



**Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety**  
*Global Partnerships for Chemical Safety*

**05w**  
**Agenda item 5**

*Contributing to the 2020 Goal*

**IFCS/FORUM-VI/05w**  
**Original: English**  
**29 February 2008**

**FORUM VI**  
**SIXTH SESSION**  
**OF THE**  
**INTERGOVERNMENTAL FORUM ON CHEMICAL SAFETY**

**Dakar, Senegal**  
**15 – 19 September 2008**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Forum VI – Future of IFCS**  
**Draft Decision Document**

**Prepared by: Forum Working Group on the Future of IFCS**

**DECISION DOCUMENT**



## **Forum VI – Future of IFCS Draft Decision Document**

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Brief Overview of IFCS.....	6
3	Future role and functions of IFCS .....	6
3.1	Current roles and functions of IFCS in relation to ICCM .....	6
3.2	Parameters for future role and functions of IFCS.....	7
3.3	Possible future role and functions of IFCS .....	7
4	Options for IFCS structure and institutional arrangements .....	9
4.1	IFCS structure .....	10
4.2	IFCS institutional arrangements .....	13
4.3	Options for future structure and institutional arrangements .....	15
5	Draft resolution for Forum VI.....	21
<b>Annexes</b>		
1	Draft Resolution on the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS).....	22
2	ICCM Resolution I/3.....	27
3	Forum V Resolution on the Future of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) .....	28

## 1 Introduction

1. The Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (Forum V) was hosted by the Government of Hungary and held 25-29 September 2006 in Budapest. In light of the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) by the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) in February 2006,<sup>1</sup> Forum V considered the future role of IFCS, including the invitation by the ICCM to the Forum:

to continue its important role in providing an open, transparent and inclusive forum for discussing issues of common interest and also new and emerging issues, and to continue to contribute through this to the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions.<sup>2</sup>

2. Recognizing the desirability of continuing to have such a forum, Forum V adopted a resolution on the future of IFCS.<sup>3</sup> The Resolution established a working group to prepare a draft decision on the future role and functions of IFCS for consideration at Forum VI. Based on the recommendations of the working group, Forum VI shall, if it so decides, propose a draft decision for possible consideration by the ICCM.

3. This paper and its recommendations were prepared by the Forum Working Group on the Future of IFCS (the Working Group), comprised of members of the Forum Standing Committee and the five SAICM Regional Focal Points. The SAICM Secretariat participated in the Working Group as an observer.

4. In responding to the Forum V resolution, the Working Group concluded that the role and functions of IFCS, its structure, and its institutional arrangements should maximize the ability of IFCS to contribute “to the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions,” while minimizing duplication and potential conflicts between IFCS, ICCM, and other processes.<sup>4</sup> In light of the very strict budgetary constraints to which all international chemicals management processes and institutions are subject, the IFCS structure and institutional arrangements should enhance cost-effectiveness to the greatest degree possible.

5. Against the background that this issue has to be seen within the broader perspective of how to aim effectively at solutions to reach the 2020 target in a holistic, pragmatic and timely way in line with the ICCM I/3 and Budapest Forum V resolutions, and the need to raise the political profile of worldwide chemical safety, the Working Group took the following approach:

6. First, the Working Group asked whether the Forum’s present terms of reference (i.e., its role and functions) needs to change. The Working Group understands the Forum V Resolution on the Future of IFCS to indicate that IFCS must adapt to the new international chemicals management framework that has been developing since the SAICM was adopted at ICCM-1. The Working Group believes that IFCS must signal Governments that the Forum has adapted to changed circumstances, that it can continue to make valuable contributions to implementation of SAICM and the pursuit of chemical

---

<sup>1</sup> See generally, Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, *First session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM1), Dubai, 4-6 February 2006*, [http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/iccm\\_sec.htm](http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/iccm_sec.htm).

<sup>2</sup> Report of the International Conference on Chemicals Management on the work of its first session (SAICM/ICCM.1/7), Annex IV, Resolution I/3, [http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/iccm\\_sec.htm](http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/iccm_sec.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Forum V Resolution on the Future of IFCS (IFCS/FORUM-V/05w), (<http://www.who.int/ifcs/documents/forums/forum5/report/en/index.html>). The text of the Resolution is reproduced in this document in Annex 3.

<sup>4</sup> Both of these requirements are derived from the mandate of the Working Group set out in the Resolution on the Future of IFCS, Paragraph 3.

safety, and that it therefore warrants their renewed support, financial and in-kind. The Working Group also recognized that an informed recommendation about the future structure and institutional arrangements of IFCS should be based upon an understanding of the future role and functions that IFCS may be asked to fulfill. Chapter 3 of this paper contains the Working Group's recommendations for the possible future role and functions of IFCS, including how they may contribute to implementation of SAICM.

7. Second, the Working Group considered possible changes to the Forum's structure that would (a) allow it effectively to serve its new role and functions, and (b) result in streamlining and cost savings, where reasonably feasible. Believing that the Forum sessions and the Forum Standing Committee are the two Forum structures that are the most important to consider for the future IFCS, the Working Group focused on them first, and considered the remaining Forum structures later (i.e., the IFCS officers, regional groups, national focal points, and ad hoc working groups). The various choices for Forum structures are presented in Chapter 4.1.

8. Third, the Working Group asked how IFCS might operate institutionally in the future, including the administering organization that may host the secretariat and the form of the IFCS secretariat, including a joint secretariat. The Working Group identified two basic approaches for the institutional arrangement:

- IFCS continues as an autonomous entity in partnership with an administering organization, or
- IFCS becomes a programmatic activity within the administering organization.

9. Several choices exist for each of these institutional approaches. They are presented and discussed in Chapter 4.2.

10. Finally, the Working Group synthesized the considerations contained in Chapter 4.1 and 4.2 to identify options for a possible future IFCS structure and institutional arrangement, upon which a recommendation to Forum VI might be based. The Working Group identified three basic options:

Option 1: modify IFCS as a distinct/independent institutional arrangement that avoids duplication, enhances synergies, and saves costs;

Option 2: integrate IFCS into ICCM by designating part of each ICCM meeting as a session of the Forum; and

Option 3: integrate IFCS into ICCM by making IFCS an ICCM subsidiary body.

11. The three options are discussed in Chapter 4.3.

12. Note that an important question under any option of incorporating IFCS into ICCM/SAICM is what rules of procedure or terms of reference would apply to Forum sessions or activities held under the auspices of ICCM. ICCM-2 will take place in May 2009, several months after Forum VI will be held in September 2008. While ICCM-2 is scheduled to consider and adopt rules of procedure for itself, Forum VI will not know what they will be, nor will the Forum know the nature of a bureau that may be created under them when it makes its decision about the future of IFCS. Accordingly, if Forum VI decides upon an option in which IFCS would be integrated into ICCM, the Forum will not know whether it can confidently "hand-off" IFCS to ICCM, because it will have no idea of whether ICCM-2 will be willing or able to accept the Forum, or under what terms. In light of this timing challenge, it may be prudent for Forum VI to adopt a contingent plan in respect to the future of the Forum, if it decides upon an option in which IFCS would be integrated into ICCM. For example: (1) the Forum VI decision could ask ICCM to consider accepting the Forum, including its key functions and activities, in a manner proposed in the decision, and (2) the decision could contain a contingent arrangement in the event that ICCM-2 did not wish to accept the Forum proposal, or in the event that ICCM-2 did not establish a bureau or similar body capable of implementing the proposal.

