
REPORT OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME TO SUPPORT INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The fourth meeting of the Executive Board of the Special Programme to support institutional strengthening at the national level for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) was opened at 9 a.m. on 29 January 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland, by Mr. Jacob Duer, Chief of the Chemicals and Health Branch.

2. In his opening remarks, Mr. Duer welcomed the members of the Executive Board and the representatives from pilot countries to Geneva. He also highlighted the successes of the Special Programme in attracting healthy contributions from donors and the continued interest from recipient countries as reflected by the increasing number of applications received. In addition, he emphasised the role that the Special Programme plays in reconfirming the political importance of sound management of chemicals and waste, as reflected through the inclusion of chemicals and waste in the sustainable development goals, and in the context of SAICM as it moves towards its Beyond 2020 process. Mr. Duer further noted that chemicals and waste is also becoming ever more vital as reflected in the priorities that the fourth session of the United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA-4) will discuss, during which the Global Chemicals Outlook II will also be launched. Finally, Mr. Duer thanked the members of the Board for their flexibility following the postponement of the meeting from December 2018 and wished them luck in achieving their mandate over the coming days.

3. Ms. Rossana Silva Restrepo, Executive Secretary of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, extended her welcome to the members of the Executive Board. She emphasised the importance of the Special Programme to the Minamata Convention in facilitating the provision of funding to countries even before the Convention came into force. She also highlighted the support provided by the Special Programme Secretariat during the establishment of the Convention's Specific International Programme. Ms. Silva Restrepo stressed the importance of such joint efforts within the chemicals cluster that reinforce programmatic synergies and allow for the sharing of experiences and lessons learned. Finally, Ms. Silva Restrepo welcomed the upcoming midterm evaluation of the Special Programme and expressed her view that the outcomes of the evaluation will further strengthen the Special Programme.

4. Mr. Carlos Martin-Novella, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions also welcomed the members of the Executive Board on behalf of the Executive Secretary, Mr. Rolph Payet. In his remarks Mr. Martin-Novella noted that in the four years since the establishment of the Special Programme has played a critical role in in facilitating of the implementation on the Conventions. He emphasised that given the expected outcomes of the upcoming Meetings of the Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, which will, amongst other things, deliberate the issues of plastic waste, marine litter, and consider the listing of new chemicals under the Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the assistance provided by the Special Programme will contribute positively to the enhancement of Parties' abilities to fulfil their obligations towards the Conventions. Finally, Mr. Martin-Novella also welcomed the upcoming midterm evaluation of the Special Programme.

ITEM 2. ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

2.1. Election of officers

5. The Group elected Mr. Clarence Matewe (Zimbabwe), representing recipient countries, and Ms. Sofia Tingstorp (Sweden), representing donor countries, as co-chairs of the Executive Board.

6. Mr. Matewe made an introductory statement on behalf of the co-chairs in which he thanked the Board for entrusting the elected co-chairs with the task of leading the Executive Board through its two-year term. He also thanked the Board for its understanding and flexibility regarding the rescheduling of the Board meeting from December 2018 due to the need to ensure that the full complement of the Board members has been achieved. Finally, Mr. Matewe provided an overview of the meeting objectives and officially opened the meeting.

7. Following the opening remarks, the co-chairs invited the members of the Executive Board to introduce themselves briefly.

2.2. Adoption of the Agenda

8. The co-chairs invited the Executive Board to consider and adopt the provisional agenda and the proposed organisation of work as contained in documents SP/EB.4/1 and SP/EB.4/1/Add.1.

9. The agenda and proposed organisation of work were adopted without amendments.

ITEM 3. APPROVAL OF THE REPORT OF THE THIRD EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

10. The Executive Board was invited to consider and approve the report of the third Executive Board meeting, held in December 2017 in Nairobi, Kenya, as contained in document SP/EB.4/2.

11. The report was approved without any modifications. The co-chairs requested the Secretariat to make the final version of the report available on the Special Programme website.

ITEM 4. FEEDBACK AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM COUNTRIES THAT ARE IMPLEMENTING PILOT PROJECTS FROM THE FIRST ROUND OF APPLICATIONS

12. Representatives from the seven countries that secured funding from the first round of pilot applications to the Special Programme were invited by the outgoing Executive Board to provide feedback on the status of their projects and share their lessons learned with the view to helping the members of the Board inform revised procedures and guidelines for subsequent rounds of applications.

