SETTING BOUNDARIES TO PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

THE NEED FOR STRONG GLOBAL CHEMICALS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT BEYOND 2020

July 2023

IPEN
for a toxics-free future

THE VOICES AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF THESE PUBLIC INTEREST GROUPS FROM LOW- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES THAT OFTEN EXPERIENCE THE GREATEST THREATS FROM CHEMICALS AND WASTE ARE ESSENTIAL. WITHOUT THEM, SAICM AND OTHER GLOBAL AGREEMENTS WOULD AMOUNT TO LITTLE MORE THAN WISHFUL THINKING.

SAICM: A UNIQUE, VITAL FRAMEWORK – YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

Established in 1998, IPEN today is the leading global public interest, civil society organization promoting policies to protect human health and environmental rights from toxic chemicals and plastics, especially in low- and middle-income countries. Our network includes more than 600 public interest groups in more than 125 countries, largely low- and middle-income nations. We work to strengthen global and national chemicals and waste policies, to conduct research providing data relevant for national, regional and international policies, and to build a global movement for a toxics-free future.

We envision a healthier world where people and the environment are free from threats posed by toxic chemicals. Our mission is a toxics-free future for all.

IPEN has contributed to SAICM since its inception and with our global network members we have been active participants in every ICCM, OEWG, and in the intersessional process. Our work has provided critical, unique research documenting threats to human health and the environment from chemicals and wastes from many parts of the world where no previous data existed. We also contribute creative, comprehensive policy solutions that have been adopted within SAICM and by many national and local governments.

A crucial role of IPEN is to support participation by our global members in chemicals and waste-related policy negotiations. The voices and active participation of these public interest groups from low- and middle-income countries that often experience the greatest threats from chemicals and waste are essential. Without them, SAICM and other global agreements would amount to little more than wishful thinking.

Many factors have contributed to the disappointing progress toward the 2020 goals. Insufficient funding for implementation, low political priority, double standards, and lack of industry responsibility play a key role in continuing problems of chemical regulation and waste management. Key safety principles such as the precautionary principle, inter-generational equity, no data – no market, right to know, substitution, and polluter pays are alluded to, but are not often operationalized.

Despite these obstacles, progress has been made. IPEN members in our eight regions from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Central and Eastern Europe work diligently to support and promote SAICM's objectives in all parts of the world. This report provides a brief snapshot of positive outcomes from among the hundreds of successful projects by IPEN and our member groups that have helped propel progress around global chemical and waste management.

We also provide recommendations for strengthening the new SAICM framework and increasing its ambition so it can fulfill its objective as a unique, critical tool for global health. It must maintain its multisectoral and multistakeholder approach as well as its broad scope as the only international forum for comprehensively addressing chemical safety. Adequate, predictable, and sustainable financing must be established, ideally through strategies that hold industry accountable for the harms caused by its products. Most importantly, the new framework must recommit to a transparent, open, and inclusive process that promotes health and environmental justice for the communities around the world who are most at-risk from toxic chemicals and wastes.

Going forward, we believe that SAICM Beyond 2020 will continue to play an essential role in the vital work toward a toxics-free future for all.

Pamela K. Miller
IPEN Co-Chair

Tadesse Amera
IPEN Co-Chair

SAICM: PROTECTING OUR HEALTH AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

Industry produces thousands of chemicals, including many thousands that can harm our health and the environment. These substances do not observe national boundaries - they enter the environment and our bodies through the air, water, waste, and even the products we buy. A recent study concluded that pollution from chemicals and waste has already exceeded the safe operating space, the "planetary boundary," for healthy living on Earth.

In 2002, the world's governments at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg agreed on action to address the health and environmental harms caused by chemicals throughout their life cycle, with the goal to minimize those harms by 2020. This goal was mirrored when more than a hundred governments adopted SAICM in 2006.

SAICM is relevant for all governments, but it is especially important for low- and middle-income countries who are often most at-risk from toxic chemicals and waste but lack the information and capacity needed to protect their residents.

