

CHEMICALS AND WASTE FOCAL AREA STRATEGY

Global Context of Chemicals and Waste

207. The number of chemicals in commerce globally is widely considered to be in the tens of thousands. Unfortunately, many countries do not have a rigorous process to review chemicals risks. When used improperly and when disposed of unsafely, chemicals can pose significant harmful impacts on human health and the environment.

208. The most harmful of these chemicals include persistent organic pollutants, ozone depleting substances, mercury and highly hazardous pesticides. Due to the global impact on human health and the environment some of these highly dangerous chemicals are controlled by international law.

209. The GEF is charged with eliminating the most harmful chemicals which are covered by the Stockholm Convention, the Minamata Convention and the Montreal Protocol. The GEF also supports the achievement of broader sound management of chemicals and waste through its support to the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

210. The implementation support for the chemicals and waste conventions by the GEF provides both the opportunity for Parties to these conventions to meet their obligations under the Conventions and to use the entry point of the Conventions to transform their management of chemicals and ultimately use and produce chemicals without suffering their harmful impacts.

GEF support for chemicals and waste has significantly evolved over time

211. The GEF has responded to new chemicals conventions and the movement towards integration and synergies among the conventions by evolving its strategy to accommodate these transitions. GEF support has moved from separate Chemicals Focal Areas (ODS and POPs) to now having one fully integrated Chemicals and Waste Focal Area, including POPs, Mercury, ODS, and SAICM.

212. The newest convention supported by the GEF is the Minamata Convention on Mercury. As the convention, has now entered force, the GEF-7 strategy will support eligible countries implement the convention obligations. The GEF interventions will expand on previous support towards ratification and entry into force taking convention guidance on implementation into account.

Table 4. GEF's role in the different Chemicals and Waste multilateral architecture.

Convention/Process	Role of the GEF
Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants	Operates the Financial Mechanism on an interim basis
Minamata Convention on Mercury	Is included in the Financial Mechanism of the Convention

Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	Provides support to Countries with Economies in Transition to implement the Protocol
Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal	Indirect support through projects to implement the Stockholm and Minamata Convention
Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade	Indirect support through projects to implement the Stockholm and Minamata Convention
Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)	Supports specific SAICM priorities

Programming for enhanced Impact

213. In GEF-6, the Chemicals and Waste strategy sought to support the development of enabling environments, economic models and financial mechanisms to strengthen the global response to improving the sound management of chemicals and waste. The GEF Global Opportunities for Long-term Development in the ASGM sector (GOLD) program for example represents the first significant step in the direction of mobilizing private and other public resources to tackle mercury for the ASGM sector by working at the sector level rather than treating it as a chemicals issue. The success of eliminating the chemicals listed under the Stockholm Convention and the Minamata Convention will require a such a sectoral approaches.

214. There are ongoing global efforts to shift to sustainable patterns of production and consumption in industrial processes, including the application of circular economy, sound material-cycle society, and sustainable materials management approaches. This presents an opportunity for the GEF to leverage resources from these efforts which will in turn improve the impact of the focal area. The GEF will need to explore the possibility of aligning its investments to ensure that the work of the GEF on chemicals and waste supports these actions, and develops and provides the evidence based results for continued action in this area.

215. In GEF-7, more emphasis will be placed in facilitating the reduction of chemicals though stronger alignment with the shift to sustainable production and consumption and through stronger private sector engagement including supporting the enabling environments for industry to adopt better technologies and practices aimed at becoming more environmentally sustainable, including eliminating POPs and mercury, careful consideration of the incentives for private sector involvement, and streamlined processes for easier private sector navigation. More emphasis will also be placed on developing sustainable financing at the national/regional level to sustainably eliminate chemicals covered under the Conventions and at the same time facilitate the sound management of chemicals and waste.

216. To be able to make the transition of a chemical based approach to a sector/economic approach the GEF-7 programs seeks to integrate the individual chemical convention issues into a sector based approached which better aligns to national level efforts to improve the industrial

and support the objectives of the Impact Programs and of other Focal Area strategies including efforts to deal with marine littering / micro-plastics agricultural sectors in countries. In this way, the work of the conventions can be better integrated into national level agricultural policy, industrial manufacturing and pollution management. An example would be where countries are seeking to control air pollution from industrial sources, GEF work on mercury and POPS would be complimentary to national efforts to reduce PM 2.5, NO_x and SO_x etc. By aligning GEF work on chemicals to broader issues of agriculture and industry investments at the national level can be leveraged to achieve the objectives of the chemical and waste MEAS and contribute to boarder environmental performance improvements in these sectors.