13. Ms. Elisa Coghlan gave a presentation on behalf of Argentina, showcasing their Special Programme project entitled "[*Strengthening National Capacity for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste*](#)". Ms. Coghlan provided background information on the Argentinian federal system and how it impacted and challenged the implementation of instruments for the sound management of chemicals and waste. She highlighted how it has led to chemicals and wastes issues being dealt with under a number of different departments, which resulted to a duplication of efforts in some cases, while leaving gaps in others. With the view to improving the overarching approach to managing chemicals and waste in Argentina, Ms. Coghlan explained that intergovernmental consultations were held amongst relevant ministries in order to identify national priorities prior to the submission of the application to the Special Programme. She indicated that the application guidelines were a useful reference to facilitate the application process, however, she also noted that some of the language could be further simplified or accompanied by a glossary to provide additional explanations. In addition, she noted that more flexibility is needed with respect to the deadlines during which the applications should be submitted and the limits placed on the percentage of funds that can be allocated to the different budget categories. She further indicated that the follow up and feedback provided by the Secretariat was very useful. Ms. Coghlan also described the challenges faced during the project implementation phase,

including, government turn over during elections, bureaucratic human resource practices in Argentina and the frequent reporting requirements to the various stakeholders. She further noted that the project provided an opportunity for Argentina to establish a directorate to work towards the consolidation of work related to the sound management of chemicals and waste in Argentina while also strengthening collaborations and involvement with relevant industry partners.

14. Ms. Maurille Elegbede gave a presentation on behalf of Benin, showcasing their Special Programme project entitled “[*Legal and Institutional Strengthening for the Sound Management of Chemicals in Benin*](#)”. In her presentation, Ms. Elegbede provided some background information on the status of chemicals and waste management legislation in Benin and highlighted that there was no overarching framework or coordination system in place in the Ministry of Environment. Upon hearing about the Special Programme, the Ministry of Environment worked with other relevant ministries to draft the application with the view to developing a project that addressed national priorities in a sustainable manner. Ms. Elegbede indicated that application process was not complicated and that the guidelines facilitated the application process, however, some difficulties were faced due to language barriers as well as with the budget section and the project description. She further noted that the Secretariat was readily available to provide technical assistance and explanations as needed throughout the application process. Finally, Ms. Elegbede noted that the project has been progressing well however some challenges were faced due to changes in the government that lead to delays in the adoption of new legislation and varying support from relevant stakeholders that are involved in project implementation, specifically, industrial associations.

15. Ms. Elsa Ferreras gave a presentation on behalf of the Dominican Republic, showcasing their Special Programme project entitled “[*Strengthening institutional capacity for the implementation of the Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm and Minamata Convention and SAICM in Dominican Republic*](#)”. In her remarks Ms. Ferreras explained that the national priorities that are being addressed through the Special Programme project were determined as a result of the outcomes of two Quick Start Programme projects. These priorities included, amongst other things, the establishment of a system to register the importation of chemicals, and to facilitate the exchange of information on the management of chemicals between relevant ministries. With regards to the application process, Ms. Ferreras indicated that the process was not easy for the Dominican Republic due to language barriers. She also stated that the application process included too many steps and the application form was confusing and poorly formatted. These issues lead to delays in meeting the application deadlines. Ms. Ferreras suggested that the Secretariat consider holding webinars to explain the application process to countries that are interested applying for funding from the Special Programme in order to provide them with an opportunity to ask questions.

16. Mr. Yousif Muayad gave a presentation on behalf of Iraq, showcasing their Special Programme project entitled “[*Strengthening the Institutional Structure for the Management of Chemicals and Wastes in Iraq*](#)”. In his presentation Mr. Muayad provided some background information on the status of chemicals and waste management in Iraq and highlighted that they face many challenges in this area due to the ongoing conflicts and political instability in Iraq. With the view to attempting to address some of these issues, the Ministry of Environment, in collaboration with the UN Environment Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA), established a technical team to apply for funding through the Special Programme following consultations with relevant ministries. A challenge at this stage of the process was prioritizing and selecting which activities to include in the application that can be carried out within the US\$ 250,000 budget. Mr. Muayad indicated that the overall application process was clear and the guidelines were very useful even though there remained some outstanding technical questions which were addressed by ROWA and the Secretariat which also provided useful and prompt feedback on the application. Mr. Muayad went on to explain that this was the first project of its kind in Iraq and that it has provided them with an opportunity to build technical and financial capacity in implementing chemicals and waste related projects in spite of the continued challenges faced as a result of the security situation in Iraq.