SAICM is the only global agreement with the mandate to address the full range of health and environmental concerns throughout the life cycle of chemicals, underscoring the need for all stakeholders and sectors to work together. In practice, it provides an umbrella framework for all other international chemical agreements. **Without SAICM, no international framework would exist for addressing most of the world's most pressing chemical safety concerns.**

SAICM "BEYOND 2020"

As it became clear that SAICM was not on track to achieve its 2020 goals, a "Beyond 2020" process was initiated to assess priorities going forward. When the new SAICM framework is adopted, it will be critical to increase the level of ambition, since it is the only global agreement to comprehensively address the existential threats that chemicals and wastes pose.

IPEN recognizes that SAICM has been instrumental in fostering progress on chemicals and waste management and calls for the new framework to advance with greater urgency and ambition, including:

- Addressing chemicals and waste throughout their life cycle.
- Incorporating meaningful, measurable, and time-bound targets, indicators, and milestones.
- Recommitting to a transparent, open and inclusive multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral design and practice.
- Addressing gaps in international agreements and providing for effective collaborations among UN agencies and all stakeholders.
- Recommitting to preserving its broad scope, without which there would be no participatory international framework for addressing the majority of the world's most pressing chemical safety concerns.
- Ensuring that issues of concern and emerging policy issues are carried forward and fully addressed.
- Securing adequate funding for implementation through a global chemicals and waste fund based on the "polluter pays" principle.
- Promoting continued, measurable progress toward reforming how chemicals are produced and used, to prevent harm to human health and the environment

When the new SAICM framework is adopted, it will be critical to increase the level of ambition, since it is the only global agreement to comprehensively address the existential threats that chemicals and wastes pose.

FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL: IPEN'S ROLE

IPEN partners with our member organizations to nurture and support their local and national campaigns, develop local research and produce local data, and foster collaborations to focus the power of their collaborative efforts in international policy debates. Stronger global policies then help catalyze and reinforce their local and national efforts.

IPEN's and our members' role in SAICM carries a similar circular feedback. Our global members rely on SAICM as a tool to encourage and guide their local and national decision-makers in developing strong regulations on toxic chemicals and waste. In turn, the coordinated research and data from IPEN member groups creates the science base needed for developing and strengthening protective regulations under SAICM. In many countries, a lack of data creates a barrier to solutions. Research by IPEN and our network partners is often the only source of relevant, local data that decision-makers and other stakeholders have for their policy deliberations.

Our work highlights the essential contributions of those from low- and middle-income countries where people often are most at-risk from toxic chemicals. By bringing together their voices, we aim to ensure that the unique perspectives, expertise, local knowledge, innovations, and insights of our member groups are heard and accounted for in SAICM and all international chemical policy forums.

Since ICCM4, IPEN and our members have conducted over 800 activities and projects promoting the sound management of chemicals and waste in low- and middle-income countries. Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2021, IPEN supported over 150 projects around controls on chemicals, waste, and plastics by our member groups in 70 countries, and in 2022, 100 projects
in 47 countries. Following are four case studies from hundreds of examples of IPEN's work that have benefitted from the protections developed under the SAICM agreement, and that, in turn, have contributed to the further development of the SAICM agreement. The case studies are:

- Eliminating Lead Paint Globally
- Exposing Threats from Chemicals in Plastics and Plastic Waste
- Electronics, Hazardous Chemicals, and Gender
- Promoting Alternatives to Toxic Pesticides

CASE STUDY: ELIMINATING LEAD PAINT GLOBALLY

Lead poisoning is a global concern that is not comprehensively addressed by any global agreement. No levels of exposure are safe for children and it is a significant public health emergency in low-income regions, where 90% of all children with elevated blood-lead levels live. Lead paint remains one of the most widespread sources of childhood lead exposure and the majority of countries in the world today lack protective, enforced laws to ban the use of lead in paint.