## 2 Brief Overview of IFCS

13. In 1992 Heads of State and Government of the UN Member States, assembled in Rio de Janeiro for the Earth Summit, adopted Agenda 21, thus establishing a framework for the systematic, cooperative action required to effect the transition to sustainable development. Chapter 19 of Agenda 21 deals with environmentally sound management of chemicals. It calls for improved coordination and enhanced cooperation among international chemical safety activities and for the establishment of an intergovernmental mechanism for chemical risk assessment and management.<sup>5</sup>

14. As an important step in implementing Chapter 19, governments established the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS).<sup>6</sup> IFCS is a non-institutional arrangement that provides policy guidance, identifies priorities, develops strategies and, where appropriate, makes recommendations to governments, international organizations, intergovernmental bodies, and non-governmental organizations involved in chemical risk assessment and environmentally sound management of chemicals. There is a strong emphasis on the full and open participation of all partners. IFCS has neither the mandate nor the resources to implement recommendations; that is a task for governments and other participants. While IFCS gives particular attention to Chapter 19, its remit is much more wide-ranging and includes all questions related to chemical risks. Therefore, it also addresses linkages with other areas of Agenda 21 such as hazardous wastes and human health.<sup>7</sup>

15. Under the current IFCS terms of reference, the structure of IFCS includes Forum sessions and participants, the Forum Standing Committee (FSC), officers, regional groups, national focal points, ad hoc working groups, and the IFCS secretariat. IFCS is administered by the World Health Organization (WHO). These current structures and institutional arrangements are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.1.

16. Since the first session in 1994, four additional sessions of the Forum have been held, at three-year intervals. Forum VI is scheduled to take place in Dakar, Senegal in September 2008.

## 3 Future role and functions of IFCS

17. An informed recommendation about the future structure and institutional arrangements of IFCS should be based upon an understanding of the future role and functions that IFCS may be asked to fulfill. This Chapter begins, in Section 3.1, by discussing the relationship between the current roles and functions of ICCM and IFCS, and their relationship as suggested in the relevant ICCM and IFCS resolutions. Section 3.2 identifies parameters that should be taken into account in considering the role of IFCS in the new international chemicals management framework. Finally, Section 3.3 proposes a future role and functions for IFCS and briefly discusses how each function adheres to the two parameters, including how the function may contribute to implementation of SAICM.

### 3.1 Current roles and functions of IFCS in relation to ICCM

18. ICCM and Forum V recognized the continuing need for IFCS' unique integrating role, embodied in Chapter 19 of Agenda 21, as a bridging mechanism for considering scientific evidence, technology, benefit assessment, and socio-economic issues; for fostering an understanding of the issues; and for providing analytical support and guidance for the development of policies and program strategies. The ability of IFCS to perform this role may be traced to:

<sup>5</sup> Agenda 21, Chapter 19, Program G.

<sup>6</sup> See International Conference on Chemical Safety, *Resolution on the establishment of an Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety*, IPCS/IFCS/94.8Res.1, 29 April 1994, [http://www.who.int/ifcs/documents/forums/forum1/en/Fl-res1\\_en.pdf](http://www.who.int/ifcs/documents/forums/forum1/en/Fl-res1_en.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> For additional information, see IFCS, *Brief History and Overview*, at <http://www.who.int/entity/ifcs/documents/overview.doc>, and *IFCS Major Activities and Achievements* at <http://www.who.int/ifcs/page2/en/index.html>.

- a. the relative autonomy of IFCS within the UN system;
- b. the open, transparent, inclusive, non-bureaucratic quality of the Forum’s participatory, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral processes, which provide a platform for consideration of specific situations and interests, in particular of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- c. the rights of participants to raise and explore issues;
- d. the ability of the Forum to stimulate debate between participants and different groups, creating better understanding and bridging differences of view;
- e. the Forum Standing Committee’s ability to oversee the identification of topics and the production of the “thought starter” and other papers that inform Forum participants about existing and emerging chemical safety issues, emphasize special needs and concerns with respect to improving chemicals management, and thus stimulate debate and greater understanding;
- f. the IFCS Secretariat’s ability to support and give priority to the Forum Standing Committee; and
- g. the open, inclusive, consensus-driven Forum procedures and practices that result in the production of Forum reports on important issues.

19. ICCM and SAICM have been heavily influenced by these qualities. Indeed, ICCM-2 may choose to incorporate them formally, to some extent, into the rules of procedure that it may adopt. Nevertheless, ICCM-1 acknowledged when it adopted Resolution I/3 that ICCM has not made the IFCS functions—nor the strengths of the IFCS approach—redundant or obsolete. Resolution I/3 invites “the Forum to continue its important role in providing an open, transparent and inclusive forum for discussing issues of common interest and also new and emerging issues, and to continue to contribute through this to the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions.” If the ICCM had believed that it had subsumed this “important role,” then it would not have invited the Forum to continue providing it.

20. The IFCS qualities acknowledged by ICCM-1 demonstrate that the functions of ICCM and IFCS can and should be complementary: ICCM, as a high level political forum, may be seen as supervising implementation of SAICM through strategic guidance, programmatic oversight and coordination, project development, and funding; while IFCS can contribute to SAICM implementation and can support the work of the ICCM through the preparation of synthesized information and reports on specific topics, which enhance mutual awareness and understanding of current and emerging issues among scientific and technical experts and other stakeholders.

### ***3.2 Parameters for future role and functions of IFCS***

21. A viable and useful IFCS should have a substantive, internationally recognized role that is supported with adequate financial and in-kind resources. In considering the role of IFCS in the new international chemicals framework, the following parameters should be taken into account. IFCS should:

- Complement and support existing sustainable development and chemical safety processes, especially the Strategic Approach, and not duplicate or conflict with them; and
- Contribute to implementation of the Strategic Approach and achievement of the 2020 Goal, and to the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions.

### ***3.3 Possible future role and functions of IFCS***

#### **3.3.1 Future role**

22. The essential role for IFCS - endorsed in ICCM Resolution I/3 and reiterated in the Forum V Resolution on the Future of IFCS - is to provide **an open, transparent, and inclusive forum for**

**enhancing knowledge and common understanding about current, new, and emerging issues related to sound chemicals management.** Implicit in Resolution I/3 is the conclusion that, by continuing to play this role, the Forum would continue to contribute to implementation of the Strategic Approach and to the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions. ICCM thus invited the Forum to provide added value to the international chemicals management framework, and to complement and support implementation of the Strategic Approach.

23. In Paragraph 24 of the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy, the functions (j), (k), and (l) assigned to ICCM may appear to render this essential Forum role unnecessary. These functions are:

- (j) To focus attention and call for appropriate action on emerging policy issues as they arise and to forge consensus on priorities for cooperative action;
- (k) To promote information exchange and scientific and technical cooperation; and
- (l) To provide a high level international forum for multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral discussion and exchange of experience on chemicals management issues with the participation of non-governmental organizations in accordance with applicable rules of procedure.

24. However, Resolution I/3 demonstrates that ICCM - having negotiated and agreed upon the Dubai Declaration, Overarching Policy Strategy, and Global Plan of Action - believed that IFCS has a valuable role to play in these areas, warranting its continued operation as a way to support the ICCM and contribute to the implementation of SAICM and the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions. Indeed, the analysis and review of the future role of IFCS carried out for Forum V found that no organization, including ICCM, currently fulfills the future role proposed for IFCS.<sup>8</sup> The collaborative, participatory process of considering, developing, and finalizing the Forum “thought starters” and reports uniquely contributes to realizing the objectives of ICCM functions (k) and (l). More particularly, the output of the Forum - the Forum reports - will likely be among the most timely and relevant information developed within an international, multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral framework and submitted to ICCM in its exercise of function (j). There is no indication at this time that the ICCM or SAICM secretariat have the capacity or intention to produce such information on their own. As it implicitly suggested in Resolution I/3, ICCM may instead rely upon the continued productivity of IFCS, so that it may fulfill this important function.

