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**REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ROADMAP ON:  
THE ROLE OF THE HEALTH SECTOR IN THE STRATEGIC APPROACH  
TO INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT  
TOWARDS THE 2020 GOAL AND BEYOND**

#### **Background**

1. World Health Assembly resolution WHA69.4 (2016) on The Role of the Health Sector in the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management towards the 2020 Goal and Beyond (1) calls for proactive health sector engagement in actions to soundly manage chemicals and waste in order to minimize the risk of adverse health impacts of chemicals throughout their life cycle. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) was adopted by the International Conference on Chemicals Management (Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 4-6 February 2006) with the overall objective to achieve “the sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment.”
  2. The World Health Organization has long recognized the importance of sound chemical management for human health, as indicated in resolutions: WHA59.15 (2006) on health sector participation in the SAICM (2); WHA63.25 (2010) on the improvement of health through safe and environmentally sound waste management (3); WHA63.26 (2010) on the improvement of health through sound management of obsolete pesticides and chemicals (4); WHA67.11 (2014) on the public health impacts of exposure to mercury and mercury compounds (5); and WHA68.8 (2015) on the health impact of air pollution (6).
  3. Resolution WHA69.4 is well-aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (7). In particular, target 3.9 of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 aims to substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water, and soil pollution and contamination by 2030. SDG 12.4 aims to achieve, by 2020, the environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste throughout
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their life cycle. Other SDGs and targets are also relevant to the health aspects of chemicals, including SDG 6.3, which emphasizes improvement of water quality.

4. About 22.7% of total deaths and 21.8% of the total burden of disease per year are linked to modifiable environmental factors (8). In 2012, around 2.3% of all deaths and 1.6% of the overall disease burden in disability-adjusted life-years were attributable to exposures to a number of selected chemicals (9). Due to the complex nature of the issue, disease burden information is available for only a small number of chemical exposures, although people are exposed to many more chemicals in their daily lives. Furthermore, the adverse effects associated with acute, chronic, and combined chemical exposures can be significant, especially among vulnerable populations.

5. Resolution WHA69.4 requests the Director-General to develop, in consultation with Member States, a roadmap for the health sector at the national, regional, and international levels towards achieving the 2020 goal and contributing to relevant targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The proposed roadmap is to be presented to the 70th World Health Assembly in May 2017. During August and September 2016, the WHO Secretariat in collaboration with the Regional Offices, including AMRO, will be conducting a virtual consultation on the roadmap with Member States.

### **Purpose**

6. The purpose of this report is to highlight the relevance of the consultation process under development and to further elaborate the roadmap. It follows the regional statement read by Canada during the 69th World Health Assembly in May 2016. The roadmap will outline concrete actions to enhance health sector engagement towards achieving the 2020 goal and contributing to relevant targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as referred in paragraph 3.

### **Action by the Directing Council**

7. The Directing Council is invited to take note of the report and make any observations that it considers pertinent.

### **References**

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