SAICM has had more influence in the work toward eliminating lead paint globally than on any other issue. Since its adoption as an emerging policy issue in 2009, work conducted by IPEN and collaboration partners in the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint has ended manufacturing and selling lead paints by many companies, influenced the development of new regulatory controls in several countries, and supported stakeholders with tools they need to effect change. This work has created substantial, measurable reductions in the manufacture and sales of lead paints and more successes are expected.

These achievements result directly in measurable reductions in the health burdens from lead poisoning of future generations, and, in turn, this translates into reduced incidents of mental impairments, cardiovascular disease, and other lead exposure-related conditions.

In 2007, global reports of toys and other products found with lead paint prompted IPEN to conduct a study looking at the issue. IPEN network groups from 11 countries collected and analyzed decorative (home use) paints, finding paints with dangerously high lead content in every country. In response, IPEN launched a worldwide lead paint elimination campaign and provided the evidence needed for its adoption as an emerging policy issue.

Since then, IPEN and our members have collected and analyzed more than 4,000 paints in about 60 countries, documenting the widespread availability of paint with dangerous lead levels. By generating country-based data on lead paint, we make the problem visible, often the first step toward regulation. Our member groups use the research as a platform to engage with policymakers in developing legislative solutions and as a tool to urge paint manufacturers to reformulate their products, often resulting in companies becoming market leaders in safer products.

The Philippines is one example of the impact of IPEN's lead paint campaign. In 2009, the Philippine public interest group and IPEN member the EcoWaste Coalition found that the majority of paint sold in the country contained high levels of lead, with more than 40% of paint containing dangerously high levels above 10,000 parts per million (ppm) – more than 100 times higher than the U.S. legal limit.

Led by their co-founder Manny Calonzo, EcoWaste conducted studies over the next four years documenting high lead content of paint and dust in Philippine homes, schools, and daycare centers. Attracting significant media attention, the studies were critical in establishing that high lead levels were ubiquitous and dangerous for the nation's children. Over the course of the campaign, EcoWaste organized more than 100 public and media events to raise awareness about the prevalence of lead paint while working for a legal ban on lead in paint. They also engaged with the paint industry to build partnerships and ultimately secured industry support for the ban.

As a result of the EcoWaste effort, in 2013, the Philippines adopted a national ban on lead paint. To monitor compliance, EcoWaste worked with industry and developed a voluntary, third-party Lead-Safe Paint certification program. By 2017, 85% of the Philippines' paint market had been certified as lead-safe, protecting millions of children from lead poisoning. National campaigns supported by IPEN in all regions of the world have utilized the same approach, leading to new regulations on lead paint being adopted.

For his work to end sales of lead paint, in 2018, Manny Calonzo was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize, often called the "environmental Nobel Prize." The work was also recognized in 2021 by the World Future Council with a special award for policies that promote better living conditions for present and future generations.

SAICM has had more influence in the work toward eliminating lead paint globally than on any other issue.

CASE STUDY: EXPOSING THREATS FROM CHEMICALS IN PLASTICS AND PLASTIC WASTE

Many of the Emerging Policy Issues and Other Issues of Concern under SAICM play a key role in promoting safer chemicals policy to reduce and eliminate threats throughout the plastics life cycle. The use of toxic chemicals in plastic consumer products and electronics makes them human health hazards, unsafe to recycle, and incompatible with circular economy goals. The endocrine-disrupting properties of many of the chemicals used in plastics cause global human health and environmental impacts that are acutely and disproportionately felt in low- and middle-income countries, including among workers and fenceline communities around production and disposal sites.