217. A fully integrated focal area that is better aligned with sectoral investments in countries to address pollution, agriculture and industrial efficiency can better attract the private sector and link to efforts on increasing environmental sustainability in these sectors since the actions will be based on sectors rather than targeting a single chemical.

218. To achieve maximum impact of the proposed focal area strategy programming should be done via sectoral lines rather than MEA specific programming in the majority of instances since the chemicals controlled by the Stockholm and Minamata Conventions overlap in many of the industrail sectors where the majority of GEF funding in the focal area is programmed.

GEF-7 Chemicals and Waste Programming

219. The GEF-7 investment framework serves to:

- Eliminate/restrict/control emissions of the chemicals listed in Annex A, B and C of the Stockholm Convention and;
- Eliminate emissions and releases of mercury in activities and processes listed in Annexes A, B, C and D of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, particularly those activities that emit or uses the highest level of mercury as well as support the control of supply and trade, waste and sound management and storage of mercury and mercury containing waste;
- Support the developpment of public-private partnerships that engage industry to improve interim storage and long-term disposal of mercury and explore the possibility of utilizing existing storage as central repositories for excess mecury from other sources;
- Support government efforts to develop and promote best practices for the environmentally sound interim storage of mercury from ASGM sector and products, etc.;
- Phase out the production and consumption of Hydrochlorofluorocarbons and phase down the production and consumption of Hydrofluorocarbons from Countries with Economies in Transition; and

- Support the objectives of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, specifically in supporting the global phase out of the manufacture of lead based paint, building capacity for management and disposal of e-waste, elimination of chemicals of global concern from the supply chain of commercial and domestic products and support to countries to control and prevent the unsafe use and disposal of highly hazardous pesticides.

220. In GEF-7 there will be increased attention placed on maximizing private sector engagement and public-private sector investments in the CW cluster as well as gender mainstreaming in the CW cluster.

221. The SDG's provide a framework for development, and several SDG's target sustainable production and consumption. Of relevance to de-toxifying development would be SDG's 3, 6, 9, 11 and 12. The GEF can invest in programs that support removal of the barriers in cities/countries that are interested in detoxifying their products and materials supply chains to prevent toxic loading of the environment.

222. The chemicals and waste focal area will support the reduction of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) that are controlled by the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic pollutants, mercury and mercury compounds that are controlled by the Minamata Convention on Mercury, Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) and other chemicals controlled by the Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer, lead in paints, chemicals of global concern in the supply chain of commercial and domestic products and highly hazardous pesticides (HHPs) that enter the global food supply.

223. The chemicals and Waste multilateral environmental agreements and SAICM facilitate better management of chemicals that are primarily in the industrial and agricultural sector. To better leverage all the stakeholders in these sectors it is proposed that the GEF-7 chemicals and waste focal area will be programmed through four main programs which are:

- Industrial Chemicals Program;
- Agricultural Chemicals Program;
- Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States Program; and
- Enabling Activities.

224. The achievement of reduction of POPs, Mercury and ODS and their waste along with broader improvement in the sound management of chemicals and waste will primarily be achieved through the above programs in the Chemicals and Waste Focal Area.

225. In addition to the Chemicals and Waste focal area, additional global environmental benefits can be achieved through investments that will be undertaken in the GEF-7 Impact Programs and other focal areas in so far as these programs ensure that chemicals and waste

management is incorporated into the design of the projects and programs in the IP. It is expected that additional benefits can accrue in the following IPs and Focal Areas: they can contribute to or above the reduction targets for the focal area:

- Sustainable Cities Impact Program;
- Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration Impact Program;
- Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program;
- International Waters - Marine Litter; and
- Climate Change Mitigation.

226. The three impact programs can also support more broadly the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management by integrating the sound management of chemicals in the design of the interventions under the impact programs. For example, in the Sustainable Cities Impact Program, by influencing the design of urban spaces including materials, products and chemicals the IP will prevent the intentional use of Stockholm Convention relevant chemicals and mercury and will more broadly contribute to the sound management of chemicals and waste by ensuring that the built environment minimizes materials and chemicals that are harmful to human health and the environment.