17. Ms. Valeriya Aspekovagave a presentation on behalf of the Kyrgyz Republic , showcasing their Special Programme project entitled “[*Strengthening capacity for national implementation of chemicals and waste related international agreements*](#)”. In her remarks, Ms. Aspekovagave provided some background information on the status of chemicals and waste management in the Kyrgyz Republic. With the view to improving the sound

management of chemicals and waste, the Kyrgyz Republic prepared to submit an application to the Special Programme. In preparation for their submission, they took part in a webinar that was hosted by the Secretariat of the Special Programme in Russian. Ms. Aspekovagave indicated that this webinar was very useful. In addition, she also reflected positively on the guidelines provided, however, she noted that the application forms were cumbersome and contained repetitive and overlapping sections. Furthermore, she acknowledged the role of the Secretariat in providing technical support during the application and implementation phases. Ms. Aspekovagave noted that the project brought attention to the issue of chemicals and waste in the Kyrgyz Republic and facilitated the mobilization and participation of relevant stakeholders including the public and non-government organisations. Some of the challenges faced, however, include frequent changes in government and responsible ministers which leads to a loss of institutional memory, interdepartmental inconsistencies and a lack of succession.

18. Ms. Kemilembe Mutasa gave a presentation on behalf of the Tanzania (United Republic of), showcasing their Special Programme project entitled "[*Strengthening institutional capacity for sound management of chemicals and waste in the United Republic of Tanzania*](#)". Ms. Mutasa introduced the Board to the challenges faced by Tanzania (United Republic of) in achieving sound management of chemicals and waste. The project submitted was designed address these challenges following a national consultation which was conducted by the Ministry of Environment to identify their national priorities. Ms. Mutasa indicated that the application guidelines were useful in facilitating the application process. The application forms were clear but the completion of the section on the project logframe and milestones was challenging since they were used to using templates that requested less detailed action plans. She also noted that the Secretariat was available to answer technical questions on the issues they found challenging. Ms. Mutasa noted that delays were experienced during the implementation phase of the project due to administrative challenges experienced following the transfer of Tanzanian government headquarters from Dar es Salam to Dodoma. Other challenges included delays in receiving information from stakeholders that are involved in the project. In spite of these delays, the project provided opportunities for the active engagement of the private sector throughout most of the project's activities. This highlighted the importance of enhancing Public Private Partnerships and mechanisms in order achieve the sound management of chemicals and waste throughout their life cycle in the country.

19. Mr Vladislav Marushevskiy and Mr. Mikhail Malkov gave a presentation on behalf of Ukraine, showcasing their Special Programme project entitled "[*Strengthening the Enforcement of the Rotterdam Convention and Building Capacity to Counteract Illegal Trafficking of Chemicals*](#)". Their presentation provided context on the choice to focus the project application on the Rotterdam Convention and the illegal trafficking of pesticides. They found the application guidelines useful and the application forms were easy to complete. They also appreciated the feedback provided by the Secretariat to improve the application shifting its focus from public awareness to institutional capacity building on illegal pesticides. With regards to the implementation of the project, they indicated that the activities planned are being completed on time, however, they highlighted the problems faced as a result of unexpected challenges posed by the project's implementing partner.

20. The representatives from each of the pilot countries also expressed their appreciation to the donors for their contributions to the Special Programme.

21. The presentations were followed by a brief question and answer period during which the members of the Executive Board requested additional clarification on the status of implementation of each project.

22. Following the presentations, the Executive Board expressed their appreciation to the representatives from the pilot countries for sharing their experiences with the Board and reflected positively on the extent to which the projects showed a strong level of country ownership and a positive impact at the national and regional level with respect to improvements in their capacity to soundly manage chemicals and waste. They also expressed their views towards the effective mainstreaming of the sound management of chemicals and waste through effective stakeholder and private sector engagement that facilitated the integration of the issue across relevant sectors, including health, and economic activities.

23. The members of the Boards further discussed the information shared by these countries and highlighted the following issues that were raised during the presentations:

- a. The Special Programme Secretariat was actively involved with partners at all stages of project development. In some cases, UN Environment regional offices were also involved. The members of the Executive Board reflected positively on the efforts made by the Secretariat.
- b. The application guidelines provided by the Secretariat were generally useful in facilitating the process of completing an application for funding from the Special Programme. However, some presenters noted that additional explanations were needed with respect to some technical aspects of project development, in particular the log frame. The presenters also noted that the Secretariat was readily available to provide clarifications as needed.
- c. The application forms were generally easy to fill out, however, it was further noted by some presenters that certain sections were repetitive and redundant.
- d. In their presentations the representatives from the pilot countries discussed a number of different challenges that were faced during the application phase and the implementation phase, including:
 - i. Language barriers faced by countries where English is not an official language contributed to the challenges experienced when filling the application forms. It was suggested that the provision of a glossary of terms to the application guidelines may facilitate the process;
 - ii. The amount of time allocated for the development of applications and taking on board the suggestions for improvement made by the Secretariat was not sufficient and would need to be extended, or done in stages in order to accommodate the need for more time;
 - iii. The limits placed on the percentage of funds that can be allocated to the different budget categories, especially for human resources were restrictive;
 - iv. With regards to challenges in implementation, some presenters noted that frequent government turn over and instabilities in their country hamper the projects' progress and efforts towards sustainability;
 - v. One presenter indicated that the frequent need for reporting was burdensome and suggested that working towards a harmonized reporting mechanism that satisfies all their stakeholders would be beneficial.
- e. It was evident from the project presentations that there was strong stakeholder engagement, which reflects positively on the involvement of many relevant sectors, however, the projects did not explicitly involve the health sector which was of particular concern since the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention and SAICM have provisions that address health issues which are not fully reflected in the projects.
- f. More emphasis was needed on the sustainability of the projects following their completion and the impact of the project outcomes on the countries' needs as well as facilitating their capacity to apply to other funding mechanisms. It was noted that regional cooperation may also facilitate the projects' long-term sustainability.
- g. The responsibility of managing an implementation partner rests with the government. Any changes in the agreed arrangements with such a partner should be communicated with the Secretariat as soon as possible, The Secretariat would subsequently consult with the co-chairs of the Executive Board with the view to approving the changes proposed by the government.

24. The members of the Executive Board requested the Secretariat to take into account the issues that were raised during the pilot country presentations when reviewing the guidelines and application forms in preparation for the fourth round of applications, as appropriate, with the understanding that some changes have already been implemented during the second and third calls for applications.

ITEM 5. CONSIDERATION OF ELIGIBLE AND COMPLETE APPLICATIONS FOR THE THIRD ROUND OF APPLICATIONS

25. Under this agenda item the Executive Board was invited to review and consider the eligible and complete applications, with the view to approving projects that will receive funding for the third round of applications.
26. To facilitate the work of the Executive Board, the Secretariat has made available the full application packages submitted by each country, which include application forms, signed endorsement letters, letters of support and additional information, as well as the appraisals made by the Secretariat and the internal task team.
27. Furthermore, the co-chairs of the Executive Board invited the Special Programme Secretariat to provide an overview of the launch and review process for the third round of applications and to introduce the background documents (SP/EB.4/3 and its addenda SP/EB.4/3/Add.1, SP/EB.4/3/Add.2 SP/EB.4/3/Add.3 and SP/EB.4/3/Add.4) with the view to assisting the Board in its deliberations on this agenda item.
28. In its presentation the Secretariat indicated that the call for applications was launched on 23 February 2018. The deadline for the submission of applications to the Secretariat was 21 June 2018. Following the application deadline, the Secretariat received 37 applications, from 34 countries. Each application was subject to an in-depth review by the Secretariat with the view to providing comments to the applicants to help strengthen their applications, as appropriate.
29. Furthermore, the Special Programme Secretariat convened two first face-to-face meetings of the internal task team comprising of representatives from the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Secretariat of the Minamata Convention, the SAICM Secretariat and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat in to undertake a review and appraisal of the applications received.
30. The appraisal involved a qualitative analysis of each project and a technical review of the activities planned. The appraisal also included a detailed review and assessment of the budget in relation to the proposed activities.
31. Of the applications received:
- a. Four were deemed GEF eligible. Of these countries, one resubmitted a modified application for further consideration.
 - b. One application was submitted by a country, specifically Tanzania (United Republic of), which already has ongoing Special Programme project that is taking place in their country. The Secretariat recommended that they reapply at a later stage once the results of the current ongoing project have been achieved.
 - c. Two countries submitted multiple eligible applications. The Secretariat invited these countries to review the applications and submit one consolidated application per country. One country resubmitted one application for further consideration. The second country indicated that the scope of each project submitted varied very widely therefore they would not be merged. However, the country did not resubmit one of its applications by the specified deadlines therefore only one application was forwarded for consideration by the Board.
 - d. Finally, applications from seven countries were withdrawn or not resubmitted by the applicants by the specified deadlines.
32. The Secretariat and the internal task team ultimately reviewed and appraised 24 applications from 24 countries, as outlined in Annex 2. The Secretariat presented the results of its appraisal of each project to the Board.

33. Following the presentation, the co-chairs invited the Executive Board to deliberate on the eligible and complete applications received by the Secretariat for the third round of applications.