### **3.3.2 Three proposed functions**

25. Considering the invitation by ICCM to continue as a forum for enhancing knowledge and common understanding, and the inherent strengths of the Forum identified in Section 3.1 above, the following functions for the Forum are proposed. Each proposed function includes a short explanation of how it brings added value to the international chemicals management framework. After the three proposed functions are presented, a very short discussion follows of how all three functions adhere to the two parameters identified above, including how they may contribute to implementation of SAICM.

#### **3.3.2.1 Provide all stakeholders, especially developing countries and countries with economies in transition, an opportunity to share and acquire information through open discussion and debate**

26. This function provides added value to the international chemicals management framework because it supports “brainstorming” opportunities among diverse groups of stakeholders, which can lead to: the development of new ideas for dealing with existing and emerging problems; testing, modification, and evolution of established beliefs and practices; broader dissemination of practical solutions; and greater distribution of expertise among chemicals management specialists and other stakeholders from countries at all levels of development.

---

<sup>8</sup> See Thought Starter on the Future of IFCS, section 3.3 (IFCS/FORUM-V/02-TS), at [http://www.who.int/ifcs/documents/forums/forum5/meet\\_docs/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/ifcs/documents/forums/forum5/meet_docs/en/index.html).

**3.3.2.2 Provide an independent, objective source of synthesized information about chemicals management issues, including potential health, environmental, and socioeconomic impacts and possible response actions**

27. This function provides added value because it helps satisfy the strong demand, especially from stakeholders in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, for relevant, constructive, credible information that addresses their needs, and because the process of preparing and assembling such information helps to enhance the capacity and abilities of those who participate in it.

**3.3.2.3 Prepare and disseminate reports that reflect a state-of-the-art understanding of key subjects; are based on solid scientific evidence; ensure a balance of existing view points; and that package accurate, relevant and important information in accessible language that educates and may stimulate action, particularly for ICCM**

28. This function provides added value to the international chemicals management framework because it will allow the production of timely, balanced, useful information on issues of current and emerging importance, with a special focus on the needs of developing countries and economies in transition. The Forum's provision of this function will be most valuable if a process is adopted ensuring that Forum reports are automatically fed into, and considered by, the ICCM.

29. All three functions complement and support existing sustainable development and chemical safety processes, especially the Strategic Approach, because they provide essential services that are not otherwise available to the full range of interested stakeholders. In light of the ICCM's need to focus its scarce resources and time on SAICM oversight and implementation of the Global Plan of Action, especially through project activities and funding, it is not expected that the ICCM can reasonably assume these functions, which is among the reasons that it adopted Resolution I/3.

30. Each of the three functions can contribute to implementation of the Strategic Approach, achievement of the 2020 Goal, and the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions by supporting the achievement of several SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy objectives, especially those related to knowledge and information and capacity building, and through those, governance and risk reduction.

## **4 Options for IFCS structure and institutional arrangements**

31. This Chapter proposes options for the future structure and institutional arrangements of IFCS, including consideration of a joint secretariat with SAICM. The Working Group considers the "structure" of IFCS to include, under the current terms of reference: Forum sessions and participants, the Forum Standing Committee (FSC), officers, regional groups, national focal points, ad hoc working groups, and the IFCS secretariat.<sup>9</sup> "Institutional arrangements" encompasses the administering organization for IFCS (currently WHO) and, in the view of the Working Group, the IFCS secretariat. Thus, the IFCS structure and institutional arrangements overlap, at least in respect to the secretariat. *Moreover, the choice of institutional arrangement will, in some cases, make a significant difference in what IFCS structures may be necessary.* For example, several of the present IFCS structures may no longer be required if IFCS is integrated into the ICCM. In the view of the Working Group, the most important IFCS structures to consider, in respect to the future of IFCS, are the Forum sessions and the Forum Standing Committee. (For the purposes of this discussion, the Forum secretariat and its Executive Secretary are considered as part of the IFCS institutional arrangement.)

32. The Working Group understands the Forum V Resolution on the Future of IFCS to indicate that IFCS must adapt to the new international chemicals management framework that has been developing

<sup>9</sup> See IFCS website, "IFCS Structure," [http://www.who.int/entity/ifcs/documents/IFCS\\_structure.pdf](http://www.who.int/entity/ifcs/documents/IFCS_structure.pdf).

since the SAICM was adopted at ICCM-1. This understanding is reflected in the options presented in this Chapter. Additionally, the Working Group believes that cost-effectiveness and cost savings should be important factors in evaluating each of the proposed options, in light of the very strict budgetary constraints to which all international chemicals management processes and institutions are subject. The achievement of increased cost effectiveness, including through agreement on a slimmer IFCS structure that can effectively serve the new IFCS role and functions, could be an important factor in attracting renewed commitments from donors to ensure the continued financial viability of IFCS.

33. With these considerations in mind, Section 4.1 describes the various components of the present IFCS structure and identifies a range of choices for how they may fit in with a future IFCS. Next, Section 4.2 identifies the range of choices for a future IFCS institutional arrangement. Finally, Section 4.3 synthesizes much of the information in the previous two sections and presents three options for a possible structure and institutional arrangement.

## 4.1 IFCS structure

**How to use this section:** This section should first be read to inform Forum participants about the structural choices that are available. Then, after Forum participants have selected one of the options listed in Section 4.3, this section may be used to help fill in some of the details for the selected option.

34. The present structure of IFCS includes the Forum sessions and participants, the Forum Standing Committee, officers, regional groups, national focal points, ad hoc working groups, and the IFCS secretariat, headed by an Executive Secretary.

### 4.1.1 Forum sessions

35. **Forum sessions** are the ultimate “engine” of IFCS. Topics are chosen and thought starter and other informational papers are prepared in anticipation of the sessions with participation of all interested stakeholders. The sessions themselves produce Forum reports, which are the main product of IFCS, and which will likely be the most important IFCS input into SAICM and ICCM. In the past, Forum sessions have been held every three years, and each of the five forums has been a major international meeting involving a conference center, travel support for representatives of developing and transitional economy countries and NGOs (as appropriate), simultaneous interpretation, document translation and printing, etc. With the exception of pre-session document preparation and travel support, the cost of each session has been borne in the past by the host country. **Forum participants** include national governments with voting rights, and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) without voting rights, but with full participatory rights in plenary sessions, contact groups, and regional groups. As is generally the case with most international chemicals management processes, the “live” aspect of the Forum sessions is a significant catalyst for participants to “get the job done.” The Working Group views the “live” and “in-person” quality of Forum sessions, which facilitates multi-sectoral participation and interaction, as an essential characteristic for performing the proposed IFCS functions, that should therefore be retained.

36. It is important to recognize that the choices for Forum sessions will depend significantly upon the choices for institutional arrangements. This applies especially to the timing, frequency, and length of sessions. Choices for Forum sessions include:

A. Venue and participation:

1. “live” and “in-person” participation by a broad range and large number of stakeholders (the present arrangement);
2. smaller topical meetings; and/or
3. appropriate alternative settings, such as meetings facilitated with information and communication technologies.

B. Timing and frequency of sessions:

1. determined independently and occurring approximately every three years (the normal practice);
2. back-to-back with ICCM sessions;
3. during ICCM sessions;
4. during each ICCM intersessional period, including back-to-back with intersessional ICCM bodies or processes; or
5. back-to-back with other chemicals meetings, frequency to be decided.

C. Length of sessions:

1. five days (the present approach);
  2. less time, e.g., two days; or
  3. variable, depending on the number and scope of topics on the agenda.
- Note: If IFCS sessions are held back-to-back with other chemicals meetings, then it may be necessary for them to be shorter than five days.

D. Operating rules (rules of procedure):

- The question of what rules of procedure should apply to Forum sessions may arise if the Forum is no longer autonomous and instead becomes a programmatic activity of its administering organization.
1. IFCS rules; or
  2. rules of the administering organization.