227. Several POPs and highly hazardous pesticides are quite pervasive in food production systems around the world. For this reason, the Food Systems, Land Use and Restoration Impact Program can enable the GEF to tackle the use of pesticides, including Endosulphan which is the most commonly used in soy bean cultivation in some countries. The IP will also create opportunities to work on Highly Hazardous Pesticides, including on regulations that control/eliminate these chemicals from entering food production systems

228. In the Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program, in consultation with countries, additional priorities may be included, such as the formalization or regulation of the artisanal and small-scale gold mining (ASGM) sector, which can help secure private sector engagement. In addition, investments in the sound management of chemicals and waste should seek to promote, as far as is practical, improved approaches to resource use that promote sustainable production and consumption.

229. GEF-7 will explore the important synergies between the International Waters and the Chemicals and Waste Focal Areas to address specifically the challenge of marine litter and micro-plastics. Waste consisting of plastics can contribute to the POPs challenge as POPs contained in plastics can be released into the environment including oceans, if not properly managed. There are therefore clear linkages to the Stockholm Convention. Marine litter in the form of micro-plastics to a significant extent derives from land-based activities and should also be seen in the context of waste management issues dealt with under this Focal Area.

230. In programming resources to address chemicals and waste priorities the following principles will be used in determining the choice of projects in the focal area:

- Cost Effectiveness - the potential chemicals reductions of a proposed activity relative to its costs will be a major factor in consideration of funding;
- Sustainability – all projects should at a minimum incorporate a pathway to ensure sustainability of the activities as well as contribute to sustained sound management of chemicals and waste. In this regard the proposals will need to demonstrate how the interventions will change the behavior of the private and public sector to ensure sustainability of the intervention;
- Innovation – Projects should seek to develop and scale locally developed technologies and practices particularly in the context of the LDCs/SIDs program including in the design of financial mechanisms at the sub-national, national and regional levels;
- Private Sector Engagement – Projects should seek to create or improve the enabling environments in which the private sector can engage to reduce the use of harmful chemicals and to prevent the emission of harmful waste;
- Programs/Programs that promote/lead to Resource Efficiency and sustainable consumption and production approaches, like circular economy or sustainable material management;
- Prioritized under National Implementation Plans/Minamata Initial Assessments/ASGM National Action Plans;
- Builds on or uses existing networks, regional, national and sub-national institutions including regional centers set up under the chemicals and waste conventions; and
- Supports the objectives of the Impact Programs and of other Focal Area strategies including efforts to deal with marine litter/micro-plastics.

Program 1. Industrial Chemicals Program

231. This program seeks to eliminate or significantly reduce chemicals subject to better management by:

- The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Pollutants;
- The Minamata Convention on Mercury;
- The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management; and
- The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

232. Through supporting projects and programs that address:

- Chemicals and Waste at the end of life;
- Chemicals that are used or emitted from or in processes and products; and
- Management of the waste, or waste containing these chemicals.

233. This program will fund facilitation of enabling environments and strengthening of national legislation and regulatory capacity for meeting obligations, with regard to persistent organic pollutants, mercury and other chemicals listed in the chemicals and waste conventions. This will include the removal of barriers to market access of manufacturing of products containing GEF relevant chemicals, and reduction of production of harmful chemicals.

234. This program will also invest in improved sustainable material management initiatives, including circular economy, sound material-cycle society, and sustainable materials management approaches, which promote the adoption of improved production, consumption and environmentally sound disposal patterns. These approaches have the potential to drive the redesign of materials and products that contains POPs and mercury and the sound management of these materials and products including plastics and electronic waste (e-waste).

235. Implementation of improved material management approaches depends on close private-public partnership and involves multiple mechanisms, including: policies and regulations, technical assistance and capacity building, awareness raising, green/sustainable chemistry and technology, public procurement and financing models.

236. Within the industrial program, improved approaches to chemical production and consumption, including circular economy, sound material-cycle society, and sustainable materials management approaches will be used in conjunction with environmentally sound disposal to address POPs and mercury in plastics and electronics life cycles. Emphasis will be on addressing the entire life cycle of these products through a Circular Economy approach with strong private sector engagement at national to global scales. Coordination and knowledge sharing among these initiatives will be promoted by engaging relevant projects from other Focal Areas and Impact Programs, including the International Waters Focal Area and Sustainable Cities IP.

