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QUICK VIEWS ON THE FIRST PLENARY OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE- POLICY PANEL ON CHEMICALS, WASTE AND POLLUTION

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution (ISP-CWP) was established in June 2025. The first session of its Plenary (its decision-making body) will be held in Geneva, 2-6 February 2026.

The meeting is expected to prioritize decisions to:

- Elect the Chair and officers of the Bureau.
- Adopt Rules of procedures for the Plenary.
- Decide on the physical location of the ISP-CWP Secretariat.
- Establish the ISP-CWP Trust Fund.

In addition, the Plenary is expected to consider several draft documents on policies and procedures, including:

- Conflict-of-interest policy.
- Process for determining the work programme.
- Procedures for the preparation and clearance of Panel deliverables.
- Financial arrangements.

It is important to note that the rules of procedure and the conflict-of-interest policy have already undergone extensive negotiations during the process to develop the Panel, whereas for the other documents some or all of the text has not yet been negotiated. Therefore, the Plenary is also expected to agree on next steps, including a roadmap and intersessional work for drafts that were not finalized during the first plenary.

IPEN Views

To safeguard the integrity of the Panel and ensure that it can fulfil its functions and perform its work in line with its operating principles, it is important that the Plenary ensures that the work of the Panel:

- Is inclusive and participatory.
- Has transparent work- and decision-making processes.
- Is free from conflicts of interest.

Below are IPENs views on how these aspects can be ensured across the working documents that will be discussed during the first Plenary.

Draft Rules of Procedure for Sessions of the Plenary (UNEP/ISP-CWP.1/3)

The draft Rules of Procedures was extensively negotiated during the process to develop the Panel and must now be streamlined to mirror the agreed text of the Foundational Document.

The Foundational Document of the ISP-CWP calls for broad participation by non-governmental organizations, and Indigenous Peoples as observers. In addition, its operating principles mandate that the Panel will be guided by transparency, taking an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach, and promoting inclusivity of participation.

IPEN Views

The Rules of Procedure should be streamlined to include already agreed provisions from the Foundational Document and additional items enabling broad participation. This includes:

- Retaining the definition of Observers in Rule 2(i) and provisions for observer participation in Plenary in Rules 6.1, 7.3, and 7.4, using the same text as in the Foundational Document.
- Retaining Rules 8, 13.3, 22.3, and 31.1 as drafted to allow for broad observer participation in all the work of the Panel and to adhere to its operating principles.

Draft Conflict-of-Interest Policy (UNEP/ISP-CWP.1/4)

In line with the Panel's operating principles of respecting independence of science and ensuring impartiality and transparency, the development and implementation of a strong Conflict of Interest (COI) policy will be crucial. This will also ensure that the Panel is viewed as credible and trustworthy and able to provide independent, scientifically sound data suitable to inform policy work.

IPEN Views

The draft conflict-of-interest policy was discussed in part during the process to develop the Panel. The final COI policy must ensure that:

- Evaluation of potential conflicts of interest accounts for current potential conflicts of interest and potential conflicts of interest resulting from recent engagements. Therefore, "from the past four years" should be retained in paragraph 12 and "current" should be deleted from paragraph 15.
- Information on potential conflicts of interest for all participants should be made public, including outcomes of COI investigations, to ensure transparency of work and secure public confidence in the legitimacy of the work of the Panel.
- The policy applies to all involved experts and also partnerships that are engaged in the work of the Panel. Therefore, all roles mentioned in Part B, paragraph 7, should be retained.
- The policy requires disclosure of all real, potential, and apparent conflicts of interest. The text in brackets suggesting [only if significant and relevant] should therefore be deleted as the relevance is up to the COI committee to evaluate.
- The mandate of the COI committee goes beyond reviewing the submissions but also includes procedures for managing identified conflicts and making recommendations on measures needed to prevent conflicts of interest.

For more information, see IPEN's previous submission [here](#).

Draft Process for Determining the Work Programme ([UNEP/ISP-CWP.1/5](#))

This draft was discussed in part during the process to develop the Panel, focused on what would fall under the responsibilities of the Secretariat, the Interdisciplinary Expert Committee, and the Bureau.

IPEN Views

To ensure inclusivity of participation, as highlighted in the operating principles of the panel, the bracketed text allowing for observer input should be retained in paragraph 2,4 and 7. Similarly reference to consultation with additional experts should be retained in paragraph 8 and 10 (c).

Draft Procedures for the Preparation and Clearance of Panel Deliverables ([UNEP/ISP-CWP.1/6](#))

Initial discussions were held on this draft during the process to develop the Panel. However, the whole draft text was not covered.

IPEN Views

To protect the integrity and credibility of the Panel, it is important:

- To include conflict-of-interest provisions at all stages, including the review stage. Therefore, paragraph 25 should be deleted. In addition, “industry” should be removed from paragraph 37. Instead, a separate paragraph should specify the review process for information from industry.
- That all stages of this process are transparent, including through public access to data and sources, retaining language in 29(c) stating that the review process should be open and transparent and ensuring that section E includes the same language as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES): the secretariat “should provide access to these materials on request.”
- That the process includes connecting local and global perspectives, including through retaining text ensuring that the deliverables are accessible to stakeholders (paragraph 2), that the scoping includes processes for including perspectives of different stakeholders (e.g. paragraph 14 (i) quater), that the procedure for use of sources state that deliverables should take grey literature into account (paragraph 37) and text highlighting that Indigenous Peoples, and local knowledge holders, can serve as primary sources of data and information (paragraph 38).
- That section G on “Procedures to safeguard commercially sensitive information” and the related Annexes II-III are deleted or significantly edited to only include a statement that information on the health and safety of humans and the environment cannot be regarded as confidential, similar to Article 9(5) under the Stockholm Convention. Neither IPBES nor the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have procedures for safeguarding commercially sensitive information ([UNEP/SPP-CWP/OEWG.1/INF/7](#)) and including such a process in this Panel would counter principles on transparency and significantly jeopardize the credibility of the Panel.

Draft Financial Procedures ([UNEP/ISP-CWP.1/7](#))

The Foundational Document requires that the Plenary requests establishing a Trust Fund to be governed by financial rules and procedures adopted by the Plenary. The draft document was prepared by the Secretariat for this meeting and has not yet been discussed.

The Foundational Document specifies that contributions to the Trust Fund:

- Will be donated without conditions.
- Will not orient the work of the Panel.
- Cannot be earmarked for specific activities, unless otherwise decided by the Plenary.

IPEN Views

The financial procedures of the Panel must include sufficient safeguards to protect the legitimacy and credibility of the Panel and details of all donations should be transparent and publicly available to protect against undue influence. The provision in paragraph 4 that the amount of contributions from private sources must not exceed the amount of contributions from public sources in any biennium should therefore be retained.

However, the levels and procedure for earmarked donations proposed in paragraph 8 should be revised to follow the practice established under [IPBES](#):

“Per exception to rule 5, additional contributions for specific activities approved by the Plenary may be accepted. Single contributions in excess of 300,000 United States dollars per contributor per activity require approval by the Plenary. Single contributions not exceeding 300,000 United States dollars per contributor per activity require approval by the Bureau. The limitation set out in rule 4 applies.”

Intersessional work

Intersessional work will be important for all procedures that are not possible to finalize during the first Plenary. It is important that this work is done in a transparent and inclusive way, including by allowing for input from observers.