



SAICM/UCT Chemicals and Sustainable Development Goals Community of Practice

Discussion Forum Guide

Please read the questions and resources below to prepare for this discussion!

Title	Chemicals and Biodiversity
Date	28th April 2021
Time	14:00 pm – 15:30 pm (GMT+2)
Facilitator	Prof Andrea Rother, Univ. Of Cape Town
Presenter	Neville Ash, UNEP-WCMC
WebEx registration link	https://unep.webex.com/unep/j.php%3FRGID=r0491493ec5542a6a708dce90b0a645a4

Two steps are required to join this discussion:

1) Sign up to the CoP, if you have not done so previously, at:

<https://saicmknowledge.org/community>

Should you require assistance or have questions, contact: uctcops@outlook.com

2) Register for the 28th of April WebEx discussion at:

<https://unep.webex.com/unep/j.php%3FRGID=r0491493ec5542a6a708dce90b0a645a4>

We encourage you also to join the CSDG CoP WhatsApp group by clicking on this link:

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/BKTKGwt5cnNCgG9BOzYK1i>

Should you **NOT be able to join the discussion** but still wish to contribute please **click the link below** and fill out the Form with your **contributions**:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=NUNFkk5Wz0ywsCREW4wD92pVK->

[1gQzNHlYW4qnca1WNUNII2RkZYMVJSMFpWUIZWWVdHWjRCTFg1RyQIQcNO_PWcu](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=NUNFkk5Wz0ywsCREW4wD92pVK-1gQzNHlYW4qnca1WNUNII2RkZYMVJSMFpWUIZWWVdHWjRCTFg1RyQIQcNO_PWcu)

Discussion Format:

- This is not a Webinar, but rather a platform for members to discuss the questions presented in the chat room of **WebEx** after an oral presentation
- The discussion presenter/s will briefly present a verbal introduction and introduce the questions listed in this discussion guide.
- Three questions will be posted during the 1 ½ hour discussion. The presenter/s will address questions and comments posted by members in the chat room and participants are encouraged to respond to each other as well.
- All are welcome to join the discussion which will be held in English. Feel free to write in another language if you are struggling with English and members will assist where possible.

This activity is supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) project ID: 9771 on *Global Best Practices on Emerging Chemical Policy Issues of Concern under the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM)*.

PRESENTER BIOSKETCH



Neville Ash is Director of the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), the specialist biodiversity Centre of UNEP, based in Cambridge, UK. He has a strong engagement in the development of the “post-2020 global biodiversity framework”, and wider UN system work on biodiversity. Prior to this he spent 6 years in Kenya, as Deputy Director of UNEP’s Division of Environmental Policy Implementation, and leading UNEP’s work on biodiversity and ecosystem services, during which time Neville led the process to establish the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Previously he was Head of IUCN’s Ecosystem Management Programme, promoting nature-based solutions to climate change and disaster risk reduction, and Head of Ecosystem Assessment at UNEP-WCMC, when he played a key role in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. He has worked with a range of regional and international assessment and policy processes.

DISCUSSION INTRODUCTION

Chemicals and biodiversity; two communities with a lot in common!

This discussion will focus on the relationships and opportunities between the chemicals and biodiversity agendas, from a substantive and policy perspective.

Whether from plastic or nutrient pollution in the waterways and oceans, unsound use and disposal of pesticides, or the contamination by heavy metals or medical and veterinary chemicals in the environment, the unsafe use of chemicals is resulting in pollution from a range of sources that is now one of the most important drivers of the loss and degradation of biodiversity around the world. At the same time, functioning ecosystems with healthy biodiversity can play a role in detoxifying the human environment, whether from air pollution in urban areas, cleaning water or decomposing waste through bioremediation of biodegradable compounds. However, these substantive relationships are not reflected in the current siloed approaches to the policy landscape for chemicals and biodiversity. At the international level, “clusters” of multilateral mechanisms focussed on biodiversity and chemicals work in relative isolation. Both clusters are currently considering priorities and strategies for the “post-2020” period, and this provides an opportunity for strengthening synergy between the biodiversity and chemicals communities.

The objective of this discussion is to discuss and develop appreciation for the various opportunities for synergy between the chemicals and biodiversity substantive and policy agendas.

QUESTION 1 (20 mins)

Background: Plastics in the ocean, mainly from land-based sources, and declines in pollinators in part due to the widespread use of pesticides have made headline news around the world. However, beyond these headlines there is a huge variety of complex relationships between the use of chemicals and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Considering these relationships and dependencies in more detail might help advance on both the chemicals and biodiversity agendas, through greater collaboration between chemicals and biodiversity professional communities.

Question 1: What do you think are the most important substantive relationships between chemicals and biodiversity that might benefit from greater collaboration between these sectors?

Resources/Information for the Discussion:

- Section 2.1.15 of the IPBES Global Assessment, on pollution as a driver of biodiversity loss. See pp 112-118 available at https://ipbes.net/sites/default/files/ipbes_global_assessment_chapter_2_1_drivers_unedited_31may.pdf
- Section 7.1 and 7.2 of the Global Chemicals Outlook. See pp145-150 available at www.unep.org/explore-topics/chemicals-waste/what-we-do/policy-and-governance/global-chemicals-outlook
- Planting Healthy Air
www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/20160825_PHA_Report_Final.pdf
- Bioremediation – an overview
www.icontrolpollution.com/articles/bioremediation-an-overview-161-168.pdf

QUESTION 2 (30 mins)

Background: At the international level, both the chemicals and the biodiversity communities are considering and developing new strategies. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, with the next set of formal discussions being convened virtually during May and June, and the anticipated adoption of the framework at the 15th CBD Conference of the Parties in October 2021 in China. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) is also developing an updated strategic approach for the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, on which future arrangements are expected to be decided at the 5th International Conference on Chemical Management in due course.

Question 2: What are the opportunities to better align the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the post-2020 chemicals agenda?

Resources/Information for the Discussion:

- CBD zero draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework
<https://www.cbd.int/article/zero-draft-update-august-2020>
- SAICM Compilation of recommendations for the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020
http://www.saicm.org/Portals/12/documents/meetings/IP4/Docs/SAICM_IP4_2_compilation-recommendations-SAICM-consideration-ICCM5.pdf
- [Mobilizing the chemicals conventions to protected biodiversity issues brief](http://www.iddri.org/en/publications-and-events/issue-brief/mobilising-chemical-conventions-protect-biodiversity)
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QUESTION 3 (30 mins)

Background: Galvanizing action for both the sustainable management of chemicals and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity requires appropriate policies to be in place, suitable incentives, and widespread political and popular support across public and private sectors - and wider society. People interact with both biodiversity and chemicals through their use and management at local scales and are dependent on them. However, communications to a wider audience on the importance of biodiversity and chemicals and risks from their unsustainable or unsuitable management has been challenging. In both cases the issues are often perceived as distant to individual's lives (views such as "*chemicals are managed by chemical companies*" and "*biodiversity doesn't affect me because I live in a city*" are all too common), and environmental news is often dominated by the climate agenda. There is therefore a need to strengthen communications on chemicals and biodiversity to a wider audience across public and private sectors and wider society.

Question 3: What are the most important opportunities to strengthen communications on chemicals and biodiversity, and how might these opportunities align?

Resources/Information for the Discussion:

- Understanding the challenges of communicating about biodiversity
https://issuu.com/inbo/docs/communicating_biodiversity
- Section 2.1 “Chemicals in our daily lives”. See pp12-18 of UN Environment Management Group report available at
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2334chemical_report.pdf