchange of scientific information.