34. The Executive board noted that the application from Tanzania (United Republic of) should have been forwarded to the Executive Board by the Secretariat emphasising that it is the Board's prerogative to assess the merits of any eligible and complete application regardless of whether or not the submitting country has an ongoing project. The Executive Board requested the Secretariat conduct an appraisal of the project from Tanzania (United Republic of) and present it to the Board for its consideration during the meeting.

35. Furthermore, Board did not consider the project from Uruguay as eligible for funding from the Special Programme Trust Fund given that it had recently graduated from [Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\) list of Official development assistance \(ODA\)](#) recipients. The Executive Board also referred to the eligibility criteria in the Special Programme terms of reference which state that "*Support from the Special Programme will be available for developing countries, taking into account the special needs of least developed countries and small island developing States and for countries with economies in transition, with priority given to those with least capacities*".

36. The Board deliberated the merits of each project and provided detailed comments on each application to further strengthen the applications that have been approved for funding and provided detailed feedback and guidance to countries whose projects have not been approved with the view to encouraging them to resubmit improved applications in the future.

37. Following its discussion, the Executive Board approved 18 projects amounting to US\$ 4,703,849. The approved projects were selected taking into account the project's merits, regional balance and priority to countries with least capacity, taking into account the special needs of least development countries and small island developing states, as follows:

Africa

Country	Project Title
<i>Angola</i>	Strengthening Angola's National Chemicals and Waste Management Programme by establishing sustainable, integrated, and coherent national structure with emphasis on Private Sector participation
<i>Ethiopia</i>	Enhancing Ethiopia's Institutional Capacity for Sound Management of Hazardous Wastes and POPs Chemicals and Improving Reporting Obligation under Basel and Stockholm Conventions
<i>Eswatini</i>	Institutional Capacity development and strengthening for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste in the Kingdom of Eswatini
<i>South Africa</i>	Phasing out of lead in paint and the development of an action plan for SAICM emerging contaminants (lead in paint, HHPs, EPPPs, EDCs, & Cd)
<i>Tunisia</i>	Institutional strengthening and capacity building project towards achieving Environmental Sound Management (ESM) of hazardous wastes and chemicals at the industrial level as well as enhancing compliance and implementation of chemicals and waste Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) including Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

Asia Pacific

Country	Project Title
<i>Cambodia</i>	Institutional strengthening in Cambodia for efficient and coordinated implementation of the chemicals and waste management international agreements
<i>Iran (Islamic Republic of)</i>	The Implementation of Cleaner Production Practices to Manage Chemicals and Waste in Oil Refinery
<i>Micronesia (Federated States of)</i>	Strengthening Institutional Capacity for the Chemicals Management in the FSM
<i>Nauru</i>	Strengthening the national capacity for integrated chemicals and waste management in Nauru

<i>Pakistan</i>	Strengthening of national legislation and capacity building of stakeholders for sound chemicals and hazardous waste management in Pakistan
<i>Palau</i>	Strengthening the national institutional capacity for chemicals and waste management in Palau
<i>State of Palestine (The)</i>	Strengthening the institutional capacity of the State of Palestine for sound waste and chemicals management and fostering stakeholder buy-in under the BRS Conventions and supporting process towards ratification of the Minamata Convention
<i>Vanuatu</i>	Strengthening the National Institutional Capacity for Chemicals and waste management in Vanuatu

Central and Eastern Europe

Country	Project Title
<i>Albania</i>	Strengthening sound chemicals and waste management in Albania, demonstrating improvement of Health Care Waste (HCW) management.
<i>Kazakhstan</i>	Strengthening the National Capacity of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Regulate Chemicals Through Ensuring Compliance with Obligations Under International Multilateral Environmental Agreements
<i>Tajikistan</i>	Strengthening institutional capacity for national implementation of the Stockholm and Basel international conventions and building capacity for accessing the Rotterdam Convention in Tajikistan

Latin American and the Caribbean

Country	Project Title
<i>Bolivia (Plurinational State of)</i>	Special Program for the Strengthening of National Capacities for Chemical Substances and Hazardous Waste Management in the Plurinational State of Bolivia
<i>El Salvador</i>	Institutional strengthening for El Salvador in the implementation of the Basel, Stockholm, Minamata and Rotterdam Conventions and the Strategic Approach for the Management of Chemical Products at the International Level

38. With regards to the South African project, the Executive Board decided to approve the project without the proposed activities focusing on the development of a Minamata Implementation plan since this would constitute a duplication of activities with the ongoing GEF funded Minamata Initial Assessment. In addition, such activities may also be funded by the Minamata Convention's Specific International Programme and would further constitute a duplication of efforts in that context. The Board therefore requested that the activities related to this outcome, as well as the corresponding fund allocations, be removed from project proposal.

