



International  
Labour  
Organization



UN  
environment  
programme



World Health  
Organization



Secretariat for the  
Strategic Approach  
to International  
Chemicals Management

***Invitation from ILO, UNEP, WHO and the SAICM Secretariat to an event hosted by the  
World Health Organization***

***Monday 10 February 2020, 10:00-12:00  
The Executive Board Room, World Health Organization,  
Avenue Appia 20, Geneva, Switzerland***

***Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste Beyond 2020 -  
Why it matters to health, labour and the environment***

People come into contact with a variety of chemicals from environmental sources - for example, air, water and food – and also through every day consumer products such as clothing, toys, furniture, electronics, household cleaners and cosmetics. In 2018, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that annually 1.6 million deaths and 45 million disability-adjusted life-years are attributable to exposures to selected chemicals<sup>1</sup>. This is likely a significant underestimate since disease burden information is only available for a small portion of the chemicals that people are exposed to in their daily lives. In addition to everyday sources, workers in particular are often subject to disproportionately high exposures to hazardous chemicals. In 2015, almost 1 million workers died from occupational exposure to hazardous substances, including dusts, vapours and fumes (an increase of more than 90,000 workers compared to 2011), based on estimates released by the International Labour Organization (ILO)<sup>2</sup>.

The [Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management](#) (SAICM) is a voluntary international policy framework which fosters the sound management of chemicals worldwide and, specifically, to support multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder efforts toward the goal agreed to at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development that, by the year 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on the environment and human health. Implementation of SAICM is overseen by the [International Conference on Chemicals Management](#) (ICCM) – a multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder forum.

With 2020 fast approaching, the ICCM decided to initiate an intersessional process to prepare recommendations on SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 (the intersessional process). The [fourth meeting of the Intersessional Process](#) is scheduled to take place from 23 – 27 March 2020 in Romania Bucharest. The outcome of the intersessional process will be presented at ICCM's fifth session to be held from 5-9 October 2020 in Bonn, Germany.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/ipcs/publications/chemicals-public-health-impact/en/> (Last accessed 2019-07-23)

<sup>2</sup> 1. Hämäläinen, P.; Takala, J.; Boon Kiat, T. 2017. Global Estimates of Occupational Accidents and Workrelated Illnesses 2017

It is important for the health, environment, and labour sectors to continue to engage and participate in the decision-making/governance to ensure the recommendations for the future meets the needs and expectations of the relevant sectors.

**Objectives of the event:**

- i) Provide an overview of SAICM and its multi-sectoral multi-stakeholder approach;
- ii) Provide an opportunity for engagement and exchange of views on the critical role and contribution of the various sectors in SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste, including the joint contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- iii) Strengthen cooperation between the health, labour and environment sectors in their efforts to address chemicals and waste, and in preparation for the fifth session of the ICCM.

**Proposed Programme:**

The joint event will include speakers from WHO, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Selected governments will present examples of the critical role and contribution of the health, labour and environment sectors in securing the sound management of chemicals and waste.

The agenda and speakers will be announced closer to the event.

The desired aim of the event is to highlight linkages and demonstrate the importance of engaging the health, environment and labour sectors for achieving the sound management of chemicals and waste Beyond 2020.

Registration at [http://reg.unog.ch/e/Sound\\_management\\_chemicals](http://reg.unog.ch/e/Sound_management_chemicals)

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