E. Services provided—whether the Forum should continue to provide:

1. translation of working documents into the six UN languages;
2. simultaneous interpretation at plenary sessions into the six UN languages; and/or
3. travel costs to developing and transitional economy country participants, and NGOs, as appropriate.

#### 4.1.2 Forum Standing Committee

37. The **Forum Standing Committee (FSC)** is, along with the IFCS secretariat, the body that is responsible during the intersessional period for all of the planning and decision-making required in preparation for each Forum session. This includes such activities as deciding upon Forum topics, themes, speakers, and agendas; identifying lead sponsors who will oversee the development (through the establishment of ad hoc working groups) of the thought starters and other informational papers upon which Forum discussions will be based; assisting the secretariat in fundraising; etc. The FSC is presently comprised of 25 members, including the President and five Vice Presidents, twelve government representatives based on equitable regional and geographic representation, four NGO representatives, the chair of the IOMC, the past President, and a government participant representing the host country for the next Forum session.

38. The FSC may no longer be needed if the institutional structure of IFCS is integrated into the ICCM. In the view of the Working Group, however, the FSC will remain an essential component of the Forum if the Forum retains its distinct institutional identity and open participatory approach to preparing the meeting agenda, materials, and documents. Forum VI may wish to consider a new name for the committee that reflects its new role and functions. Choices for the Forum Standing Committee include:

- A. The name of the FSC could be retained or changed to, inter alia:
1. Forum Advisory Committee;
  2. Program Advisory Committee; or
  3. Program Steering Committee.

B. Composition:

1. maintain the FSC's present composition and size; or
2. modify the FSC's composition to make it somewhat smaller. For example, do not retain the five Vice Presidents, the past President, and/or the representative of the next host country.

C. Working procedures:

1. meetings:
  - a. continue working primarily via correspondence and teleconferences with occasional in-person meetings, or
  - b. conduct in-person meetings only at Forum sessions; hold all other FSC meetings via teleconference or internet.
2. frequency of meetings: continue to schedule teleconferences and in-person meetings flexibly, determined by the work program.

### 4.1.3 Forum officers

39. **Forum officers** include a President and five Vice Presidents. The **President** is appointed by a government elected to hold office at a session of the Forum. The President presides over plenary sessions of the Forum, chairs the Forum Standing Committee, and undertakes related responsibilities. Whatever form the future Forum takes, it will be necessary for someone to preside over Forum sessions. Hence, this function should be maintained in some manner.

40. The **Vice Presidents** each represent a different UN region. Considering that the Forum Standing Committee has regional representation in addition to the five Vice Presidents, it may be appropriate for a future IFCS structure not to include Vice Presidents.

41. Depending on the basic option selected by the Forum, choices for Forum officers include:

A. President

1. retain office of President, with functions that are similar to the present ones, or
2. depending on the IFCS institutional arrangement, no longer have a President, but instead maintain the function of a Forum presiding officer or chair.

B. Vice Presidents

1. retain the five Vice Presidents, recognizing that their roles will likely not be as expansive as those envisioned in the present Guidelines for the Regional Roles and Responsibilities for Vice Presidents, or
2. elect Vice Presidents for the duration of a Forum session (e.g. to lead regional discussions to formulate regional input), or
3. no longer have IFCS Vice Presidents.

### 4.1.4 Other IFCS structures

42. The Forum **regional groups**, led by the Vice Presidents, deal with the issues of strategy development and improved coordination, and meet before and during Forum sessions to discuss and agree upon common regional positions and strategies. The future role of IFCS proposed in Chapter 3.3 would be "to provide an open, transparent, and inclusive forum for enhancing knowledge and common understanding about current, new, and emerging issues related to sound chemicals management." With this narrower role, which focuses on disseminating and sharing knowledge and information among chemicals management technical experts and other stakeholders, the future Forum may no longer need to support regional groups, which have become a key feature of SAICM. (This proposal should *not* be understood to suggest that there should no longer be regionally based representation on the Forum Standing Committee or that regional input would not be formulated during sessions of the Forum.)

43. Depending on the basic option selected by the Forum, choices for regional groups include:

1. retain regional groups, or
2. no longer have regional groups.

44. **IFCS national focal points** disseminate information on Forum activities within countries and provide the Forum with information on national priorities and progress respecting the environmentally sound management of chemicals. National focal points should reflect the future IFCS role and functions. It may not be necessary to retain separate, distinct IFCS national focal points, in light of the future IFCS role and the establishment of SAICM focal points under ICCM. In light of the proposed future role of the Forum, consideration should be given to the criteria for focal points.

45. Choices for national focal points include:

1. IFCS national focal points, with revised roles and responsibilities,
2. SAICM focal points, or
3. no longer use national focal points.

46. **Ad hoc working groups** serve as the primary mechanism for preparing agenda topics for Forum sessions, including meeting documents and the organization of the plenary program. They facilitate the involvement and contribution of IFCS participants and other experts in the IFCS process. Working groups have open membership. They may be time-limited or open ended. It will be important to continue the option of establishing working groups to assist in the work of the Forum and FSC. As in current practice, working groups should normally meet and communicate by e-mail or teleconference and not in person (with the exception of working group meetings that may be held during a “live” session of the Forum).

47. Depending on the basic option selected by the Forum, choices for ad hoc working groups include:

1. continue to use ad hoc working groups on an as-needed basis,
2. limit the use of ad hoc working groups to specific, pre-defined situations, or
3. no longer use ad hoc working groups.

48. If a distinct Forum continues, then it will need to be served by a **secretariat**. Considerations related to the IFCS secretariat and Executive Secretary are discussed in greater detail in the next two sections of this Chapter.

## 4.2 IFCS institutional arrangements

**How to use this section:** This section should first be read to inform Forum participants about the choices for institutional arrangements that are available. After Forum participants have selected one of the options listed in Section 4.3, Section 4.2 may be used to help fill in some of the details for the selected option.

49. Institutional arrangements involve the administering organization that may host the IFCS secretariat and the form of the secretariat. The key questions regarding the administering organization are (1) what organization should serve as the administering organization for IFCS, and (2) whether IFCS should remain functionally autonomous or should become a programmatic activity of its administering organization.

50. The relationship between the administering organization and IFCS is important. In the current arrangement, IFCS is an autonomous entity that has entered into an agreement with WHO to host the secretariat, acting on the advice of the Forum Standing Committee. The Working Group believes that

the institutional autonomy of the Forum has been a chief reason over the years for its success and for the qualities that led ICCM-1 to adopt Resolution I/3. At the same time, the Working Group acknowledges that administrative and financial constraints may require the consideration of some options for institutional arrangements that would not preserve IFCS' institutional autonomy. Under the "non-autonomous" options, the Forum would become an *activity* of the administering organization.

51. In respect to the form of the IFCS secretariat, the main question is whether it should continue as a single entity, or whether it may be advantageous to have a joint secretariat. With a joint secretariat, two different administering organizations would cooperate together to provide secretariat services. Each administering organization may be responsible for providing those services and functions associated with an area in which the respective organization has a comparative advantage. Alternatively, the responsibilities could be divided between the two administering organizations on a case-by-case, project, or employee basis. For example, the SAICM secretariat, a joint UNEP-WHO secretariat, is housed in UNEP Chemicals, with WHO contributing by seconding one WHO employee to UNEP. In any joint-secretariat arrangement, lines of decision-making authority and contribution of resources are issues that would need to be addressed.

52. A joint secretariat for IFCS may be especially appropriate if the institutional autonomy of IFCS is maintained, WHO is willing to continue as an administering organization, and stronger institutional links with the SAICM secretariat are desired. If IFCS is integrated into ICCM and the SAICM secretariat, then it could be advisable for WHO to second to the SAICM secretariat an additional employee who would be responsible for administering Forum-related functions. In all cases, selection of an administering organization may be subject to approval of the governing body of the IGO involved.