In 2021, IPEN and our members released a series of international reports on the toxic chemical problem with plastics and plastic waste management hazards. We also contributed to two global UN reports, the UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur Report on the Plastic Pandemic and the UNEP Plastic Pollution Report and exposed toxic hazards from plastic waste-to-fuel processing, also known as refuse-derived fuel (RDF), which contains toxic chemical additives and, when burned as fuel, creates more highly toxic substances that poison air, water, food, and ultimately our bodies. Between 2020 and 2023, we released several new studies on toxic exposures from virgin and recycled plastics, including:

- A study of recycled plastic pellets from 24 facilities in 23 countries found that all pellets contained one or more of the 18 chemicals tested for, including some containing toxic chemicals that are banned in recycled products.
- A study of recycled plastic consumer products from China, Russia, and Indonesia found highly toxic flame retardants were widespread in plastic products from these countries.
- A study from Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Russia, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania found the endocrine-disrupting chemical BPA in plastic children's products and plastic food packaging.
- A joint report with the Endocrine Society highlighting the current best knowledge about the effects of endocrine-disrupting chemicals in plastics on human health.
- A study exposing the hidden plastic waste trade, uncovering problems with most current estimates that undercount the trade by as much as 40%.
- IPEN contributed studies to a report by Greenpeace that documents toxic impacts on workers, communities, and consumers across the recycled plastic stream.

Our work highlighting threats from plastics and plastic waste in Africa shows the importance of local data in global policy forums. In 2019, our study produced local data on toxic chemicals created by the open-burning of plastic e-waste in Ghana and Cameroon, finding food chain contamination by highly toxic chemicals. That year, IPEN and our African member groups brought the findings to the Basel Convention negotiations, demonstrating to delegates the weak regulations that allow developed countries to export their toxic e-waste to Africa, resulting in toxic exposures and contaminated food. In 2022, we released research from 11 Arabic and African countries showing toxic threats to children and consumers from toys and other recycled plastic products, and took the findings to the BRS COP to advocate for stronger controls on chemicals in plastics.

As discussions intensified around establishing a Plastics Treaty, this work gained even greater global relevance. Many low- and middle-income countries in Africa (and elsewhere) bear the brunt of the world's plastic addiction, with unmanageable mounds of toxic plastic wastes from developing countries burdening their shores. At the beginning of the Plastic Treaty negotiations, discussions focused simplistically on plastic as a marine litter problem. The evidence collected by IPEN and our members demonstrated that the toxic threats from plastic go well beyond beach clean-up solutions, and instead require an approach to end the toxic threats posed across the plastics life cycle.

With data on the health threats from chemicals in plastics from our global members, IPEN established the scientific case and promoted knowledge sharing among global public interest groups, policymakers, and the media to call for a Plastics Treaty that addresses toxic chemicals and health. The result of this work is clear in the shifting discussions around the Treaty. At the start of the negotiations in 2022, few countries recognized the need for a health-protective Plastics Treaty. But by the INC-2 in 2023, nearly three-quarters of the government submissions called for the protection of human health as an objective of the instrument, and two-thirds recognized the need to address chemicals of concern in plastics.

CASE STUDY: ELECTRONICS, HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS, AND GENDER

Phones, computers, televisions, and other electronics are blockbuster consumer products, but the industry uses hundreds of chemicals to make them. Many of these are hazardous and lack comprehensive health and safety information due to weak regulatory policies. This causes harm in production, exposes consumers to toxic chemicals during use, and releases toxic chemicals when products become electronic waste.

In 2009, to address these concerns, more than 100 governments agreed at SAICM ICCM2 that hazardous chemicals in the lifecycle of electrical and electronic products is an issue of global concern. At ICCM3 (2012) and ICCM4 (2015), governments endorsed expert recommendations for addressing hazardous chemicals in the lifecycle of electronics, including design, production and waste. IPEN has worked to help implement these recommendations, primarily focusing on the production and waste parts of the electronics life cycle. This work over many years and across several countries shows the importance of continuing efforts on this issue of concern in a new SAICM agreement.

Due to its chemical intensity, electronics production threatens worker and community health. Electronics production also serves as a key case study in exploring the relationship between women and chemical safety because in many countries, women comprise the majority of the workforce. Human rights violations are rampant in brand-name factories and in those of their contract suppliers. In addition, electronics production routinely violates key chemical safety principles such as precaution, right to know, polluter pays, and others. The true cost of the chemical and electronic industry's products is substantially underestimated as health and environmental costs are externalized onto workers and communities as key vulnerable populations.