237. The following Chemicals and Waste MEA specific areas will be addressed by the industrial chemicals program:

Chemicals and Waste at end of life:

- Elimination of the use of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in equipment by 2025;
- Environmentally sound waste management/disposal of mercury/mercury containing waste or persistent organic pollutants including liquids containing PCBs and equipment contaminated with PCBs having a PCB content above 0.005%, in accordance with

paragraph 1 of Article 6 and part II of Annex A of the Convention, as soon as possible and no later than 2028; and

- Prevention of waste/products containing persistent organic pollutants from entering material recovery supply chains (including e-waste management with the aim of preventing e-waste from entering solid waste).

Chemicals used/emitted from/in processes and products

- Introduction and use of best available techniques and best environmental practices to minimize and ultimately eliminate releases of unintentionally produced POPs and mercury from major source categories included in both the Stockholm and Minamata Conventions including, but not limited to, cement manufacturing, coal fired power plants, various metallurgical processes, waste incineration;
- Reduction and elimination of mercury from the Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Mining Sector;
- Elimination of primary mercury mining, along with controls on use of mercury from primary mining;
- Phase out and eventual elimination of mercury or mercury compounds used in manufacturing process contained in Annex B of the Minamata Convention;
- Elimination of the use of mercury and persistent organic pollutants in products (including brominated flame retardants, PFOS and short chained paraffins) as well as the use of mercury in products (as specified in Annex A of the Minamata Convention) by phasing out manufacturing of the pure chemicals and introduction of alternatives in the products with a preference to non-toxic chemicals;
- Phase out of substances controlled by the Montreal Protocol for countries with economies in transition; and
- Phase out of the manufacture of lead based paints.

Program 2. Agriculture Chemicals Program

238. This program will address the agricultural chemicals that are listed as persistent organic pollutants under the Stockholm Convention and agricultural chemicals that contain mercury or its compounds.

239. Where the chemicals are in use, investments will be made to introduce alternatives.

240. The program will target the reduction of Endosulphan, Lindane and highly/severely hazardous pesticides that enter the global food supply chain as well as address end of life, waste

and obsolete POPs and mercury based agricultural chemicals and management and safe disposal of agricultural plastics contaminated by POPs and mercury based agricultural chemicals.

241. This program will also address restriction of DDT production and use in disease vector control in accordance with World Health Organization recommendations and guidelines on the use of DDT in cases where locally safe, effective and affordable alternatives are not available to the Party in question.

Program 3. Least Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States Program

242. This program will seek to address the sound management of chemicals and waste through strengthening the capacity of sub-national, national and regional institutions and strengthening the enabling policy and regulatory framework in these countries.

243. The program will provide support to the development of public-private partnerships specifically adapted to the circumstances of LDCs and SIDS to enable the sound management of chemicals and waste.

244. Under the SIDS/LDC program the following may be pursued under this program:

- Implementing Sustainable Low and Non-Chemical Development Strategies in SIDS and LDCs;
- Promoting Best Available Technologies (BAT) and Best Environmental Practices (BEP) to reduce UPOPs releases from sectors relevant to the Minamata and Stockholm Conventions in SIDS and LDCs;
- Promoting cleaner health-care waste management based on the lessons learnt from GEF funded healthcare waste projects to reduce UPOPs and mercury releases;
- Strengthening the management system for e-waste, addressing all stages of the life cycle (i.e. acquisition of raw materials, design, production, collection, transportation and recycling) in SIDS and LDCs;
- Phasing out of mercury-containing products;
- Undertaking gender mainstreaming and project monitoring and evaluation; and
- Develop a strategy to ensure that technical assistance and investments are solidly linked to enhance countries' ability to deal with the management of POPs and mercury in a sustainable manner.

245. Under this program, locally appropriate solutions will be encouraged as well as the use of existing regional institutions. This program does not prevent LDCs and SIDS from accessing resources from the other 3 programs.

Program 4. Enabling Activities

246. This program will:

- Support enabling activities under the Stockholm Convention, including National Implementation Plans (NIPs) and NIP Updates;
- Support enabling activities under the Minamata Convention, including Minamata Initial Assessments (MIAs) and artisanal and small-scale gold mining National Action Plans (ASGM NAPs);
- Global Monitoring of chemicals, related to effectiveness evaluation under the Chemical Conventions; and
- In addition, interested countries may also take part in the Integrated National Planning for MEAs and SDGs.