53. The choices for the institutional arrangement include:

- A. IFCS continues as an autonomous entity in partnership with an administering organization:
  - 1. WHO serves as administering organization (the current arrangement);
  - 2. UNEP serves as administering organization; or
  - 3. WHO and UNEP jointly serve as administering organizations.

Or

- B. IFCS becomes a programmatic activity within the administering organization. Possible arrangements include:
  - 1. a WHO program, such as the WHO International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS), serves as IFCS secretariat;
  - 2. UNEP (UNEP Chemicals) serves as IFCS secretariat;
  - 3. the SAICM secretariat serves as IFCS secretariat (note that SAICM secretariat is staffed jointly by UNEP Chemicals and WHO, with UNEP serving as the administering organization and WHO seconding an employee to UNEP); or
  - 4. a joint secretariat in which:
    - a. one organization has the primary administering role for IFCS, and another supports it by seconding one or more staff members to the administering organization; or
    - b. both organizations serve a co-equal administering role.

The administering organizations for the joint secretariat could include:

- c. WHO or WHO/IPCS and
- d. UNEP Chemicals or SAICM secretariat.

54. An additional, basic issue related to the institutional arrangement is whether the name, "Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety," will be appropriate for the new IFCS role and functions. Choices in this regard include:

- A. Retaining the name “Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety” or
- B. Using a new name, such as “International Forum on Chemical Safety” (which would allow continued use of the initials “IFCS”).

### **4.3 Options for future structure and institutional arrangements**

**How to use this section:** In deciding upon a future structure and institutional arrangement for IFCS, Forum participants could first decide which of the basic options in this section is preferred. Then participants could select from the specific alternatives that are listed under the description of each option. Forum participants may wish to use the information in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 to help fill in some of the details for the selected option.

55. This section synthesizes much of the information just presented and identifies three options for a possible future IFCS structure and institutional arrangement: (1) retain IFCS as a distinct/independent institutional arrangement, but modify it to avoid duplication, enhance synergies, and save costs; (2) integrate IFCS into ICCM by designating part of each ICCM meeting as a session of the Forum, which would be served by the SAICM secretariat; or (3) integrate IFCS into ICCM by making IFCS an ICCM subsidiary body. Each of the three options includes several alternatives for the specific ways in which it could be implemented.

56. An additional, “integrate into ICCM” option is not included. It would be to merge IFCS into the ICCM, so that ICCM and the SAICM secretariat perform some of the Forum functions and processes, but no distinct IFCS structural, institutional, or programmatic identity is retained. This option could be described as a “sun-setting IFCS” option. It would likely bring the greatest cost savings, because it could probably be implemented by the SAICM secretariat with a relatively small amount of additional resources, compared to those contemplated in the secretariat’s existing budget. However, this choice would also likely result in the loss of most or all of the IFCS qualities and functions that ICCM-1 and Forum V supported in their respective resolutions. Moreover, it would arguably fail to comply with the Forum V resolution, which, by “recognizing the desirability of continuing to have such a forum,” does not appear to contemplate the complete dissolution of IFCS. In light of the text and apparent intent of these resolutions (the latter of which includes the Working Group’s terms of reference), the Working Group concluded that a recommendation to dissolve IFCS would fall beyond its mandate. Consequently, the Working Group did not consider this option.<sup>10</sup>

57. Note that an important question under any option of incorporating IFCS into ICCM/SAICM is what rules of procedure or terms of reference would apply to Forum/ICCM sessions. ICCM-2 will take place in May 2009, several months after Forum VI will be held in September 2008. While ICCM-2 is scheduled to consider and adopt rules of procedure for itself, Forum VI will not know what they will be, nor will the Forum know the nature of a bureau that may be created under them when it makes its decision about the future of IFCS. Accordingly, if Forum VI decides upon an approach in which IFCS would be integrated into ICCM, the Forum will not know whether it can confidently “hand-off” IFCS to ICCM, because it will have no idea of whether ICCM-2 will be willing or able to accept the Forum, or under what terms. In light of this timing problem, it may be prudent for Forum VI to adopt a contingent plan in respect to the future of the Forum, if it decides upon an approach in which IFCS would be integrated into ICCM. For example: (1) the Forum VI decision could ask ICCM to consider accepting the Forum, including its key functions and activities, in a manner proposed in the decision, and (2) the decision could contain a contingent arrangement in the event that ICCM-2 did not wish to accept the Forum proposal, or in the event that ICCM-2 did not establish a bureau or similar body capable of implementing the proposal.

---

<sup>10</sup> The Forum may revisit this question if it wishes.

### **4.3.1 Option One: Modify IFCS as a distinct/independent institutional arrangement that avoids duplication, enhances synergies, and saves costs**

58. This option is the most similar to the present IFCS arrangement, but some of the IFCS structures would be eliminated or cut back, and synergies and/or cost savings could be enhanced through a revised institutional arrangement.

#### **4.3.1.1 Secretariat and administering organization**

59. Alternatives include who the administering organization is, and whether the Forum is autonomous or an activity or program of the administering organization.

Alternative one: WHO

- autonomous Forum or a WHO activity?
- variations include arrangement under which WHO provides staff (e.g., where in WHO staff is housed, in IPCS or a different WHO program?)
- WHO provides executive secretary.

Alternative two: UNEP

- autonomous Forum or a UNEP activity?
- UNEP Chemicals, SAICM secretariat, or another part of UNEP?
- UNEP provides executive secretary.

Alternative three: Joint secretariat, WHO/SAICM

- UNEP/SAICM provides administrative services and staff, WHO provides additional professional staff ;
- variations include manner in which WHO provides staff, and whether they have an office at WHO, or are seconded to UNEP/SAICM;
- decision-making and management authority channels need to be determined ;
- the “primary” administering organization provides the executive secretary.

#### **4.3.1.2 Forum sessions**

60. The Forum sessions could be conducted in different ways under this option. For all alternatives, the Forum would arrange for its results to feed directly into ICCM (see note in Section 4.3.1.5 below). Additionally, the length of a session could depend on the session’s program and agenda.

Alternative one: Forum meets on a schedule that is not linked to other international chemicals meetings.

Alternative two: Forum meets “back-to-back” with another international chemicals meeting.

Alternative three: Forum meets immediately before an ICCM session.

- precedent/prior example: Swiss one-day metals “side event” held day before Forum V in Budapest;
- conference covers one or two appropriate topics.

#### **4.3.1.3 Forum bodies/officers**

61. The Forum bodies and officers could be retained as they currently exist or they could be adapted, including in the following manner:

- a. President: retain;
- b. Vice Presidents: do not retain;
- c. Regional groups: retain;
- d. National Focal Points:
  - i. use IFCS national focal points, if available, with revised roles and responsibilities, or
  - ii. use SAICM focal points;
- e. FSC (or program or forum steering committee or advisory committee, depending on the name chosen): retain, with fewer members. The committee could be composed of:
  - i. President,
  - ii. Regional representatives,
  - iii. NGO representatives (industry, science, public interest, trade unions), and
  - iv. IOMC representative.

#### 4.3.1.4 Advantages and disadvantages of option

##### 62. Advantages:

- would best preserve the features (e.g., institutional autonomy, independence, etc.) that have helped enable IFCS to contribute to sound chemicals management objectives since 1994; this advantage would include rules of procedure designed specifically for IFCS;
- could enhance the Forum's ability to contribute useful information to ICCM, especially if the Forum sessions are held independently from ICCM sessions, so that ICCM participants have an opportunity to consider the information in advance of ICCM sessions;
- could serve as a contingent arrangement in the event that ICCM-2 does not accept the Forum VI proposal on the future of IFCS, or in the event that ICCM-2 does not establish a bureau or similar body capable of implementing the proposal.