In 2016, IPEN began working with public interest groups in three important electronics production countries in Asia to address three key issues:

- Making victims of the electronics industry visible;
- Advocating for the right to know about emissions from electronics manufacturing; and
- Revealing gender issues in electronics production.

Making victims visible: Thousands of workers have been seriously injured or killed working in electronics production in Asia, but the victims are largely invisible to the global population which uses consumer electronics. A project in South Korea with Supporters for the Health and Rights of People in the Semiconductor Industry (SHARPS) used video to visualize these victims and tell their stories. The project grew into a 45-minute documentary "Stories from the Clean Room" that captured the attention of lawmakers when it premiered in South Korea's parliament. This brought national attention to workers' health issues in South Korea and was shown in more than 20 countries worldwide.

Advocating for the right to know: Inventories of chemical releases are a key part of the public's right to know. An important SAICM policy recommendation is to "formulate, promote, and implement legislative as well as voluntary initiatives to adopt and implement Pollutant Release and Transfer Registries (PRTR)." As the "workshop of the world," China has a large electronics production industry and a growing demand for information about emissions and releases driven by excessive pollution. The Chinese public interest group Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs (IPE) and IPEN worked to advocate for a Pollutant Release and Transfer Registry (PRTR). The project in China featured an innovative effort to get companies to manage the environmental impacts of their supply chains in China by requiring their suppliers to disclose annual PRTR data. The ultimate goal is a mandatory system for reporting emissions and releases.

Revealing gender issues in electronics production: In Vietnam, women make up the majority of the electronics industry workforce, including at the two largest Samsung mobile phone manufacturing plants. In a first-of-its-kind study by the Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (CGFED) and IPEN, women workers reported violations of labor law and numerous health impacts, including dizziness, fainting, bone and joint problems, and miscarriage. The study triggered a government investigation which confirmed some of the issues reported by women workers.

A severe backlash from the company prompted a 2018 statement of concern about women workers in Vietnam from three UN Special Rapporteurs, who noted that "it is unacceptable that researchers or workers reporting on what they consider to be unhealthy and inadequate working conditions are intimidated by private or public officials." In 2023, a former manager of Environmental Health and Safety at Samsung Electronics stepped forward as a whistleblower and CGFED, SHARPS, and IPEN have highlighted violations of company policies as revealed by internal Samsung investigations.

In the area of women's equality, IPEN has also spearheaded work to highlight issues around women's health and chemical exposures in their homes, workplaces, and communities. With UNEP, in 2021, we released the report on "Women, Chemicals, and the SDGs," focusing on the impact of chemicals on women and inequalities in decision-making on chemicals and waste management. In 2022, we produced a follow-up report, "Women Leaders: Addressing Chemicals and Waste Issues" highlighting women around the world working to end toxic threats. We also created an extensive online gender and chemicals training to catalyze a broad, woman-led leadership for addressing toxic chemical exposures. Today, the IPEN Women's Caucus leads this work in exposing and addressing chemical threats to women's health.

CASE STUDY: PROMOTING ALTERNATIVES TO TOXIC PESTICIDES

Pesticide exposures are another example of a global chemical threat that is far from adequately addressed by other agreements. Many Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) are banned or severely restricted in high-income countries but continue to be widely used in low- and middle-income countries where a much greater proportion of the population work and live in rural, agricultural areas and where regulations are absent or very weak. Even mandatory implementation of the basic Prior Informed Consent procedure has been blocked for many pesticides, making it hard for governments to control what enters their borders.

Through SAICM, countries have recognized the harms from HHPs. Governments at ICCM4 welcomed a strategy developed by FAO, UNEP, and WHO and encouraged efforts to implement the strategy at the local, national, regional, and international levels, emphasizing agroecologically-based alternatives to pesticides and approaches for strengthening national pesticide regulations.