39. With regards to the Iranian and Palestinian projects one Board member representing donors did not support the use of Special Programme funds to support these projects, and did not join consensus to approve either project. The Board member noted their objections with the Iranian project due to potential security concerns, and the Palestinian project due to their position regarding the applicant's status as a State Party under the chemicals and waste related Conventions.

40. The Board requested the Secretariat to inform each country that submitted an application of the outcomes of the Board's deliberations and to include detailed feedback for improvements based on the detailed comments made during the meeting.

ITEM 6. UPDATE ON THE OPERATIONS OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME

6.1 Secretariat activities and budget for the Trust Fund

41. The co-chairs of the Executive Board invited the Special Programme Secretariat to provide an update on the work it has undertaken since the third meeting of the Executive Board in December 2017, including a report

on the budget and expenditures of the Special Programme Trust Fund and the operations of the Special Programme as outlined in document SP/EB.4/4.

42. The Executive Board welcomed the Secretariat's report on the budget and expenditures of the Special Programme Trust Fund and the operations of the Special Programme. The Board sought to clarify whether or not the staff costs budgeted for 2019 are fully directed to Secretariat staff. The Secretariat clarified that the staff costs indicated reflect 100% of the staff costs dedicated to the full and effective implantation of the Special Programme, while noting that on some occasions the staff of the Special Programme Secretariat provide substantive and logistical support to other units of the chemicals and health branch as well as to the Minamata Convention during which time the staff costs are covered by the Branch or the Minamata Convention.

43. The Executive Board approved the 2019 budget for the operations of the Special Programme as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Approved budget for 2019 (all amounts in US\$)

	Staff Costs	Contractual Services	Travel	IP-Direct	Operating Costs	TOTAL
Output 1: Management of the Special Programme	0	15,000	75,000	0	0	90,000
Output 2: Technical assistance	0	0	50,000	4,703,849	0	4,753,849
Output 3: Communications	40,000	60,000	20,000	50,000	0	170,000
Mid-term Evaluation	62,492	0	25,000	0	0	87,492
Staff costs	800,502	0	0	0	20,000	820,502
TOTAL (NET)	902,994	75,000	170,000	4,753,849	20,000	5,921,843

6.2 Draft terms of reference for the midterm evaluation of the Special Programme

44. The co-chairs of the Executive Board invited Mr. Michael Spilsbury, head of the UN Environment Evaluation Office, to present the draft terms of reference for the mid-term evaluation of the Special Programme, in the context of the internal UN Environment Project document for the Special Programme, available in document SP/EB.4/5.

45. In its deliberations under this agenda item, the Executive Board welcomed the initiation of the mid-term evaluation of the Special Programme. However, the Board also indicated that the proposed draft terms of reference were not clear and that the proposed objectives did not clearly indicate how they will contribute to the assessment of the performance and implementation of the Special Programme, its Secretariat and that the projects it is funding are contributing to institutional strengthening at the national level and building capacity towards the sound management of chemicals and waste.

46. Furthermore, the Board noted that the text of the proposed draft terms of reference used a lot of UN standard guidance language which was not reader friendly. There was also mention of an evaluation reference group which may not be a necessary component of the evaluation process. It was also noted that the proposed draft terms of reference should refer to the instruments that the Special Programme supports and the integrated approach to financing of chemicals and waste.

47. In line with its discussion, the Executive Board requested the Secretariat to undertake a stepwise approach to revising the proposed draft terms of reference, in collaboration with the UN Environment Evaluation Office, with the view to integrating the recommendations for improvement made by the Board and initiating the midterm evaluation in April 2019, as outlined in the calendar of activities available in annex 3.

6.3 Resource mobilization strategy

48. The Secretariat presented an overview of the status of the implementation of the resource mobilization strategy to date and introduced background document SP/EB.4/6 to assist the Board in its deliberations on this agenda item.

49. With respect to establishment of a resource target for the duration of the Special Programme, the Executive Board indicated that it was not necessary to set a resource target at this point in time. However, in its deliberations the Executive Board highlighted the importance of expanding the Special Programme's donor base by reaching out to countries and regions that have not yet contributed to the Special Programme Trust Fund. The Board also reflected on the need for the effective implementation of a strong communication strategy to facilitate the mobilization of new donors.

50. The members of the Board also stressed the need to ensure that donors are acknowledged during the Secretariat's outreach activities and by recipient countries through the outputs produced during the implementation of their Special Programme funded projects.

