

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

Thank you, Madam Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO) and Member of IPEN.

Madam Chair, we believe that the panel's future work should be primarily focused on chemicals in order to supplement current legislative and policy frameworks, rather than establishing three, each of which considers chemicals, waste, and pollution from different horizons. An integrated technique would concentrate on the pollutants associated with chemicals at all stages of their lifecycle. The panel is responsible for classifying and storing information regarding chemicals and their effects.

The scope of the OEWG should be to "strengthen the science-policy interface on chemicals and provide governments with scientific information that they can use to develop policies". The panel should not be directly coupled to existing policy frameworks, but rather work complementarily. The panel should allow the dynamics and openings to emphasize new knowledge and understanding about chemical and analytical instruments.

Madam Chair, over 350,000 different chemicals and chemical mixtures are used where only 1% of the chemicals are assessed properly. Many of these chemicals disrupt the endocrine system, cause cancer, and/or cause brain disorders. Over 53 million years of life were lost due to exposures to a group of selected chemicals due to leaching, production and usage, estimated by WHO in 2019. Only a fraction of these chemicals are regulated by existing multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

However, we are calling for a simple definition of horizon scanning to be included in the working document for the European Chemicals and Wastes Monitoring Panel. Horizon scanning "Identifies early signs of change not yet on the policy radar or addressed adequately," is addressed by IPEN. The working document by the OEWG proposes that capacity building should be part of the initial establishment of a science-policy panel. Another key function has been stated as "Facilitating information sharing with countries, in particular developing countries seeking relevant scientific information". The working document proposes to include capacity building as a principal function in the initial establishment of the science-policy panel additionally along with the preparation of specific institutional arrangement. The resolution also notes that most scientific publications on chemical hazards are not publicly available.

Therefore we call on to follow "Polluter pays principle" to raise impact and financial support. In our perspective, any new efforts need to be specifically targeted to have as much impact as possible using limited means, noting the lack of funding for the sound management of chemicals and waste. Financial support for a future science-policy panel should come from various sources, especially from an internationally coordinated tax on basic chemicals producers.

I thank you.

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