IPEN and our members call for regulations to phase-out HHPs and provide research and country-based data to support this advocacy. IPEN supports the proposal to establish a Global Alliance on Highly Hazard Pesticides at ICCM5.

In Ethiopia, agriculture is the foundation of the economy. Cotton is an important crop, but it is notorious for the high volumes of hazardous pesticides used to grow it. A report by PAN-Ethiopia found that 58% of the pesticides used in Ethiopia are HHPs. For decades, many believed that cotton could not be grown without pesticides, but a project by IPEN member Pesticide Action Nexus (PAN) Ethiopia shows that growing cotton without pesticides can be profitable and better for health and the environment.

In southern Ethiopia, many small family farmers had experienced pesticide poisoning and faced high pesticide costs and dwindling profits, so they were motivated to adopt safer, less expensive farming practices. PAN-Ethiopia established Farmer Field Schools, where farmers could develop practical skills in soil conservation and pest management while reviving indigenous methods and developing local innovations to solve pest and crop management problems.

Beginning with just 90 farmers, the Farmer Field Schools have now helped more than 8,000 smallholder cotton farmers cut the use of HHPs for cotton production. Farmers trained in the program are achieving higher yields than untrained farmers in the same area while bringing in 80% higher price for their organic cotton than the baseline. Since 2017, 200 farms have achieved organic certification through the program.

In Mexico, in 2017, IPEN member group RAPAM compiled a groundbreaking comprehensive report demonstrating that many pesticides banned in other countries were still being used in Mexico. The report notes the prominence of the issue of HHPs in the SAICM negotiations and documents their use throughout the country. Following its publication, Mexico's National Human Rights Commission (CNDH in Spanish) called for the phasing-out of HHPs and the federal Environment, Health, and Agricultural authorities adopted a phase-out policy. A progressive ban on HHPs is now part of the agenda of several groups and government officials as a result of RAPAM's and their partners' work.

RAPAM also works to expose the link between genetically modified (GMO) crops and pesticides, in collaboration with a broad alliance of peasant organizations, scholars, and public interest groups. The "Sin Maíz no hay País" (No Maize no Country) campaign advocates against the introduction of GMO corn and its attendant use of the toxic herbicide glyphosate. RAPAM has brought in experts from the IARC-WHO to discuss their classification of glyphosate as a probable carcinogen, and other experts to highlight the need to adopt the precautionary principle in pesticide policy. As a result, a 2022 presidential decree calls for phasing out the use of glyphosate in Mexico by 2024, along with restrictions on imports and use of GMO corn for human consumption. RAPAM is now advocating for a progressive ban on HHPs to be included in a Senate initiative on reforming the Health General Federal law. Their proposal is supported by federal health and environmental authorities and the federal Science and Technology authority.

To achieve health and environmental protection from the harm of pesticides, the Beyond 2020 instrument will be crucial in implementing the biodiversity framework targets of reducing the risk from pesticides by half. An alliance of all stakeholders could facilitate the shift to safer agroecological practices and accelerate a phase-out of HHPs.

IPEN LEADERS FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Since our inception, IPEN has worked to advance voices from civil society groups in low- and middle-income countries, based on the principles of environmental justice. In all our work, IPEN leaders from our global network steer our efforts. Our 15-member Steering Committee (below), mostly from the Global South, provides strategic guidance on our programs and overall direction.

Rolande Djatougbe Aziaka, President of Association Welfare and Director, ECO CONSCIENCE TV, Togo.

David Azoulay, Director, Environmental Health Program, Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL).

Fernando Bejarano, founder of the Pesticide Action Network (RAPAM, A.C.), Mexico and IPEN's Regional Coordinator, Latin America and Caribbean hub.

Semia Gharbi, Chairperson of Tunisia's Association de l'Education Environnementale pour les Futures Générations (AEEFG).

Shahriar Hossain, founder, Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO), Bangladesh.