51. In addition, the Board emphasised the role of the private sector when considering resource mobilisation in the context of the Special Programme. They expressed the continued need to strengthen and increase the Special Programme's engagement with the private sector through financial and in-kind contributions as well as through their direct involvement in facilitating the implementation of Special Programme projects at the national level. The Board suggested that such engagements can be facilitated by reaching out to relevant industry associations and private sector platforms.

52. Furthermore, the members of the Board indicated that stronger links need to be made between the Special Programme and the Sustainable Development Goals, including through its projects, with the view to attracting new donors. A focus on projects that target e-waste as well as marine litter and micro plastics were also suggested as possible areas of interest to new donors.

53. In line with its discussion, the Executive Board requested the Secretariat to develop a focused action plan that outlines activities and necessary resources to showcase the Board's priorities over the next two years.

6.4 Communications strategy

54. The co-chairs of the Executive Board invited the Special Programme Secretariat to provide an overview of the status of the implementation of Phase I of the communications strategy and the proposed branding and visual identity of the Special Programme, as well as provide an overview of the Special Programme website and e-learning modules as outlined in document SP/EB.4/7.

55. The Executive Board approved the proposed branding and visual identity of the Special Programme, and requested the Secretariat to use them, as appropriate. It was also agreed that appropriate slogans will be included alongside the logo to highlight key aspects of the Special Programme, such as institutional strengthening. In its discussion, the Board emphasised the importance of widely using the approved branding and visual identity of the Special Programme in order to facilitate the Programme's visibility to both donors and recipient countries.

56. With regards to the website, members of the Board welcomed the proposed improvements to the Special Programme project database to include a search engine that facilitates the retrieval of information. In addition, the Board noted that the contents of the Special Programme website are not available in all six official languages of the United Nations, while further noting that this may facilitate improved information sharing. Furthermore, the Board expressed its concern that the information related to the Special Programme can be difficult to find through the UN Environment home page. The Board also requested the Secretariat look into creating links from the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, the Minamata Convention and SAICM websites to the Special Programme website.

57. With regards to the guidelines and e-learning modules, the Board welcomed the development of both

products and hoped that they will facilitate the application process and contribute to the improvement of the quality of the applications submitted. It was also noted that there are many useful lessons that can be compiled based on experiences from past rounds of applications with the view to providing additional guidance to applicants.

58. The Board also discussed the importance of outreach activities and information sharing sessions to facilitate awareness raising on the Special Programme. This included hosting side events at the margins or relevant meetings or holding regional workshops.

59. Finally, the Board welcomed the proposed activities that will be implemented under Phase II of the communications strategy.

ITEM 7. DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

60. To facilitate the Executive Board's deliberations under this agenda item, the Secretariat made a brief presentation outlining a tentative calendar of activities leading up to the fifth meeting of the Board as well as a tentative agenda items that the Board may wish to consider at its next meeting.

61. In light of the tentative calendar of activities provided by the Secretariat, the members of the Board decided that its next meeting will be held in September or October 2019 at a venue to be advised. The Board requested the Secretariat to consult with the co-chairs when determining the dates of the meeting, while considering the possibility of holding the meeting through virtual means or back to back with other related meetings, for example the third meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, which is scheduled to take place in October 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand. If there is no alternative venue the meeting will be held in Geneva, Switzerland.

62. The Board also approved the proposed tentative agenda for its upcoming meeting and requested the inclusion of an additional item regarding the 'definition of developing country' in the context of the Special Programme. The Board particularly requested the Secretariat to assess and report back on available and appropriate criteria to define the term 'developing country', for example, the DAC list of ODA recipients, UN country classification, amongst others.

ITEM 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

63. Members of the Board expressed their appreciation to the Secretariat for successfully convening the fourth meeting of Executive Board and facilitating the work of the Special Programme.

64. The Board member representing the Asia/Pacific region was announced by the Secretariat as Mr. Ritesh Kumar (India). The selection was carried out through an electronic ballot, facilitated by the UN Environment Governance Affairs Division, with the Asia/Pacific representatives of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in Nairobi. The full list of Executive Board members can be found on the [Special Programme website](#).

65. A draft report was circulated online among the members of the Executive Board for their comments over a period of two weeks. The Secretariat made the necessary amendments in order to finalize the present report.

