

Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC)
Inter-Organization Coordinating Committee

Summary Record of the Seventeenth Meeting

The seventeenth meeting of the Inter-Organization Coordinating Committee (IOCC) of the IOMC was held 27-28 June 2002 at UNITAR, Geneva, Switzerland. UNITAR chaired the meeting.

The meeting was held back-to-back with a special session of the IOCC with the President and secretariat of the InterGovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS). The special session was held in accordance with the wish for a more regular exchange of information between the two bodies.

The main topics discussed at the seventeenth meeting of the IOCC were the need for a new technical Coordinating Group on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the need for improved information and discussion on capacity building activities, the implications of the UNEP Governing Council Decision on a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the UNEP Global Mercury Assessment, the functioning of IOMC information systems and website, and the administrative arrangements for the IOCC Secretariat. A regular review of the activities of IOMC Technical Coordinating groups was also undertaken.

The IOCC discussed the need for a new IOMC Coordinating Group on POPs to promote coherence among participating organizations and governments to address POPs and their obligations under the Stockholm Convention. Both of these matters had been discussed in detail at separate technical meetings held in January and May 2002 respectively. The IOCC agreed to a procedure for finalizing the terms of reference of the new Coordinating Group. It also agreed to decide on the secretariat for the new coordinating group at the next IOCC meeting.

UNITAR invited IOMC to consider ways to improve information and discussion on capacity-building activities particularly on progress made since the third meeting of the IFCS (Forum III). It was agreed that this issue would be discussed further at the next meeting of IOCC.

UNEP reported on the Decision on a Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management taken at the UNEP GC Special Session in February 2002. A progress report, including options for taking the process forward is to be provided at the GC's s regular session in February 2003. The IOCC agreed to work together on this initiative. UNEP also reported on progress with the Global Mercury Assessment also to be presented to the GC in February 2003.

The IOCC discussed preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development including the draft plan of implementation and type 2 capacity-building partnerships of relevance to IOMC.

IOCC reviewed the status of IOMC information systems including the IOMC database of activity profiles and calendar of events, developed by UNEP Chemicals, and the IOMC website.

Three IOMC Technical Coordinating Groups (CG) were active over the six month period December 2002 to June 2003; the CG on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR), the CG on Chemical Accidents and the CG on Assessment of Existing Chemicals and Pollutants. Information on their activities is included on the IOMC website (<http://www.iomc.ch>).

The IOCC agreed that the original mandate of the CG on Harmonization of Chemical Classification Systems now that the work on classification and labelling had been presented to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). A new Sub-Committee of Experts on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling under UN ECOSOC had been established.

The IOCC noted that the CG on Stocks of Obsolete Pesticides and Industrial Chemicals had not met during the past six months but that discussions on obsolete pesticides had taken place in the margins of meetings of the African Stockpile Programme, an activity of UNEP Chemicals.

The IOCC discussed administrative arrangements for the IOMC secretariat, including rotation of the secretariat.

The next meeting of the IOMC/IOCC will be held on 22-23 January 2003 at UNITAR, Geneva.