Yuyun Ismawati, co-founder of Nexus for Health, Environment, and Development (Nexus3) Foundation in Indonesia, 2009 Goldman Environmental Prize winner.

Génon Jensen, Founder and Executive Director, Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL). Brussels.

Naji Kodeih, Board Member, IndyAct, Lebanon.

Gilbert Kuepouo, Executive Director of Centre de Recherche et d'Education pour le Developpement (CREPD), Cameroon.

Aileen Lucero, National Coordinator of EcoWaste Coalition, Philippines.

Griffins Ochieng, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Centre for Environment Justice and Development (CEJAD), Kenya.

Jindřich Petrlík, Program Director, Arnika Toxics and Waste Programme, Czechia.

María Elena Rozas, National Coordinator, Pesticide Action Network of Chile and Alliance for a Better Quality of Life.

Olga Speranskaya, Co-Director, Health and Environment Justice Support (HEJSupport) and senior advisor to IPEN and Eco-Accord.

Sherika Whitelocke-Ballingsingh, Poison Information Coordinator for The Caribbean Poison Information Network, Jamaica.

PROGRESS BEYOND 2020

PROMOTING "POLLUTER PAYS"

The SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy that was adopted in 2006 acknowledged that access to considerable financial and other resources will be needed to achieve the sound management of chemicals. However, these funds never materialized on a scale commensurate with the need. Substantial new and additional funds for the implementation of SAICM will be needed for a meaningful global effort to achieve SAICM's goals and relevant SDGs, especially for low- and middle-income countries.

UNEP's independent evaluation of SAICM found that the success of the SAICM mission depended on secure and sustainable financing. With the notable exception of the Quick Start Program trust fund, the SAICM process has been hampered by both uncertainty and shortfalls in planned financing.

Ultimately, the costs of eliminating threats from toxic chemicals and managing their risks should be borne by the industries that produce and profit from them, and not by the public. Unfortunately, today, the reverse is generally the case: polluting industries profit while the public ends up paying to clean up their toxic messes. As UNEP notes,

> The vast majority of human health costs linked to chemicals production, consumption and disposal are not borne by chemicals producers, or shared down the value-chain. Uncompensated harms to human health and the environment are market failures that need correction.