ITEM 9. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

66. The meeting drew to a close at 6 p.m. on 31 January 2019.

ANNEX 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX 2

LIST OF APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AT ITS FOURTH MEETING

Africa

Country	Project Title
<i>Angola</i>	Strengthening Angola's National Chemicals and Waste Management Programme by establishing sustainable, integrated, and coherent national structure with emphasis on Private Sector participation
<i>Cote d'Ivoire</i>	Strengthening Institutional Capacities for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste
<i>Ethiopia</i>	Enhancing Ethiopia's Institutional Capacity for Sound Management of Hazardous Wastes and POPs Chemicals and Improving Reporting Obligation under Basel and Stockholm Conventions
<i>Eswatini</i>	Institutional Capacity development and strengthening for the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste in the Kingdom of Eswatini
<i>Madagascar</i>	Structuring adequate capacities to key national institutions on environmentally sound management of chemicals and hazardous wastes (ESMCW) in Madagascar.
<i>South Africa</i>	Phasing out of lead in paint and the development of an action plan for SAICM emerging contaminants (lead in paint, HHPs, EPPPs, EDCs, & Cd), as well the development of the Minamata Convention national implementation plan for mercury in South Africa
<i>United Republic of Tanzania</i>	Management of Obsolete Chemicals and Chemical Wastes in Tanzania
<i>Togo</i>	Strengthening institutions, coordination, and access to information for sound chemicals management in Togo
<i>Tunisia</i>	Institutional strengthening and capacity building project towards achieving Environmental Sound Management (ESM) of hazardous wastes and chemicals at the industrial level as well as enhancing compliance and implementation of chemicals and waste Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) including Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions

Asia Pacific

Country	Project Title
<i>Cambodia</i>	Institutional strengthening in Cambodia for efficient and coordinated implementation of the chemicals and waste management international agreements
<i>Iran (Islamic Republic of)</i>	The Implementation of Cleaner Production Practices to Manage Chemicals and Waste in Oil Refinery
<i>Micronesia (Federated States of)</i>	Strengthening Institutional Capacity for the Chemicals Management in the FSM
<i>Nauru</i>	Strengthening the national capacity for integrated chemicals and waste management in Nauru
<i>Pakistan</i>	Strengthening of national legislation and capacity building of stakeholders for sound chemicals and hazardous waste management in Pakistan
<i>Palau</i>	Strengthening the national institutional capacity for chemicals and waste management in Palau
<i>State of Palestine</i>	Strengthening the institutional capacity of the State of Palestine for sound waste and chemicals management and fostering stakeholder buy-in under the BRS Conventions and supporting process towards ratification of the Minamata Convention
<i>Vanuatu</i>	Strengthening the National Institutional Capacity for Chemicals and waste management in Vanuatu

Central and Eastern Europe

Country	Project Title
<i>Albania</i>	Strengthening sound chemicals and waste management in Albania, demonstrating improvement of Health Care Waste (HCW) management.
<i>Kazakhstan</i>	Strengthening the National Capacity of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Regulate Chemicals Through Ensuring Compliance with Obligations Under International Multilateral Environmental Agreements
<i>Tajikistan</i>	Strengthening institutional capacity for national implementation of the Stockholm and Basel international conventions and building capacity for accessing the Rotterdam Convention in Tajikistan

Latin American and the Caribbean

Country	Project Title
<i>Bolivia (Plurinational State of)</i>	Special Program for the Strengthening of National Capacities for Chemical Substances and Hazardous Waste Management in the Plurinational State of Bolivia
<i>Colombia</i>	Strengthening of institutional capacity through the development and dissemination of technical instruments for the sound management of chemicals and hazardous waste
<i>El Salvador</i>	Institutional strengthening for El Salvador in the implementation of the Basel, Stockholm, Minamata and Rotterdam Conventions and the Strategic Approach for the Management of Chemical Products at the International Level
<i>Panama</i>	Strengthening capacities in Panama for monitoring and controlling chemicals
<i>Uruguay</i>	Strengthening National Capacities for the Sound Management of Chemicals

ANNEX 3

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE REVISION OF THE DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME

Activity	Main Actors	Timeframe
Revision of the draft terms of reference for the mid-term evaluation of the Special Programme taking into account the comments made by the Board	UN Environment Evaluation Office	Mid-February 2019
Revised draft terms of reference circulated to the Executive Board for a period of three weeks for their comment	Secretariat / Executive Board	Mid-February – March 2019
Integration of comment provided by the Executive Board following the comment period	Secretariat / UN Environment Evaluation Office	March 2019
Executive Board teleconference to endorse the final terms of reference for the mid-term evaluation of the Special Programme	Secretariat / Executive Board	March 2019
Initiation of the mid-term evaluation of the Special Programme	UN Environment Evaluation Office	April 2019