

## ICCA Input on UNEA-5 Ministerial Declaration

The International Council of Chemical Associations (ICCA) is pleased to provide input to the ministerial declaration of UNEA-5. As H.E. Sveinung Rotevatn notes in his letter on Ministerial Declaration inputs, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the global community and its impacts will continue for some time. Recovery requires a globally coordinated response, including coordination with the private sector. While rapid economic growth is needed, ICCA notes that progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 continues to be a priority. It is also important to carefully prioritize resources, given the constraints of all member states, industry, and IGOs. The products of chemistry, including plastics, are essential for both global recovery from the pandemic and to achieve actions under the UNEA-5 theme, “Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.”

As Member States and stakeholders navigate the ongoing global health emergency and move to rebuild a post-pandemic world, sustainable solutions should also foster the development and availability of, and access to, critical medical supplies and products that promote health, hygiene, and a safe food and water supply. We must focus on responsible consumption and production as we balance the need for these products with considerations for the environment. To do so, it is essential to build a viable system where stakeholders will act voluntarily and continuously.

In this vein, ICCA recommends the following messages be conveyed in the ministerial declaration:

- **Support for science- and risk-based chemical management systems in every country**

ICCA will continue to strengthen our Responsible Care® program to promote safe chemicals management, but this voluntary initiative is not a substitute for the establishment of legal chemical management systems in countries where they don’t exist today. Effective and well-administered chemical management systems are critical to ensuring that countries are able to understand the chemicals on the market in their countries, address pollution, have the necessary information on chemical hazards and risks, and take appropriate steps to assess and manage chemical risks. This is a key action for nature and critical to achieving the SDGs. Furthermore, chemicals management systems also allow countries to generate the necessary revenues – i.e., through registration fees and tax income from industrial activity – which can be used towards further enhancing the protection of human health and the environment.

- **Support for the SAICM Beyond 2020 Instrument for global chemical management**

Due to the pandemic, UNEA-5 is now scheduled to be held before the Fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-5), where stakeholders are expected to agree to a new instrument to replace the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). ICCA is an active SAICM stakeholder and strongly supports the continuation of a similar albeit more ambitious global chemical framework beyond 2020, with clear and achievable objectives and enhanced implementation of agreed KPIs by all parties (e.g. through national plans), and a strong focus on encouraging the institution of chemical management systems in all countries.

- **Support for the establishment of integrated waste management systems by all member states**

UNEP/EA.3/L.20 emphasized that environmentally sound waste management should be given the highest priority in reducing the leakage of plastic into the ocean. Reaffirming this commitment, the declaration should call on member states to establish integrated waste management systems to capture all used materials, including but not limited to plastic packaging, and to achieve universal access to such systems.

- **Support for collaborative action to develop new innovative technologies to increase circularity of plastics, improve waste management, and create new value systems that end plastics waste**

The chemical and plastics industries, along with the broader business community, are actively developing forward-looking, ambitious, achievable goals to tackle marine litter. Collaborative action among member states, the private sector, IGOs, NGOs, and others is critical to achieving these goals.

The Environment Assembly can make a significant contribution to Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals at a global scale by encouraging support for the messages above, among actions on other key environmental priorities. ICCA encourages the work of UNEA-5 to complement, reinforce, and build upon, rather than duplicate the significant work on chemicals and waste management conducted by other forums, including SAICM, the Basel Convention and its Plastics Waste Partnership, the G-20, and APEC.

As UNEA-5 considers action on marine plastic litter and microplastics, it is important to establish a global framework through which member states commit to implementing national waste management plans to reduce leakage of plastic to the ocean, in line with the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision, which has been adopted by more than 50 countries. The Blue Ocean Vision, first agreed by the G20, establishes a goal to eliminate leakage of plastic waste into the ocean by 2050.

ICCA looks forward to reviewing the draft of the ministerial declaration and providing additional comments.