##### 63. Disadvantages:

- maintaining IFCS as a separate body from ICCM/SAICM may make achievement of a coherent framework for international chemicals management more difficult;
- continued funding of two separate structures and processes could be difficult to sustain, because it would be more expensive and would not automatically make full use of possible synergies.

#### 4.3.1.5 “Feeding” reports into the ICCM agenda

64. Note that, if this “distinct/independent institutional arrangement” option is selected, then it may be advisable for the Forum and ICCM to establish an understanding to ensure that Forum reports are fed directly into the ICCM agenda. In this circumstance, the Forum may wish to propose, and ICCM may wish to consider, an agreement under which IFCS will:

- a. Contribute in a timely manner documents and information to ICCM on ICCM agenda topics, in particular, those pertaining to emerging policy issues and priorities for cooperative action, information exchange and scientific and technical cooperation, and the exchange of information on chemicals management issues;<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> This text is based on SAICM OPS para 24, (j), (k), and (l).

- b. Provide ICCM an independent, objective source of synthesized information about chemicals management issues, including potential health, environment, and socioeconomic impacts and possible response actions;<sup>12</sup>
- c. Prepare and submit reports to ICCM that reflect a state-of-the-art understanding of key subjects; are based on solid scientific evidence; ensure a balance of existing view points; and that package accurate, relevant and important information in accessible language that educates and may stimulate action;<sup>13</sup>

and ICCM will:

- d. Place the main topics and conclusions of Forum reports on the agenda of the next ICCM meeting, for consideration by ICCM.

65. Additionally, the Forum could follow the approach in the current IFCS terms of reference, by distributing reports “through appropriate channels” to other relevant organizations.

#### **4.3.2 Option Two: Integrate IFCS into ICCM by designating part of each ICCM meeting as a session of the Forum**

66. In this option, IFCS no longer has a distinct institutional identity, but its functions, which are performed by ICCM and the SAICM secretariat, are identified as “Forum” activities.

##### **4.3.2.1 Secretariat and administering organization**

67. There is no longer an IFCS secretariat; instead, the SAICM secretariat provides services related to Forum activities and consequently UNEP serves as the administering organization.

##### **4.3.2.2 Sessions**

68. Forum sessions could be conducted in the following ways. Under either alternative, results of the sessions would feed into later segments of ICCM in the week.

Alternative one: first two days of ICCM are devoted to the Forum (e.g., “ICCM meeting as the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety”).

Alternative two: Forum meets for one or two days immediately before (i.e., “back-to-back” with) regular ICCM session.

##### **4.3.2.3 Forum bodies/officers**

69. The Forum bodies and officers could be adapted, including in the following manner:

- a. FSC: an ICCM Expanded Bureau,<sup>14</sup> including full regional and NGO representation, assumes FSC functions, including Forum topic selection, preparation of thought starters and other informational papers, and preparation of agenda for ICCM-Forum session;
- b. President:
  - function assumed by ICCM President/Chair of Expanded Bureau
  - ICCM President/Chair of Expanded Bureau to chair ICCM-Forum sessions;
- c. Vice Presidents: no longer applicable;

---

<sup>12</sup> This language is from the proposed IFCS function described above in Section 3.3.2.2.

<sup>13</sup> This language is from the proposed IFCS function described above in Section 3.3.2.3.

<sup>14</sup> This option is based on the assumption that ICCM-2 will decide to establish an expanded bureau. This could be a separate, supplementary body to a core ICCM bureau (as was the case for the SAICM Preparatory Committee). Another possibility would be for the ICCM to establish a bureau with a permanently broad membership, similar to that of the Forum Standing Committee and the former SAICM Preparatory Committee’s expanded bureau.

- d. Regional Groups: no longer applicable;
- e. National Focal Points:
  - i. use IFCS national focal points, if available, with revised roles and responsibilities, or
  - ii. use SAICM focal points.

#### **4.3.2.4 Advantages and disadvantages of option**

70. Advantages:

- in respect to Forum sessions, the option could achieve cost savings and minimize duplication and overlap between the Forum and ICCM, depending in part on the extent to which Forum and ICCM participants were the same individuals;
- would ensure that Forum outcomes could be taken up by ICCM.

71. Disadvantages:

- the short time of the Forum sessions and lack of time between the Forum and ICCM sessions could prevent the Forum from stimulating and feeding into the ICCM preparation process;
- could confuse the roles of the Forum and ICCM, and would require a reconfiguration of SAICM institutional arrangements by ICCM;
- there may need to be different levels of participation requiring additional resources during the five-day conference, because the Forum and ICCM portions of sessions may attract different participants (e.g., technical and scientific experts versus chemicals management policy makers);
- ICCM rules of procedure would apply, which could be somewhat less supportive of broad, multi-stakeholder participation than present IFCS rules.<sup>15</sup>

#### **4.3.3 Option Three: Integrate IFCS into ICCM by making IFCS an ICCM subsidiary body**

72. Under this option, IFCS no longer has a distinct institutional identity, but its functions are identified as “Forum” functions and activities and are performed by a distinct ICCM subsidiary body. IFCS would perform its work responding to, in particular, ICCM mandates, while retaining its culture and working structure.

##### **4.3.3.1 Secretariat and administering organization**

73. The secretariat could be administered in two basic ways:

Alternative one: There is no longer an IFCS secretariat; instead, the SAICM secretariat provides services related to Forum activities and consequently UNEP serves as the administering organization.

Alternative two: The Forum subsidiary body has its own distinct secretariat, including consideration of a secretariat administered jointly by the SAICM secretariat and WHO.

##### **4.3.3.2 Sessions**

74. The results of Forum sessions would feed into the ordinary/high level segment of ICCM under either of these sessions alternatives.

---

<sup>15</sup> Whether this turns out to be the actual case will depend on the exact rules of procedure that may be adopted by ICCM-2.

Alternative one: the Forum meets during ICCM intersessional period.

Alternative two: the Forum meets for one or two days immediately before the regular ICCM session.

Alternative three: the Forum meets back-to-back with an ICCM intersessional body, if established.

#### **4.3.3.3 Forum bodies/officers**

75. The Forum bodies and officers could be adapted as follows to achieve streamlining:

- a. President:
  - (i) function assumed by Chair of subsidiary body Bureau/Expanded Bureau, or
  - (ii) ICCM President/Chair of ICCM Expanded Bureau to chair Forum sessions;
- b. Vice Presidents: if needed, ICCM Bureau Vice Presidents;
- c. Regional Representatives: as part of subsidiary body Bureau;
- d. National Focal Points:
  - i. use IFCS national focal points, if available, with revised roles and responsibilities, or
  - ii. use SAICM focal points;
- e. Forum Standing Committee: the subsidiary body has its own Bureau/Expanded Bureau, which assumes FSC functions including Forum topic selection, preparation of thought starters and other informational papers, and preparation of agenda for Forum. The Bureau/Expanded Bureau could be composed of:
  - i. a Chair (or the ICCM President),
  - ii. ICCM Bureau Vice Presidents,
  - iii. regional representatives,
  - iv. NGO representatives (industry, science, public interest, trade unions), and
  - v. IOMC representative.

#### **4.3.3.4 Advantages and disadvantages of option**

76. Advantages:

- could preserve the Forum's autonomous working structure as a multi-faceted, open, participatory, and transparent process;
- could achieve significant cost savings and minimal duplication and overlap between the Forum and ICCM;
- would ensure that the Forum aligns itself with ICCM priorities;
- would provide an authoritative endorsement of the Forum as a platform and think-tank for knowledge-building, brainstorming, and bridge-building, including for the specific interests and needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- would establish a clear institutional and political link to ICCM and SAICM;
- if Forum sessions were held during the ICCM intersessional period (not back-to-back with ICCM), would ensure that Forum reports and outputs could contribute to ICCM preparations;
- intersessional Forum sessions could also allow the Forum to be integrated into ICCM/SAICM without requiring significant reconfiguration of ICCM sessions;

- the Forum subsidiary body could operate under its own rules of procedure.

