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I. Introduction

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II. Major trends and emerging issues on use and management of chemicals in Africa

5. More and more African countries are importing chemicals and products containing chemicals, due to inter-alia, trade liberalization

fossil fuels, complemented by generally inefficient diesel generators. These are major sources of chemical discharges into the environment.

13. In order to capture opportunities for trade with industrialized countries, African countries will have to harmonize their trade and environmental policies, as overseas buyers increasingly demand evidence of environmental responsibility including sound management of chemicals, in part as a result of chemicals legislation coming into force through, for instance, the European Union's REACH Regulations. This presents an opportunity for supplying environmentally sound goods and services (e.g. organic produce) to niche (inter) national markets.

14. Around the continent, there is a trend towards subregional and regional integration, which demands increasing harmonization of policies and strategies for environmentally sound management of chemicals. In this context, institutions such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW) could contribute to strengthening policies and strategies for implementation and enforcement of environmentally sound management of chemicals.

III. Actions taken and progress made

Sound management of chemicals throughout their lifecycle for sustainable development

15. Many African countries have put in place sectoral policies and institutions for environmentally sound management of chemicals. Examples of these include environmental management acts and the associated institutions that they establish. Such institutions include the National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998 of South Africa, the National Environmental Management Council of Tanzania, the promulgation of Decree 58 of 30th December 1988 establishing the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) of Nigeria, the Environmental Management and Coordination Act (1999) of Kenya that created National Environmental Management Authority, the institution that manages environmental affairs in Kenya, the National Environmental Management Authority of Uganda, the Environmental Protection Agency of Ghana, and the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency, among others.

16. The approach to environmental management by many of the above and other African institutions is so far, sector-wise. In case of chemicals management, most countries have separate legislation and institutions for pesticides, industrial and commercial chemicals, etc. The national secretariats established for the various Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Gambia, Nigeria and Senegal. Other countries have made good progress with development of their national chemical profiles and subsequent strategies and action plans, even though means for their implementation are still to be secured (e.g. Morocco and South Africa).

18. National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPCs) support the introduction of better chemicals management practices and techniques in particular in the business sector. The NCPC Programme is a joint initiative of UNIDO and UNEP that since its inception in 1994, established Centres in 11 African countries (Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zimbabwe). The level of activities and success varies between these centres in terms of national ownership and sustainability. Some NCPCs operate specific programmes for chemical industries (e.g. South Africa) or for chemical-intensive other sectors (for example tanneries in Ethiopia) whilst other NCPCs deliver dedicated services for environmentally sound management of chemicals, including new business models like chemical leasing, in different manufacturing sectors (e.g. Egypt and Morocco). In general however, CP centres still need to be upscaled and its network expanded to cover the whole continent. Moreover Cleaner Production needs to be mainstreamed into national development programmes as a way of fostering sustainable development. This aligns well with industry initiatives, for example from the global chemical manufacturing industry through its Responsible Care programme, which has been actively promoted and implemented in some African countries particularly South Africa.

19. Sound management of chemicals also requires some quantification of chemicals flow, especially of obsolete stocks of pesticides and other hazardous chemicals since their long term effects remain a concern. In Africa, the African Stockpiles Programme (ASP), a global

27. An issue that comes up in these incidences is the need for active cooperation in areas such as comparative analysis of chemical wastes between international and national chemicals inspection units at entry and export points. This could help prevent the recurrence of such incidents. In general and in this context, there is an urgent need to invest in facilities and institutions for monitoring and evaluation of key chemicals in the environment as a basis for national, subregional and regional priority setting for chemicals management. This needs to be accompanied by proper mechanisms for information exchange among African countries, building upon existing initiatives like Pesticide Action Network (PAN) and Chemical Information Exchange Network (CIEN). The positive contribution of UNEP's African regional centres for chemical analysis and data generation is acknowledged in this regard.

Developing Strategic Approach to International Chemical Management (SAICM) in Africa

28. Adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM) on 6th February 2006 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the Strategic Approach to International
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31. More support is needed to foster involvement and cooperation of the private sector, in the implementation of environmentally sound chemicals management. The private sector has

45. Appropriate guidelines should be developed for SAICM implementation, taking into consideration existing national policies, institutions and chemicals use profile. More emphasis needs to be placed on developing appropriate formal institutional mechanisms and governance of SAICM implementation at national and subregional levels, including involvement of major stakeholders, in technical assistance provided for implementation of SAICM.

46. African countries expect continuous international support for sustainable industrial development and greening of their industry and economy. This support should be extended towards helping them achieve their commitments under the JPOI and MDGs, including through the development of their human, institutional and technical resources for achieving environmentally sound management of chemicals. In general, Africa expects that environmentally sound management of chemicals will become an integral element of the financial, technical and other support provided by its development partners, including under such mechanisms like the Monterrey Agreement.

47. Africa stands to benefit from enhanced compliance with provisions of the chemicals MEAs, in particular through developed countries banning and otherwise preventing the trade and/or transfer of obsolete technologies and hazardous wastes and chemicals. In addition, African countries call upon their development partners to assist with capacity-building for them to better control and enforce such trade and transfers.

48. Africa recognizes that its capacity to effectively participate and engage in negotiations on international chemicals and other environmental agreements is limited and expresses its concern that as a result thereof, the development needs and priorities of Africa may not have been addressed properly in many of the past negotiations. This is further complicated by proliferation of meetings under the various MEAs, for which preparations and participation in by African countries may be inadequate. There is therefore an urgent need for support by Africa's development partners in training African negotiators who can competently articulate its development and environmental agenda in such negotiations.