OBJECTIVE

SAICM is an international policy framework to foster the sound management of chemicals worldwide and, specifically, to support the goal agreed to at the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development “to ensure that, by 2020, chemicals will be produced and used in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on the environment and human health using transparent science-based risk assessment procedures and science-based risk management procedures, taking into account the precautionary approach”.

The Overarching Policy Strategy (OPS) outlines 5 objectives: Risk Reduction; Improved Knowledge and Information; Improved Governance; Increased Capacity-building and technical cooperation; Reduction of Illegal international traffic

KEY ELEMENTS

Voluntary Policy Framework, Multi-stakeholder, Multi-sectoral nature: The involvement of all relevant sectors and stakeholders, including at the local, national, regional and global levels.

SAICM is composed of three texts adopted by the first International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM-1) in Dubai on February 6, 2006:

- The Dubai Declaration – a high level statement expressing commitment from government, civil society and the private sector;
- The Overarching Policy Strategy – sets out the scope, principles, objectives and implementation in greater detail;
- The Global Plan of Action – a list of over 250 potential work areas and activities.

SAICM has a very broad scope which includes:

- all chemical substances - agricultural and industrial chemicals as well as toxic metals.
- the management of chemicals at every stage of their life-cycle – production, use, recovery and reuse, and end of life, including the presence of chemicals in products.
- all environmental, economic, social, health and labour aspects of chemical safety.
The implementation of SAICM is overseen and monitored by the International Conference on Chemicals Management (the Conference or ICCM) a global forum which includes governments, international organizations, industry groups, public interest associations, labour organizations, scientific associations and representatives of civil society. However, decision-making is limited to government officials. The ICCM meets every three years up to 2015, and then in 2020.

One of the functions of the ICCM as identified in the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy (paragraph 24.j) is to call for appropriate action on emerging policy issues (EPIs) as they arise and to forge consensus on priorities for cooperative action.

Another key component of SAICM was the Quick Start Program (QSP) which was put in place to support initial capacity-building activities for the implementation of SAICM objectives in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. QSP was a voluntary, time-limited trust fund, administered by UNEP initially until 2013 but extended to 2015.

EXPECTED RESULTS
SAICM overall goal is the achievement of the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are produced and used in ways that minimize significant adverse impacts on human health and the environment.

To measure progress, a set of 20 indicators falling under the 5 Overarching Policy Strategy objective areas were developed against which countries report progress toward the 2020 goal.

CANADA’S INVOLVEMENT
Canada participates in SAICM because it has real potential to contribute to global chemical safety:
• International policy cohesion for chemical and waste issues
• Synergies / identify gaps / leverage intergovernmental agencies’ work
• Agreed procedure to identify and prioritize emerging issues
• Modest work programmes to achieve practical outcomes
• Unique interdisciplinary, multi-sectoral international forum for discussions on chemicals
• Voluntary and non-binding policy framework

Canada delivers on its WSSD 2020 commitments domestically primarily through the Chemicals Management Plan.

Canada also contributes:
• regionally through trilateral work with the CEC and SPP and bilateral work with US through COSM and GLBTS, and
• internationally through work under Conventions and active participation in other multilateral chemical initiatives (GHS, OECD, WHO)

RESULTS / PROGRESS
Activities
Canada is on target to achieving its national 2020 targets through implementation of our Chemicals Management Plan. As well, our involvement in multilateral and bilateral activities contributes to enhancing collaboration and sharing of expertise based on our domestic experience.

Canada supports implementation of SAICM:
• Internationally through international chemical activities in a number of fora (i.e. OECD, WHO, UNEP and at MEAs)
• By providing In-kind support i.e. provision of information/ expertise to emerging issues (Canada is an official contributor to the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint; Canada participates and contributes information in the PFC Global Group).

By participating in SAICM meetings since inception and sometimes chairing breakout sessions on specific topics i.e. on Financing; Health Sector Engagement. Canada has:
• Provided funds to develop reporting indicator modalities, the online reporting tool and the Health Sector Strategy.
• Provided funds and human resources in support of the development of a Global Health Risk Assessment Network.
• Canada is working with the SAICM Secretariat, WHO and other Government and Non-Governmental Health Sector Focal Points to discuss how to better engage the health sector in SAICM; Canada initiated and co-sponsored a resolution to promote health sector engagement in the sound management of chemicals which was accepted at the 69th World Health Assembly (WHA) in 2016.
• Canada also supported the development of an roadmap for the resolution with concrete areas for health sector engagement.
• Canada is the Western Europe and other Countries Regional Representative on the Steering Committee for the Chemicals in Products initiative identified as an emerging policy issue at ICCM2.
• At ICCM4 (2015), Canada was nominated as the SAICM Regional Focal Point for the Western
Europe and other Countries Group and attends ICCM5 (2020) Bureau meetings.

- Health Canada was nominated as co-chair of the intercessional process (2017-2020) to consider SAICM and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020. The first meeting was held February 7-9, 2017.

Reports

Arrangements for periodic reporting by stakeholders were considered at ICCM-2 held in Geneva from 11 to 15 May 2009.

A draft baseline report was prepared by the secretariat and provided to the first meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the ICCM, held in Belgrade, 15-18 November 2011.

Canada submitted its first report in 2011 to cover progress for 2009-2010. This information along with other country submissions was synthesized into the first SAICM progress report.

The second progress report (2011-2013) was considered at ICCM-4 in 2015. 108 submissions of data were provided by governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

Canada’s second country progress report, prepared through a process of interdepartmental consultation was submitted in April 2014.

ICCM4 adopted an Orientation and Guidance Document calling on all stakeholders to pursue additional initiatives to make progress towards the 2020 goal.

ICCM4 also initiated an intercessional process to prepare recommendations on SAICM beyond 2020, including possible measurable objectives in support of the Sustainable Development Agenda, and an independent evaluation of SAICM.

Results

From a global perspective, there is general consensus that SAICM has helped increase awareness of chemicals as a multi-sectoral issue and fostered coordination of chemicals related issues in several international institutions and programs. Similarly, the ICCM has provided an overarching policy forum to facilitate global dialogue and has helped enhance coherence and focus of stakeholders on the common elements needed for the sound management of chemicals.

At the regional and national levels, SAICM has helped raise the profile of the importance of chemicals management and provided a platform and opportunities for regions to identify and discuss common challenges and share relevant information in support of the SAICM goal, and for nations to set their own 2020 targets, with the Quick Start Programme providing funding to help enable less developed countries set and meet their own chemicals management goals.

Looking at the contribution to specific issues, SAICM has helped galvanise focus on issues of common concern (i.e. "emerging issues") and has fostered improved coordination amongst international organisations in implementation of their activities on the sound management of chemicals.