77. Disadvantages:

- some of the flexibility and independence of the present IFCS approach would likely be lost;
- would depend on ICCM-2's ability and willingness to establish an executive body or bureau for the subsidiary body that would be capable of assuming functions currently filled by FSC.

## **5 Draft resolution for Forum VI**

78. The Working Group recommends that the Forum consider the three basic options identified in Section 4.3 of this paper, including the various alternatives contained under each option. The three basic options and their alternatives form the basis of the Draft Resolution on the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), which is attached as Annex 1.

## Annex 1

# Draft Resolution on the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS)

Note: The Working Group recommends that the Forum consider the options and alternatives identified in Section 4.3 of the background document, *Forum VI – Future of IFCS: Draft Decision Document*. These include:

Option 1: modify IFCS as a distinct/independent institutional arrangement that avoids duplication, enhances synergies, and saves costs;

Option 2: integrate IFCS into ICCM by designating part of each ICCM meeting as a session of the Forum; and

Option 3: integrate IFCS into ICCM by making IFCS an ICCM subsidiary body.

After choosing an option, the Forum could select from among the alternatives for Forum structures and institutional arrangements that are offered with the chosen option.

The three basic options and their alternatives form the basis of the Draft Resolution contained below. The entire draft should be considered to appear “between brackets.”

## Draft Resolution on the [Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS)] [*new name*]

### The sixth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety,

**[PP1] Having met** in Dakar, at the invitation of the Government of Senegal, from 15-19 September 2008,

**[PP2] Having regard** to the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) by the International Conference on Chemical Management (ICCM) on 6 February 2006,

**[PP3] Intending to contribute** to the goal articulated in paragraph 23 of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which aims “to achieve, by 2020, that chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment”;

**[PP4] Recalling** the adoption at Forum V of the Resolution on the Future of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS), which established a working group to prepare a draft decision on the future role and functions of the IFCS, including options for its institutional arrangement and consideration of a joint secretariat with SAICM, mindful of the need to avoid duplication, its possible relationship to the ICCM, and its contribution to the implementation of the SAICM, for consideration at Forum VI,

**[PP5] Commending** the successful conclusion of the mandate of the working group,

**[PP6] Further recalling** the invitation by the International Conference on Chemical Management to the Forum to continue its important role in providing an open, transparent and inclusive forum for discussing issues of common interest and also new and emerging issues, and to continue to contribute through this to the implementation of the Strategic Approach and the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions,

**[PP7] Appreciating** the unique multi-faceted role that the Forum has played as a flexible, open and transparent brainstorming and bridge-building forum for Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations including from the private sector which has facilitated consensus building, taking into particular account the specific situations and interests of developing countries and countries with economies in transition,

**[PP8] Recognizing** the desirability of continuing to have such a forum,

**[PP9] Acknowledging** the need to use human and financial resources efficiently and to avoid duplication of functions and work areas in order to enhance the implementation of SAICM and to allow the continuation of the important role played by the Forum,

[*Note*: further preambular paragraphs may be needed according to the choices of the subsequent operative paragraphs]

1. **[Decides]** that the new name of the Forum shall be the “International Forum on Chemical Safety,” which thus will continue to be known as “IFCS”;
2. **Decides** that the role of the Forum shall be to provide an open, transparent, and inclusive forum for enhancing knowledge and common understanding about current, new and emerging issues related to sound chemicals management;
3. **Decides** that the functions of the Forum shall be to:
  - 3.1. Provide all stakeholders, especially developing countries and countries with economies in transition, an opportunity to share and acquire information through open discussion and debate;
  - 3.2. Provide an independent, objective source of synthesized information about chemicals management issues, including potential health, environmental and socioeconomic impacts and possible response actions; and
  - 3.3. Prepare and disseminate reports that reflect a state-of-the-art understanding of key subjects; are based on solid scientific evidence; ensure a balance of existing view points; and package accurate, relevant and important information in accessible language that educates and may stimulate action, particularly for ICCM;
4. **Encourages** the President, Vice Presidents, and Forum Standing Committee members to undertake all suitable efforts to ensure that this Resolution receives adequate attention during the preparatory process of ICCM-2;

**Option 1: Modify IFCS as a distinct/independent institutional arrangement that avoids duplication, enhances synergies, and saves costs:**

5. **Decides** to continue the IFCS as a distinct and independent institutional arrangement;
6. **Invites** [the WHO to continue] [UNEP] [WHO and UNEP jointly] to provide the secretariat and administrative services for IFCS;
7. **Decides** that the future Forum sessions will meet [on a schedule determined by the Forum, that is not linked to other international chemicals meetings] [back-to-back with another international chemicals meeting] [immediately before an ICCM session];
8. **[Decides]** that the Forum Standing Committee shall henceforth be known as the [Forum Advisory Committee (FAC)] [Program Advisory Committee (PAC)] [Program Steering Committee (PSC)];
9. **Decides** that the [FSC] [FAC] [PAC] [PSC] shall be composed of:
  - 9.1. the IFCS President,

- 9.2. [#] governmental representatives of each of the five UN regions,
  - 9.3. four non-governmental organization (NGO) participants, representing industry, science, public interest, and trade unions, and
  - 9.4. a representative of the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals (IOMC);
10. **Invites** the [SAICM focal points] [existing IFCS national focal points, with revised roles and responsibilities,] to serve as the IFCS focal points;
11. **Proposes and invites** the ICCM to consider an agreement under which IFCS will:
- 11.1. Contribute in a timely manner documents and information to ICCM on ICCM agenda topics, in particular, those pertaining to emerging policy issues and priorities for cooperative action, information exchange and scientific and technical cooperation, and the exchange of information on chemicals management issues;
  - 11.2. Provide ICCM an independent, objective source of synthesized information about chemicals management issues, including potential health, environment, and socioeconomic impacts and possible response actions;
  - 11.3. Prepare and submit reports to ICCM that reflect a state-of-the-art understanding of key subjects; are based on solid scientific evidence; ensure a balance of existing view points; and that package accurate, relevant and important information in accessible language that educates and may stimulate action; and
  - 11.4. ICCM will place the main topics and conclusions of Forum reports on the agenda of the next ICCM meeting, for consideration by ICCM;
12. **Invites** all Governments, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, including from the private sector, to provide voluntary financial and in-kind resources in support of the Secretariat in the fulfillment of its functions.