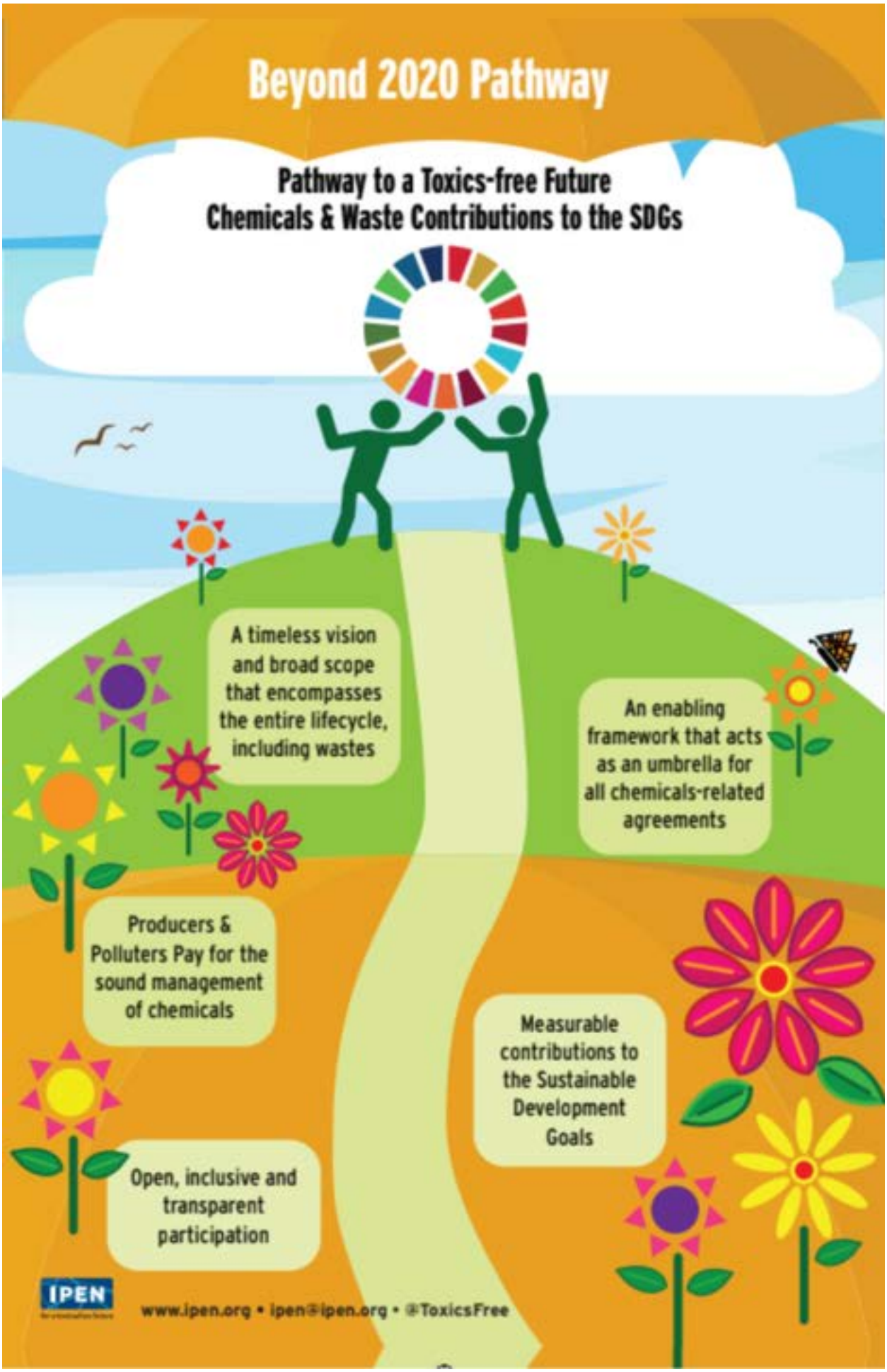
IPEN calls for reversing this scenario through the implementation of the "polluter pays " principle for management of chemicals and waste. While scientists have identified three environmental "planetary crises," global funds to address only two of these crises – climate change and biodiversity – have been established.

A global fund on chemicals and wastes should be created. One approach would be through a levy on the production value of basic chemicals. The global chemical industry has an annual turnover of approximately USD $4.1 trillion per year (trillion = thousand billion). If, for example, a global levy recovers USD $4.1 billion annually, the total cost to the chemical industry would be 0.1% of their annual turnover, just one cent for every ten dollars in sales.

TOWARD A TOXICS-FREE FUTURE

At this decisive point, the new SAICM framework Beyond 2020 needs re-commitment from its stakeholders to work toward a more ambitious agreement and effective implementation. Adequate financing and raising the political priority given to chemicals management will play key roles in improving how chemicals are produced and used in order to prevent harms to human health and the environment.

Some public interest groups around the world are still unaware of SAICM and lack access to the necessary resources and capacity to participate meaningfully as effective stakeholders. In response, we need more predictable, accessible resources to continue and expand joint programs on SAICM outreach and implementation. This will be essential for nurturing capacity among public interest stakeholders, increasing public interest-government dialogue, and advancing the common goal of a toxics-free future.


Beyond 2020 Pathway
Pathway to a Toxics-free Future
Chemicals & Waste Contributions to the SDGs
A timeless vision and broad scope that encompasses the entire lifecycle, including wastes
An enabling framework that acts as an umbrella for all chemicals-related agreements
Producers & Polluters Pay for the sound management of chemicals
Measurable contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals
Open, inclusive and transparent participation
IPEN
www.ipen.org • ipen@ipen.org • @ToxicsFree

www.ipen.org

ipen@ipen.org

@ToxicsFree