**Option 2: Integrate IFCS into ICCM by designating part of each ICCM meeting as a session of the Forum**

5. **Proposes and invites** the International Conference on Chemicals Management to decide, at its second session, to integrate the Forum into the ICCM by designating part of each ICCM meeting as a session of the Forum;
6. **Invites** the SAICM secretariat to provide the secretariat and administrative services for the Forum;
7. [**Proposes and invites** the ICCM to consider devoting the first two days of regular sessions of ICCM to sessions of the Forum] [**Proposes** that the Forum should meet for one or two days immediately before regular ICCM sessions];
8. **Proposes and invites** the ICCM to consider that an ICCM Expanded Bureau, composed of the ICCM Bureau members, [X] government representatives of each of the five UN regions, [the SAICM regional focal points], the chair of the IOMC, and four NGO participants representing public interest, science, industry, and trade unions, shall assume the functions of the Forum Standing Committee;
9. **Invites** the ICCM President to serve as IFCS President and the [SAICM focal points] [existing IFCS national focal points, with revised roles and responsibilities,] to serve as the IFCS focal points;

[*Note: the remaining paragraphs of this Option 2 also appear identically in Option 3*]

10. **Further proposes and invites** ICCM-2 to adopt the revised terms of reference for the Forum, as contained in [Attachment #];
11. **Recognizes** that successful integration of the Forum into ICCM will require sufficient financial and in-kind resources to ensure that the Forum can effectively serve its functions, and urges all Governments, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, including from the private sector, to provide sufficient voluntary financial and in-kind resources in that regard;
12. **Decides** that until ICCM integrates the Forum into ICCM as described above in Paragraph [#] of this Resolution, and until ICCM or the integrated Forum adopts terms of reference for the Forum as described in Paragraph [#] of this decision, the Forum shall operate under the revised terms of reference contained in [Attachment #], and the Forum Standing Committee shall operate under the revised terms of reference contained in [Attachment #];
13. **Authorizes** the Forum Standing Committee, operating under its revised terms of reference contained in [Attachment #], to take any decisions that may be necessary to conclude the integration of the Forum into the ICCM, as described above in Paragraphs [# and #] of this Resolution, and to report back to the Forum on progress made;
14. **Requests** the IFCS Secretariat to support the Forum Standing Committee and to work closely with the SAICM Secretariat in the implementation of this Resolution;
15. **Invites** the SAICM Secretariat to contribute actively to implementation of the relevant parts of this Resolution;
16. **Invites** all Governments, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, including from the private sector, to provide voluntary financial and in-kind resources in support of the Secretariat in the fulfillment of its functions.

**Option Three: Integrate IFCS into ICCM by making IFCS an ICCM subsidiary body**

5. **Proposes and invites** the International Conference on Chemicals Management to decide, at its second session, to integrate the Forum into the ICCM by making IFCS an ICCM subsidiary body;
6. [**Invites** the SAICM secretariat to provide the secretariat and administrative services for the Forum] [**Proposes and invites** the International Conference on Chemicals Management to establish distinct secretariat services for the Forum, including consideration of a secretariat administered jointly by the SAICM secretariat and WHO];
7. **Proposes** that the Forum should meet [during the ICCM intersessional period] [immediately before the regular ICCM session] [back-to-back with an ICCM intersessional body, if established];
8. **Proposes and invites** the ICCM to consider establishing a bureau/expanded bureau for the Forum, which would assume the functions of the Forum Standing Committee;
9. **Further proposes** that the subsidiary body bureau/expanded bureau be composed of [a Chair,] [the ICCM President,] [the ICCM Bureau Vice Presidents,] [X] government representatives of each of the five UN regions, the chair of the IOMC, and four NGO participants representing public interest, science, industry, and trade unions;
10. **Invites** the [SAICM focal points] [existing IFCS national focal points, with revised roles and responsibilities,] to serve as the Forum focal points;
11. **Further proposes and invites** ICCM-2 to adopt the revised terms of reference for the Forum, as contained in [Attachment #];
12. **Invites** the ICCM to attribute specific tasks to the Forum, such as the preparation of reports on new and emerging issues on chemical safety management, as substantial input for consideration of

specific situations and interests, in particular of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, mindful of the need for adequate resources for these tasks;

13. **Recognizes** that successful integration of the Forum into ICCM will require sufficient financial and in-kind resources to ensure that the Forum can effectively serve its functions, and urges all Governments, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, including from the private sector, to provide sufficient voluntary financial and in-kind resources in that regard;
14. **Decides** that until ICCM integrates the Forum into ICCM as described above in Paragraph [#] of this Resolution, and until ICCM or the integrated Forum adopts terms of reference for the Forum as described in Paragraph [#] of this decision, the Forum shall operate under the revised terms of reference contained in [Attachment #], and the Forum Standing Committee shall operate under the revised terms of reference contained in [Attachment #];
15. **Authorizes** the Forum Standing Committee, operating under its revised terms of reference contained in [Attachment #], to take any decisions that may be necessary to conclude the integration of the Forum into the ICCM, as described above in Paragraphs [# and #] of this Resolution, and to report back to the Forum on progress made;
16. **Requests** the IFCS Secretariat to support the Forum Standing Committee and to work closely with the SAICM Secretariat in the implementation of this Resolution;
17. **Invites** the SAICM Secretariat to contribute actively to implementation of the relevant parts of this Resolution;
18. **Invites** all Governments, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, including from the private sector, to provide voluntary financial and in-kind resources in support of the Secretariat in the fulfillment of its functions.

## Annex 2

# ICCM Resolution I/3

### **Resolution adopted by ICCM on 6 February 2006**<sup>16</sup>

Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety

*The Conference,*

*Recognizing* the unique, multifaceted and significant role which the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety has played in the area of sound chemicals management at the international, regional and national levels,

1. *Invites* the Forum to continue its important role in providing an open, transparent and inclusive forum for discussing issues of common interest and also new and emerging issues, and to continue to contribute through this to the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions;
2. *Requests* the Strategic Approach secretariat to establish and maintain a working relationship with the Forum in order to draw upon its expertise.

---

<sup>16</sup> Report of the International Conference on Chemicals Management on the work of its first session (SAICM/ICCM.1/7), Annex IV, Resolution I/3, [http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/iccm\\_sec.htm](http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/iccm_sec.htm) (attached as Annex 2).

**Annex 3**

**Resolution adopted by Forum V on 29 September 2006**<sup>17</sup>

**Forum V Resolution on the Future of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS)**

**The fifth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety,**

*Having met* in Budapest, at the invitation of the Government of Hungary, from 25 to 29 September 2006,

*Having regard* to the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) by the International Conference on Chemical Management (ICCM) on 6 February 2006,

*Having regard* to the invitation by the International Conference on Chemical Management to the Forum to continue its important role in providing an open, transparent and inclusive forum for discussing issues of common interest and also new and emerging issues, and to continue to contribute through this to the implementation of the Strategic Approach and the work of other chemicals-related international organizations and institutions,

*Appreciating* the unique multi-faceted role that IFCS has played as a flexible, open and transparent brainstorming and bridge-building forum for Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations including from the private sector which has facilitated consensus building,

*Recognizing* the desirability of continuing to have such a forum,

*Having regard* to the need to use human and financial resources efficiently and to avoid duplication of functions and work areas in order to enhance the implementation of SAICM and to allow the continuation of the important role played by the IFCS,

1. *Requests* the IFCS Secretariat to establish and maintain a close working relationship and co-operation with the SAICM secretariat,
2. *Invites* the SAICM secretariat to participate in IFCS organised meetings as appropriate,
3. *Decides* to establish a working group to prepare a draft decision, inter alia through teleconferences, email and other communication aids, on the future role and functions of the IFCS, including options for its institutional arrangement and consideration of a joint secretariat with SAICM, mindful of the need to avoid duplication, its possible relationship to the ICCM, and its contribution to the implementation of the SAICM, for consideration at Forum VI,
4. *Decides* that membership and participation in the working group shall be limited to the members of the Forum Standing Committee (or the designee of a member of the Forum Standing Committee), and that the five regional SAICM focal points (or the designee of a region through the SAICM focal point) shall also be invited to participate as members of the working group,
5. *Decides* that, based on the recommendations of the working group, and before the next ICCM, Forum VI shall, if it so decides, propose a draft decision for possible consideration by the ICCM,
6. *Urges* for reasons of synergies and cost-effectiveness that consideration be given to further IFCS Forum meeting being held back-to-back with other relevant international meetings such as ICCM,

*Invites* all Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, including from the private sector, to provide voluntary financial and in-kind resources in support of the secretariat in the fulfilment of its functions.

<sup>17</sup> Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety Final Report (IFCS/FORUM-V/05w), Executive Summary, <http://www.who.int/ifcs/documents/forums/forum5/report/en/index.html>